

**MINUTES OF BUSINESS MEETING
HELD BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MAY 1, 2017**

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Eric Prause, Chairman
Andy Kidd, Vice Chairman
Michael Stebe, Secretary
Jessica Scorso
Timothy Bergin

Alternates: Julian Stoppelman
Patrick Kennedy
Teresa Ike

Also Present: Gary Anderson, Director of Planning
Renata Bertotti, Senior Planner
Nancy Martel, Recording Secretary

Time Convened: 7:24 PM

NEW BUSINESS:

HILLIARD MILLS, LLC – To revise Art. I, Sec. 2.01 to add a definition for “banquet hall” and Art. II, Sec. 16.15.02 to add banquet halls and outdoor entertainment at banquet halls as special exception uses in the Industrial zone. – Zoning Regulation Amendment (2017-024)

Ms. Scorso stated she was comfortable keeping the definition as is, as the word “private” is just explaining that the banquet hall is not opened to the general public.

Mr. Kidd agreed with Ms. Scorso as he said he saw no reason to strike the word “private.” He stated he was happy to include the change to the regulations to expand the uses in the Industrial zone. The change adds more opportunities for business owners, and he is pleased with the ability to accomplish said change by special exception, he said.

Mr. Prause said he thought it would be good to have a definition for banquet halls. He suggested removing the word “private,” as that is less ambiguous. He pointed out a possible situation where the applicant would not want to invite the general public to an event. Mr. Prause said he felt this is an appropriate use for the Industrial zone. He suggested the Commission could look at the impacts on other zones too, but reiterated that this change makes sense. The special exception is appropriate for the outdoor entertainment as well, as it falls in line with the language in other zones, said Mr. Prause, and he is in favor.

MOTION: Mr. Stebe moved to approve the zoning regulation amendment at Art. I, Sec. 2.01 to add a definition for “banquet hall” and Art. II, Sec. 16.15.02 to add banquet

halls and outdoor entertainment at banquet halls as special exception uses in the Industrial zone, with the following modifications:

1. To replace the proposed regulation reading:
 - “(m) Outdoor entertainment under a permitted Banquet Hall use provided that:
 - (a) To the extent possible, sound amplification equipment is oriented in a manner that directs the sound away from abutting properties, and buffering is provided to mitigate noise trespass;”
- with language reading:
 - “(m) Outdoor entertainment under a permitted Banquet Hall use provided that:
 - (a) To the extent possible, sound amplification *and light* equipment is oriented in a manner that directs the sound *and light* away from abutting properties, and buffering is provided to mitigate noise *and light* trespass.”
2. To replace the phrase “for a private event” with “for an event” in the proposed definition for Banquet Hall.

Mr. Bergin seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The reason for the approval is that the proposed amendment is consistent with the Manchester Plan of Conservation and Development Aspirations and the goals and objectives of the Plan’s Growth Management Principle 3.

The zoning regulation amendment will be effective on May 17, 2017.

UNITED SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION – For exterior modifications to the existing house and partial pavement of the existing gravel driveway at 99 Hartford Road, Historic Zone. – Historic Zone Site Development Plan (2017-025)

Attorney Robin Pearson, with the law firm of Alter & Pearson in Glastonbury, Connecticut, represented United Schools Association, Inc. She stated that this is a site plan review application for a proposed change to an existing site and structure in the Historic zone, but it involves a use that is allowed as of right. The applicant is proposing strictly physical changes with this application.

Attorney Pearson went on to inform the Commission about the applicant’s purpose relating to the building site at 99 Hartford Road. Said property is the Austin Cheney Mansion, which is currently used by the applicant. She stated the building is currently being used by the applicant and the change would allow the use to be extended to the third floor of the building.

Attorney Pearson spoke about the mission of United Schools Association, Inc. (USA). USA creates and manages programs to recruit and care for international students who attend high schools and middle schools in the United States, according to Attorney Pearson. She went on to explain that USA has two existing programs in Massachusetts, one in Connecticut, one in

Virginia and is in the process of adding another program in Rhode Island for the summer of 2018. Consequently, USA has experience with housing international students and working in conjunction with educational institutions, according to Attorney Pearson. She pointed out that USA has contracted with East Catholic High School in Manchester, the school the residents attend.

According to Attorney Pearson, the program consistently uses family-style residences. In addition, she pointed out that there are always adult house parents supported by non-resident staff who are on location in each of the residential structures. Attorney Pearson informed the Commission that in terms of the site in Manchester, there are two onsite house parents who are always present in the single family home to foster a family atmosphere. She stated that in general, the house parents in the homes function as legal guardians or de facto guardians for these children. When the students from around the world contract with USA, their parents enter into legal documents giving the local parents and USA total control, she said. As a result, USA has guardianship of the child while the child is in the jurisdiction and under the care of USA, Attorney Pearson stated, and USA has full parental rights with regard to the students occupying the homes. She explained that USA has found that most of the locations, as is true in Manchester, have recognized this arrangement to constitute a valid single family use.

Attorney Pearson stated the students are ages 14 to 18 and come from countries around the world to attend high school. USA is dedicated to maintaining a ratio of students from different countries, offering an opportunity for intergroup participation with those students, she stated. She went on to point out that this is a culturally expanding opportunity rather than students from one particular culture within the home. The students are dedicated and are committed to pursuing an education that will enable them to address the challenges of succeeding in an increasingly global community, Attorney Pearson said. She went on to explain that this program is a major investment by students' parents and, as such, the parents vet this organization very closely. Additionally, the parents expect that their children will benefit from this experience, Attorney Pearson said.

Attorney Pearson informed the Commission of the potential impacts of this application, though she pointed out that the use itself is not up for analysis at this meeting. She went on to explain that students are not permitted to have cars while in the USA program; therefore, the only vehicles at any given house would include the contracted van for transportation of students and the house parents' cars. The traffic impact from this use is actually less than what may be experienced with a traditional family occupying the home, particularly if the family has several teenage children, Attorney Pearson stated.

She reiterated that the children have adult supervision at all times. It is a requirement of USA's operating protocols that an on-duty staff member is present at all times when there are students in the home, according to Attorney Pearson. She then pointed out that USA's supervision may even exceed the supervision of a traditional family home.

Attorney Pearson stated that USA looks for larger homes, a minimum of five bedrooms and three bathrooms, preferably larger. The occupancy depends on the number of bedrooms, bathrooms

and the layout, she said. In all instances, the house parents are assigned their own area with a private bedroom and bathroom, according to Attorney Pearson.

She informed the Commission that the attendees on behalf of the applicant are Dr. Paulo Oppermann, Regional Director of USA; Joseph Versteeg from Torrington, Connecticut, who is a Connecticut-based fire protection consultant with experience in code issues; and David Goslin, an architect with Crosskey & Associates.

Attorney Pearson explained that the structure at 99 Hartford Road is currently occupied by 12 students and two house parents. She stated that only the first two floors of the home are being utilized and the purpose of this application is to both bring the existing structure fully into compliance for the current occupancy and also to enable USA to utilize the third floor of this structure. Attorney Pearson stated that there are three floors and an attic in the home.

Attorney Pearson went on to illustrate the timeline of the acquisition of this property. In September, 2015, Mr. Morgaman and his local realtor, Linda Lohnes, ReMax, met with Staff in Manchester, including Mr. Pellegrini and the Zoning Enforcement Officer, she explained. Attorney Pearson stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the possibility of opening residential homes to establish the relationship with East Catholic High School, to ensure that USA acted in compliance with Manchester's requirements, and to assure that the Town was comfortable with their proposal.

In addition, the meeting was to discuss logical places for homes or residences for USA's purpose, according to Attorney Pearson. She pointed out that at the meeting, Staff suggested that USA look into the Cheney Mansions, as they may be the best option both as to size and flexibility. Staff was quite familiar with the goal of the Historic District which is to find good uses for the structures, particularly the Mansions, in order to preserve them, said Attorney Pearson. At Staff's suggestion, USA began researching the Cheney Mansions as a possibility, she said. Attorney Pearson distributed a copy of the October 22, 2015 letter in which the Town determined the proposed use would meet the definition of family and, therefore, would be permitted in any single family residence as a matter of right in the Town of Manchester.

Attorney Pearson informed the Commission that she had listened to the Cheney Commission meeting recording.

Mr. Anderson clarified that the above-referenced letter was sent after consultation with the Town Attorney.

She went on to apprise the Commission that USA contracted to purchase the property, which closed in June, 2016. In August 2016, the students arrived from all over the world, according to Attorney Pearson. She explained that the students embarked on a two-week English Foundation program in Boston. During their absence, said Attorney Pearson, the building official and fire marshal in town notified USA that the single family designation did not apply with regard to building and fire code issues. While the use was appropriate for zoning, USA would have to comply with fire and building code issues relative to the use of the building, Attorney Pearson said. She stated that the notification was the first time USA was aware of this issue and

immediately began working with both the local and State code officials to bring the building into compliance.

The issue is the rating of the rooms, which deals with access and accessibility, Attorney Pearson explained. The rooms must meet an R2 building and fire code level, typically required for dormitories or multi-family residences, she stated. Working with the local officials, USA needed to bring the building into compliance with the R2 standards for building and fire code purposes, while remaining a single family for zoning purposes, she said.

Attorney Pearson stated that in the interim, USA was required to close off the 3rd floor and post a round-the-clock fire watch and temporarily cap the occupancy. She further stated that once USA became R2 compliant, they could then open the third floor to occupancy. USA rented some apartments next door, basically in the Cheney complexes, and housed the students that would have occupied the third floor rooms.

USA was required to perform additional work, which was recently completed, namely a complete commercial-level fire alarm system, and has now developed the plans to achieve R2 compliance, Attorney Pearson stated. She explained the requirements include handicapped access to the building, which is required even if they don't open up the third floor, and developing a plan to have a second means of access to the third floor in order to utilize the rooms. There are bedrooms with bathrooms on the third floor, she stated. Attorney Pearson explained that the students are returning in August, necessitating the completion of the changes to allow the displaced students to occupy the third floor, and the work must get under way immediately.

Attorney Pearson stated that USA retained Mr. Goslin because of Crosskey & Associates' extensive experience in historic renovation; in the Cheney area, they were employed to work on the Dye House renovation. As such, Attorney Pearson said, Crosskey & Associates are familiar with all Federal standards and the guidelines and requirements of the Cheney Brothers Historic Plan, and they work with sensitivity to historic renovation standards. Crosskey & Associates met with the Cheney Commission on April 13th, and have remained in contact with Town Staff, said Attorney Pearson. She pointed out that the Commission is in possession of the reviews by Engineering and Traffic regarding the site plan. The Cheney Commission's referral back to Staff was not supportive; the Commission has the letter dated April 25th whereby the Cheney Commission recommended the Planning & Zoning Commission deny the application for changes to 99 Hartford Road, according to Attorney Pearson. She went on to state that the Cheney Commission felt the proposed dormer was out of scale with the rest of the building; the proposed driveway and sidewalk material do not meet the historic characteristics of the District; and the proposed changes threaten the integrity of the Historic District. However, Attorney Pearson explained, the recommendation was based on plans submitted dated March 28, 2017. She went on to say the applicant has taken a hard look at the recommendation, and now has revised the plans to change the driveway and sidewalk materials to be compatible with the existing driveway and stone sidewalks. Most importantly, Attorney Pearson stated, the design has now reduced the scale of the dormer, which at the time of the presentation to the Cheney Commission, was deemed not possible.

According to Attorney Pearson, the final comment by the Cheney Commission stated the proposed changes threaten the integrity of the Historic District, though no explanation was provided. The Cheney Commission made very good comments, and in her opinion Crosskey & Associates have benefited immensely, she said. The proposed changes are to the rear of the building, and Crosskey & Associates stated that the structure itself was revised over the course of time, she stated. The structure was built in 1912 and revised in 1922, according to Attorney Pearson.

USA has made a major investment in the building and in the community, and has worked with Town Staff to get the code issues resolved, stated Attorney Pearson. She reminded the Commission that USA has hired the very best historic architectural firm in the area.

David Goslin, Principle Architect, Crosskey Architects, addressed the Commission. He explained that their company is based in downtown Hartford, and they specialize in adaptive reuse and historic preservation. He began the presentation with a photo slideshow and projected a photo of the building looking up from Hartford Road. Mr. Goslin informed the Commission that the building sits on the Great Lawn up on the hill. He explained the mansion was originally built in 1911 and illustrated the original three story building as well as the gable on the left side which was added in the 1920s. In addition, he explained the distinctions in the architecture: the original building was three stories; the third floor is built under the roof and has hip dormers; the 1920s addition is actually a story and a half; and the shed dormers peek out from above the eave line.

Mr. Goslin went on to project an image of the home, describing the original building and the 1920s addition. He pointed to the original front door with the portico and the balustrade above. The windows are replacement windows, explained Mr. Goslin, and are metal clad with white trim. He described the trim around the portico as the original wood, as are the gable, trim and the purlin extension brackets, which are decorative and do not provide any structure. He further illustrated the hip dormers and the gravel driveway from Hartford Road which approaches the house, winding to the west of the building. Mr. Goslin pointed out the western side of the 1920s addition as well as the gable which was also part of the 1920s addition. The main gable, a story and a half, according to Mr. Goslin, is original and the dormers peek out above the roof. He stated that there are usually two cars parked in front of the garage and a car parked on the side. Mr. Goslin pointed to the primary entry for the students, which leads past the pantry and into the kitchen, and said the front and back doors are not used and are ceremonial. He pointed to another view wrapping around to the north of the house and distinguished between the original building and the 1920s addition.

Mr. Goslin went on to show the gravel driveway with cobblestone edging and the hill gently climbing easterly, the van parking area in the back, and the driveway looping around and back to the garage. He pointed to a landscaped island in the center of the driveway, a view of the back door, a view looking west across the back door towards the garage, and another view of the back illustrating the gentle slope of the hill. Mr. Goslin stated they intend to use the hill to their advantage to help incorporate handicapped accessibility into the first floor without a ramp. He showed the east-facing façade with a covered terrace and the same columns and colonnade as at the front entrance.

Mr. Goslin then projected the site plan pointing to Hartford Road and the gravel drive which wraps around to the back of the house. He then illustrated an enlarged version of the site plan showing the back of the house, the driveway, the house and the garage, and the area they had intended to pave. He stated that he had presented the pavement to the Cheney Brothers Historical Commission, and the pavement has since been revised to a decorative gravel surface that is handicapped accessible. Mr. Goslin pointed out that because the building will provide handicapped accessibility, code requires a handicapped-accessible parking space and an accessible surface for someone in a wheelchair to get from the parking space into the building. After researching the gravel, said Mr. Goslin, it will be a composite material which will have a stone dust base and a hexagon mesh with depth. The mesh will be filled with gravel which locks it into place. He described the installation: the egg crating steel mesh which is filled with stone; a geotextile fabric on top of the earth, a 6” stone base, then placing the mesh and packing it. In doing so, it will be locked in place, preventing ruts and providing a handicapped accessible surface. Mr. Goslin provided a photograph of the blue stone driveway connecting the gravel to the entry. He stated it is a very traditional method, very common in houses of this era. By making the changes to the site, it is deemed appropriate and in keeping with the character of the district, he said.

Mr. Goslin explained that by code, there must be handicapped accessibility. Federal law mandates that in any structure being altered, if there is no elevator, the first floor has to be made fully accessible and part of that is accessibility from the site into the building, he said. Mr. Goslin further stated that whether the use is changed or not, if this were a single family home and a family member became disabled, handicapped accessibility would be required regardless of use.

He also said that the other issue to overcome was the fire protection. To this point, according to Mr. Goslin, the building has been on a fire watch. He stated that the required fire alarm system has been installed, is fully operational, and has been permitted.

Another change internally, according to Mr. Goslin, is the pocket doors which will be pushed all the way into the wall. They will build a new door assembly which would achieve the fire rating to meet code, Mr. Goslin stated, and should the property ever revert back to a single family home, these changes will all be reversible.

Another large challenge has been the stairs, he said. Mr. Goslin projected an image of the existing house with only one central stair, a living room and dining room, smaller pantry rooms, staff room, kitchen and library. He also pointed out a small servants’ stair which provides access to the basement and the second floor. He stated that it is not enclosed, it has winders, is very narrow, and does not provide a means of egress. Mr. Goslin explained the issue is there are no other stairs to the second and third floors. He explained the proposal would add another stair, though they are limited as to what they could do and where they could put it. One of the requirements, according to Mr. Goslin, is two means of egress, which are remote from each other to provide two directions to exit. In working with Mr. Versteeg, a former State Fire Marshal, the first thought was to obtain a code modification requesting leniency if sprinklers and a fire alarm were installed and safety improvements were completed. This proposal was put to both the

building official and the State official who verbally denied it. At that time, according to Mr. Goslin, there was no choice but to add a second staircase.

Mr. Prause requested clarification of the site plan which Mr. Goslin provided. Mr. Prause also asked if there would be changes to the exterior of the front door on the south side and Mr. Goslin stated they are not touching that side.

Mr. Goslin informed the Commission that, if they were required to make handicapped revisions to the front door, it is about six inches lower than the main floor. He explained that there is a vestibule stepping down, and then stepping down to grade. If this would be made accessible, according to Mr. Goslin, it would involve completely removing the door and raising it up; all the historical trim and detail would be altered. Therefore, the intent was not to touch any of the existing fabric, and the idea was to look at other options, he said.

Mr. Prause inquired whether the internal staircase area is where a dumbwaiter is currently, to which Mr. Goslin replied that it will be eliminated.

Mr. Goslin projected the proposed rendering, noting that the design took cues from the original house. He explained that the 1920s dormers are shed dormers and are very simple. Thus, they designed an extension of the dormer to the main house, according to Mr. Goslin, in order to obtain head room. He pointed to a window which is at the landing of the second floor stairs. There is a five foot ceiling height and in order to get the head room, the ceiling must be raised, stated Mr. Goslin. This was accomplished by extending the dormer across and making the overhang broader across, according to Mr. Goslin, taking cues from the 1920s addition. He presented the new handicapped accessible entry where they took cues from the detailing of the front and east porticos and incorporated them into the new entrance, though leaving off the balustrade in order to make it less formal. He went on to say that their goal was to not alter the ridge lines so that from other sides of the house, there would be no evidence of this work.

Mr. Goslin projected an image of the dormer that had been presented to the Cheney Commission. He pointed out that they were able to take nine inches out of the vertical distance by lowering the head height and still be code compliant. In response to the Cheney Historical Commission's input, they reduced the scale of the dormer, according to Mr. Goslin, though the width will remain in order to get headroom as the stair passes down. He projected an image of a landing that transitions to another landing, a window at the landing between the first and second floors, which transitions down to the entry at the back door. After the plan was presented to the Cheney Commission, they requested a plan installing the stairs without altering the roof line, stated Mr. Goslin. He stated that in order for the stair to work on all floors, it must stack, and in order for the stair to stack, it must be centered under the gable so it would not project over the roof line. As the stair transitions down to the lower floors, Mr. Goslin stated, it would completely cut one end of the house off from access and would destroy the first floor kitchen, which would then be relocated. He stated that they did look at that option, but having looked at the option of designing an addition, going for the code modification, and installing stairs without altering the roof line, the proposed plan is the only viable option.

Mr. Goslin also stressed that all the work to the interior is completely reversible, should this ever revert back to a single family home. USA has not altered any of the detailing within the home and the plan is to maintain the details, according to Mr. Goslin. All the new materials and finishes in the new floor plans will be complementary to the character of the house; they will match trims, crown molding, and hardwood floors, he said.

Mr. Stebe inquired about the new entry and the rails on the outside. He questioned whether those are extra steps and what the material is.

Mr. Goslin informed Mr. Stebe that the grade slightly climbs up over to the parking, and the plan is for a bluestone sidewalk. Because the stoop must be level with the first floor for accessibility purposes, as the grade drops away, they will install three granite steps to transition back down to grade, with handrails, he said.

Mr. Stebe asked about the material for the handrails, to which Mr. Goslin replied that they will be wrought iron. Mr. Stebe also requested clarification on the driveway and parking spaces. He surmised there would be the pea gravel encasement and similar prep work for the bluestone. He was concerned about the bluestone and frost heaves making it difficult for a wheelchair.

Mr. Goslin stated the bluestone would be on a compacted base. If necessary, the bluestone could be installed on a concrete base faced with bluestone, he said.

Mr. Stebe inquired about the materials used on the patios on the east end and south face, to which Mr. Goslin replied that they are concrete. Mr. Goslin presented a photo of the concrete on the 1920s addition, in which the east terrace is a paver set within a concrete border.

Mr. Prause observed that a lot of thought had been put into this project to try to keep the character of the Historic Zone. He asked whether anyone else from the team was at the meeting, to which Mr. Goslin stated that he was the only one.

Mr. Prause inquired about the comments from the Cheney Commission. Mr. Goslin stated that, in the prior rendition, there was asphalt pavement, and the Cheney Commission expressed concern about runoff. Therefore, the plans changed to gravel as it is 100% permeable, he said. He stated there were some concerns about the use, not related to the architecture.

Mr. Prause inquired about the discussions with the fire marshal and what the threshold is that triggers the requirement for a different type of fire suppression. He asked whether it is the number of residents. Mr. Goslin replied that, as required by the R2 building code, more than six residents constitute a dormitory. Mr. Prause stated that anyone with guardianship does not necessarily make it a dormitory.

Mr. Joe Versteeg stated that the wording in the building code and fire safety code that the local building official and local fire marshal applied defines a single family home as being occupied by members of a single family with not more than five outsiders. Therefore, he stated, a husband and wife, whether married in the eyes of the church or common law, with two or 42 children between them, are a single family. Mr. Versteeg went on to say that whether they be biological

children, legally adopted, foster children, or an older daughter that is now in her 30s who gets divorced and comes home with her five kids, the code looks at that as a single family. Because of the legal documentation and the transfer of parental rights to USA, in reality, just like in all the other states and jurisdictions that they have had these properties, it is considered a single family home, Mr. Versteeg said. The State Fire Marshal and State Building Official were uncomfortable with that designation, though they could not define “single family,” according to Mr. Versteeg. As a result, to make it legal under the building code, whenever there are more than six residents, it falls into congregate housing, group home, or another form of larger residential, requiring a fire alarm system and a full sprinkler system, with approximately one or two exits depending on the number of residents, the height and configuration of the building that drives the sprinkler system along with the two separate exits.

Mr. Prause inquired as to the occupancy on the second and third floors. Mr. Versteeg replied that currently, all bedrooms are on the second floor so the occupancy is 12 with two house parents.

Mr. Prause requested clarification that once the building code requirements are met, the third floor could become accessible for residents too, so there would be an additional four that would be on the third floor. Mr. Versteeg explained that there are four bedrooms on the third floor.

Ms. Scorso inquired about the actual driveway and whether that is to be expanded, with four spots, to which Mr. Versteeg replied that it is staying as is. Mr. Versteeg went on to say that there are three spots with gravel, two spots in front of the garage, and a spot adjacent to the garage.

Mr. Anderson clarified that the issue is between the building code and the zoning regulations. Back in 2005, the Zoning Enforcement Officer determined through zoning that this property was to be considered a single family home based on the definition of a single family home in the zoning regulations, which includes guardianship, according to Mr. Anderson. He stated that is why that determination was made, and this has not been before the Planning & Zoning Commission before because it was an as of right use. Mr. Anderson stated that the one thing he cannot speak to is the statement that the Staff encouraged the applicant to look at properties in the Cheney District, as he was not with the Planning Department at that time.

Mr. Anderson went on to say the current temporary occupancy is up to 16 people, including the students and managers. He pointed out that Attorney Pearson mentioned the 24-hour fire watch, which was put in place to allow temporary occupancy. Some of the steps the applicant has taken are to satisfy their continued occupancy, i.e., the driveway and walkway, Mr. Anderson said. He clarified that the reason they are before the Commission now is related to the change of structure to the building. The change to the structure of the building triggers a review by the Planning and Zoning Commission, according to Mr. Anderson. He went on to point out that the Planning and Zoning Commission has fairly broad purview over this application. Mr. Anderson explained that, in looking at Art. II, Sec. 18.04.01 (a) of the zoning regulations, because the use of the property is tied into proposed expansion of the building, “(a) “Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for a property which requires minimal alteration of the building, structure or site and its environment, or to use a property for its originally intended

purpose.” He went on to say that the reason that the applicant is before the Commission relates to the physical change to the building; however, in this case, it is tied to the use of the building as well.

Mr. Anderson stated that this application was before the Cheney Commission a couple of weeks ago, and the Commission has the Cheney Commission’s recommendation, which was based on the exterior changes to the building. The Cheney Commission advised a negative determination in this case, he said. Mr. Anderson said that the Cheney Commission did discuss the use of the property and the potential additional uses moving forward. He stated he would recommend that the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Cheney Commission, and perhaps the Economic Development Commission meet to discuss the future of this district.

Attorney Pearson reminded the Commission that they have had a chance to view the changes proposed, and that Mr. Anderson had suggested the Commission could look at the use with regard to these changes by reference to that particular code section. She went on to underscore that the use is an established right in the zoning regulations. Attorney Pearson informed the Commission that in listening to the Cheney Commission tape, there was no question that the issue the Cheney Commission had was, above all else, with the use. She went on to say that their resolution was totally and accurately conveyed to the Commission, and if there is a concern about the use, changes would need to be put forth in the future in that regard.

Attorney Pearson went on to say that the Cheney Commission was very considerate, allowing the applicant plenty of time, and asked abundant good questions. As a result, Attorney Pearson stated, the Planning & Zoning Commission has a much better plan in front of them, and this revised plan is something worthy and appropriate for approval. However, there appeared to be a concern on the part of the Cheney Commission about the use and whether the proposal would allow more children to reside in the home, she stated, and they also felt that it is their mission to work against any changes to the historic structures. Attorney Pearson said she had reviewed the Cheney Brothers’ Preservation and Development Plan. On page 60 of the plan, she said, the purpose of the plan was to acknowledge that we need to find inventive uses for these structures and ways to encourage people to invest in these structures and preserve them without damaging the integrity of the district. She reminded the Commission the changes are proposed to the rear of the house; there will be no changes to the front of the house and the proposed dormer at the rear will not be visible from the front.

Attorney Pearson pointed again to page 60 of the Cheney District plan, in the introduction to the whole plan, and a paragraph which epitomizes exactly the approach that was taken when that Historic District Plan was adopted in the 80s. It says, “Today the Cheney Brothers Historic District retains all of the mills, mansions and houses that were part of the extraordinary industrial village that had its development peak in the 1920s. These structures have lost their original purposes and need to find new uses that would make their maintenance and upkeep economically feasible once again. That is the dual purpose of this preservation and development plan,” read Attorney Pearson. She reminded the Commission that this application does exactly that, without a change in the allowable single family use of the zone or in changing the structure in such a way that would prevent its use in the future for a more traditional family use. The changes to the plan

subsequent to the Cheney Commission meeting include removal of the bituminous paving and three parking spaces for the handicapped, she stated.

According to Attorney Pearson, the curbing along the proposed walkway is now proposed to be cobblestone, which mimics the cobblestone of the existing driveway, instead of concrete curbing. The sidewalks that were previously proposed to be concrete pavers are now proposed to be bluestone, she said. She stated that the stairway from the sidewalk to the new door and stepping down to the existing addition will now be granite. Attorney Pearson stated that these improvements have been made in direct response to the Commission's comments.

Attorney Pearson explained that, when the Cheney Commission began to focus on the dormer, there was a question about the overhang over the new access door, though there were no issues raised with the railing or the design of that feature, so the new door mimics the front door but is a little less grand. The Cheney Commission's only other issue had to do with the scale of the dormer, according to Attorney Pearson. She went on to say that lowering the scale of the dormer is not possible because of head clearance, and as Mr. Goslin's plan depicted, it has now been reduced by 9", making the windows less significant from that view. According to Attorney Pearson, the Cheney Commission stated more than once that they do not expect this application to be denied, and that they are a recommending body. She stated that she hopes the Cheney Commission appreciates the changes to this plan. According to Attorney Pearson, the new proposal fits well with the existing building and achieves the goal of providing access to the third floor.

Access to the third floor was a matter of concern to the Cheney Commission, according to Attorney Pearson; however, that is a requirement that must be met regardless of the number of students. She went on to explain that, when the Historic District Plan for the Cheney District was adopted, it was recognized that change would be necessary to save the buildings. The Cheney Commission gave a definition of rehabilitation on Page 84 of that plan which states "Rehabilitation means the process of returning a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration which makes possible contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic architectural and cultural values," stated Attorney Pearson. She pointed to the zoning regulation at Art. II, Sec. 18.01.01, from the Historic Zone, they talk about allowing development, and they underscore at 18.01.03 "Use and re-use of property shall be developed to allow safe access and movement of pedestrians, stabilize, improve and protect property values, strengthen the local economy, and protect and promote the public health, safety and welfare." She also stated that in 18.01.4, entitled "Building, Construction/Rehabilitation Criteria," the zoning regulations read "The exterior rehabilitation of all segments of the visible structure and the architectural treatment and esthetic character shall be made in view of the fact that excessive uniformity, dissimilarity, inappropriateness or poor quality of design in the exterior appearance of buildings in the neighborhood is not appropriate." Attorney Pearson pointed out that with the change in scale of the dormer by reducing the height as specifically mentioned by the Commission, they have added the appropriateness, and there can be no argument that the materials are of high quality.

She further reported that the regulation goes on to say "The designs for exterior rehabilitation shall recommend appropriate material and colors to maintain or restore the integrity of the

regional architectural character of a given structure.” Attorney Pearson stated that this is achieved with the proposed changes to the plan. She further quoted Art. II, Sec. 18.04.01 (b) “The distinguishing original qualities or characteristics of the building structure or site and its environment shall not be destroyed;” (c) “Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an early appearance shall be discouraged;” and (i), “Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when alterations and additions do not destroy historic architectural or cultural material.” Attorney Pearson stated that the proposed plan is totally in keeping with the character of the building and is compatible to at least the 1922 addition. She further read, “New additions or alterations to the structures shall be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired.” Mr. Goslin has attested to the fact that all changes are easily reversible, she said, and they meet all the requirements of the Staff reviews.

Mr. Goslin pointed to the Staff review requesting labeling pipe sizes and materials of the pipe.

Attorney Pearson went on to say that one other element in the regulations is to look at the financial benefits to re-using these buildings and saving the buildings by making changes that advocate for and facilitate reinvestment in the structures. She went on to describe what the applicant has invested to date and will continue to contribute to the local economy, which should also be considered. USA invested \$629,000 to purchase the building, \$110,000 on furniture, fixtures and equipment, and \$138,000 on the fire watch. Attorney Pearson described the fire watch as a 24/7 operation that requires an approved contractor to implement the program per the rules established by the fire marshal, requiring 24/7 patrols of the building. Additionally monitoring logs must be maintained and are open at all times for inspection, she said. Attorney Pearson went on to explain the fire watch is a \$39,000 annual contract, the fire alarm system itself which was just completed, and the proposed improvements are another at least \$150,000 into the structure, which USA believes is a low estimate. The applicant has invested over one million dollars into this property in order to accommodate this particular use, she stated.

Attorney Pearson stated that this application has implications for East Catholic High School as well. USA is currently paying \$375,000 in tuition on an annual basis and East Catholic benefits from this program. In addition, according to Attorney Pearson, USA has a \$215,000 payroll for the Staff residing on the premises and \$105,000 for catering and school lunches which is contracted with Highland Park Market, which is another beneficial recipient in the community. She pointed out that USA estimates that each family and student put another \$75,000 a year into the local economy. Children spend anywhere from \$500 a month and up; when the families visit, they contribute by staying in the hotels and eating at the restaurants to be with their children, which is a significant contribution to the local economy, according to Attorney Pearson. She further stated that USA pays an annual \$27,000 to local contractors for lawn care, gutters, plumbers, and ongoing maintenance of the building, based on last year’s expenses and \$45,600 last year for insurance, utilities and property taxes which are not included in the above estimates.

Attorney Pearson reminded the Commission that the maximum student to staff ratio is 6:1, though it is currently less. She stated that this is a well-managed, expensive operation that will ensure the continued existence of the Austin Cheney Mansion while USA is the property owner.

However, according to Attorney Pearson, USA cannot subsist if they are unable to utilize the third floor. An argument could be made that this is USA's problem and technically it is, said Attorney Pearson. However, she encouraged the Commission to look hard and long at the regulations, as nothing negative appears in this particular proposal. The plan is for a very sensitively designed and appropriate site and building changes to be fully utilized in a manner that is compliant with the Cheney Brothers plan, stated Attorney Pearson. She further reiterated that this is a site development review, not a special permit, and meets the regulations.

Dr. Paulo Oppermann, Regional Director with USA, agreed that putting more people into the home is a concern in terms of the neighborhood. He explained how USA homes are managed and their positive impact to the community. According to Dr. Oppermann, USA has a system which has proven to work well in other locations. He states it is grounded on education and adolescent development theories, with very tight supervision. The homes have had no concerns from neighbors regarding noise or destruction of property, he asserted, aside from one Manchester neighbor who complained that someone had backed a car onto their lawn, and this situation was immediately addressed. Dr. Oppermann explained that USA has a very positive impact on the community, as the students participated in Rebuild Manchester and Earth Day.

Mr. Prause inquired about the goal of USA; i.e., what they are seeking to accomplish through the exchange.

Mr. Oppermann replied that USA started as a not-for-profit organization. The main goal was to bring cultural exchange between Americans and students from around the world in order to help Catholic schools; every partner is a Catholic school regardless of the location. USA seeks to have a positive impact on the community and on the Catholic schools, and also bring about cultural exchange.

Mr. Prause asked if there are any specific criteria when selecting students, i.e., a wide range of countries to be represented, disadvantaged students, or high scholarship students.

Dr. Oppermann stated the goal is to bring in cultural exchange welcoming students from all around the world. The company has developed a system according to the economic situation for each country, and provides some scholarships, he said. The company compensates in order to accommodate and welcome students from all around the world. USA provides diverse English-speaking students, in order to assimilate with other cultures. Academic standards, personal values, and positive participation are features when selecting students, he said.

Mr. Prause asked if Attorney Pearson was familiar with Miss Porter's School in Farmington, which appears to be a similar situation. The school has a dozen or more students with the same setup with two house parents supervising, he said. Attorney Pearson replied that her daughter was a day student at Miss Porter's.

Mr. Prause asked about Attorney Pearson's experience with the house managers at Miss Porter's. In response, Attorney Pearson stated that her daughter was very happy she was not boarding, as the rules for boarders are very strict.

Mr. Prause asserted that Miss Porter's supervisors and students have a similar relationship to the USA homes, to which Attorney Pearson agreed. However, he stated that Miss Porter's does not obtain guardianship. Attorney Pearson's opinion was that Miss Porter's parents do not sign away guardianship as they are usually reachable.

Dr. Oppermann inserted that the partnership with the school is paramount. On a day-to-day basis, there is communication with educators, international admissions, and the principal in order to maintain the highest standards of discipline, education and human development possible. The staff is trained to be similar to family members with strong values, according to Dr. Oppermann, and there are many success stories.

Mr. Prause thanked Attorney Pearson for the team's effort to work with the Cheney Commission and taking their suggestions into account. In looking through the regulations for the zone, it mentions making sure the zone, the use and the development in the area are in conformance with the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development, he stated. The Commission must look at the development of the area, he stated, even with an allowed use, and when the use expands, it is within the Commission's purview to ensure that any use must not outgrow and impact the historical functions of the buildings.

Attorney Pearson stated, in her opinion, the Commission should not take that into account because that is a special use standard. She stated that unless the Commission finds that the dormer or the new materials that are proposed for the sidewalk and the flagstone are inappropriate, the materials are faulty, the design is bad, or it is visually disconcerting, the Commission cannot deny the application. In this case, she said, a well-renowned historical architect has told the Commission that this is the minimal amount that can be done to make the building compliant and to create a structure to get access to the 3rd floor. She went on to say that, with regard to the Plan of Conservation and Development, this is a site plan review. From a zoning standpoint, the Commission is governed by the zoning classifications, not by the code classifications, so this use is an allowed use. USA would agree to limit parking to four vehicles on the site if necessary to avoid a traffic impact, she said. Attorney Pearson stated there would be more traffic generated with a large family if measured by terms of impact on the neighborhood, and again, the application does meet site plan criteria.

Mr. Prause asked Mr. Goslin if he had the plans that were shown to the Cheney Commission. Mr. Goslin replied that the plans themselves have not changed; just the materials in the plans have changed. Mr. Prause asked if the Cheney Commission was presented a different view than the Planning and Zoning Commission saw tonight. Mr. Goslin stated he had shown the dormer on one of the slides, although they did not see the rendering; they saw a 2D elevation. Tonight's rendering was created after that meeting, he said. Mr. Prause asserted that the dormer is essentially nine inches shallower, to which Mr. Goslin agreed. Mr. Prause wondered if that is basically the change and Mr. Goslin stated that is the only change; the width stayed the same.

Mr. Anderson commented that the information has been given to the Commission and the two views were sent to the Cheney Commission. Mr. Anderson asserted that the northern elevation and the 3D concept for the two elevations were shown to the Cheney Commission and sent to the Cheney Commission prior to their meeting.

Mr. Stebe requested clarification of materials, specifically the blue pea rock. Mr. Goslin replied that it will be small pea stone gravel. The color has not been determined and it will probably be a brownish color to match the brown color that is in the driveway. Mr. Stebe specified that it should be similar to what is being put back into the driveway, to which Mr. Goslin stated the driveway is mostly dirt. Mr. Stebe interjected that the dirt has piled up where the snowplows have put the snow piles during the winter. He reiterated that the two types of stone should match. Mr. Goslin stated he would be happy to present samples.

Mr. Stebe stated that, to the best of his recollection, the siding of the house is a stucco material. Mr. Goslin replied that it is a cement-based stucco and it will remain as such.

Mr. Stebe inquired whether color matching is an issue. He also asked what type of railing is being installed, as he does not recall any other wrought iron on the building. Mr. Goslin stated that there are currently no railings on the outside of the building, as the number of steps does not require railings. In this proposal, there will be three steps, so code requires handrails on each side.

Mr. Stebe asked if the railing would be decorative, to which Mr. Goslin replied that it will be very simple wrought iron. Mr. Stebe asserted that prior information from Attorney Pearson discussed the idea of renovations vs. building new and how the work will complement the current attributes of the building. Mr. Stebe read out of Art. II, Sec. 18.04.01 (f) in the zoning regulations, the last sentence stating “The repair, replacement or missing architectural features would be based on duplications of features substantiated by historic physical or pictorial evidence rather than on a conjectural design or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings or structures.” Mr. Stebe stated that this is written into the zoning regulations, and inquired whether the railing would be similar to a railing in the 1920s era. Mr. Goslin asserted that it would most likely have been a wrought iron railing at that period of time.

Mr. Stebe also inquired about the material which will be installed on the portico for the doorway. Mr. Goslin replied that the materials of the portico on the back entry would be the same materials that are used on the front portico and the east portico to match the wood trim.

Mr. Stebe stated he appreciated the economics of putting this building into use as desired. He noted Attorney Pearson had read the first half of Art. II, Sec. 18.01.03, but not the last half, which states, “The development and new structures of the buildings within the zone shall be permitted in a manner which will enhance and protect the existing structures and ensure the preservation of the general characteristics of the zone.” He went on to say the dormers on the front side of the 1920s addition are individual dormers, not linked across to a flat shed roof and are dormered out individually. However, on the back side, the plan is to extend the dormer line all the way across the north end.

Mr. Goslin concurred. He pointed to the existing shed dormer, which is three windows across which will be extended, continuing the roof line all the way to the main house. Therefore, the plan is, according to Mr. Goslin, to continue the existing lines in order to get the head room needed on the interior for the second floor landing; in order to achieve proper head room, the

eave line must rise to the same height to come downstairs to the second floor. Mr. Stebe asked if there will be another stair above, to which Mr. Goslin agreed, stating there will be a stacked setup.

Mr. Stebe went on to ask about the materials for the windows. Mr. Goslin replied that the new windows will match the existing windows exactly. They will be Andersen windows with the same materials, he stated, with wood on the inside, clad on the outside.

Mr. Anderson clarified one statement made about the Cheney Commission's deliberation. He stated he did not get the sense that the Cheney Commission was resigned to the approval, but that the Commission was hoping that Crosskey would take their recommendation very seriously.

Ms. Bertotti stated that there are some outstanding staff comments which are very minor and technical in nature. The comments require some notes, she said. However, the plans have changed somewhat since the staff had a chance to look at them, she said. Ms. Bertotti stated she does not believe that these proposed changes, as presented tonight, will significantly impact any issues regarding draining, grading, storm water management or anything of that nature. She did, however, suggest that if the Commission proceeds to approve this application, the plans be re-reviewed by the Town staff before issuing an approval.

Dr. Oppermann stated that they are very open to the comments made by the Cheney Commission. The nine inch lowering of the dormer may not seem drastic, but it was exactly what was recommended, he said, and entering from the street, the dormer would not be visible. Dr. Oppermann stated that if, after an extensive historical assessment of the handrail, it is deemed necessary to change the material, USA will be happy to comply.

Attorney Pearson thanked the Commission for their consideration.

Ms. Scorso expressed that the Commission is very lucky to have an organization willing to take the time and to work with the community, as well as hiring an architectural firm that will maintain the historical features of this building, knowing its importance. She also thanked Attorney Pearson for her thorough presentation and expressed appreciation for USA's work with the Cheney Commission.

Mr. Kidd echoed Ms. Scorso's sentiments. He also made it clear that in his opinion, the use is not a factor in the discussion, but at the same time, the history of the misunderstanding regarding the third floor should also not be a factor. Mr. Kidd maintained that he agrees with Mr. Anderson's belief that we may not have brought in enough of the rehabilitation or redesign with respect to acknowledging code changes or code compliance. Specifically, in Mr. Kidd's opinion, this applies to (i) under Rehabilitation, where Attorney Pearson mentioned there was nothing in the regulations that addressed that. He said he thought this was somewhat addressed by the language, "Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged." He suggested considering adding language about the notion of contemporary design to meet new regulations and encouragement of additional uses. He stated he is comfortable that the dormer design will enable the use of the third floor, and feels this would fall

into the context of a reasonable effort. Mr. Kidd stated his opinion that the Commission should approve the application.

Mr. Anderson suggested it might be appropriate to hold a workshop to discuss the topic of ensuring the Cheney District continues to be a major historical asset to the Town and that the buildings are occupied with proper uses, while not prohibiting occupants and owners from improving properties in a manner that would improve the district. Participants in a workshop could include the Planning and Zoning Commission, Cheney Commission, Economic Development Commission, and Chief Building Official and/or Town Attorney, he said. A workshop would help to flesh out the vision for the Cheney District and how that relates to the Plan of Conservation and Development, Mr. Anderson said.

Ms. Scorso agreed, stating the conversation is needed, given the length of time required to review this present application. She asserted her belief that the present applicant is doing right by this property; however, the Commission may be faced with a similar application.

Mr. Stebe requested clarification of Ms. Bertotti's statement regarding requiring updated plans to be re-reviewed by staff.

Ms. Bertotti said that, in response to the Cheney Commission's comments, the applicant has changed the surface of the driveway and has also proposed lowering that dormer a few inches down. Those two changes have not been reviewed by Staff and, therefore, Ms. Bertotti would like a second staff review by Engineering for the driveway surface to make sure there are no changes to run-off, by Building for the dormer height, and by the Zoning Officer. She clarified that these plans had not yet been submitted, and tonight was the first time Staff had seen them. Ms. Bertotti said she did not anticipate any problems with the review.

Mr. Prause expressed his opinion that the application was very thorough and he was impressed that USA took the Historic Commission's comments into consideration. He went on to say that, considering the Historic Zone regulations, Art. II, Sec. 18, the proposed work falls in line with the target for this zone. Mr. Prause stated that, regarding the requirements for rehabilitated properties, USA is making a good effort to ensure that only minimal alterations are being completed, that the character and qualities are being maintained in the area, that stylistic features are being preserved, and alterations are being done in such a manner that removal of the alterations would not affect the essential form and integrity of the structure. He stated in his opinion, looking at the change in general, the types of uses allowed in the Historic Zone promoting commercial opportunities, such as inns and bed and breakfasts, would require the same code compliance. However, in looking at the goal the Town aims to achieve, the market is not the same as it was 100 years ago for these properties, requiring viable options, he said.

Mr. Prause went on to state that he was impressed with the decorative gravel, which he was not aware of, in an effort to meet the requirement of handicapped accessibility, while trying to retain the features of the home. He went on to say he was not in favor of the extra dormer, but felt it was as compatible as it could be.

Ms. Bertotti stated that her draft motions refer to two staff memoranda that were written based on the last rendition of the plans that were reviewed. The new plans presented tonight had not been reviewed, so she recommended that the motion include additional modifications to address a staff review of the proposed plans.

Historic Zone Site Development Plan (2017-025)

MOTION: Ms. Scorsio moved to approve the site plan for exterior modifications to the existing house and partial pavement of the existing gravel driveway at 99 Hartford Road, Historic Zone, with the modifications as specified in staff memoranda from:

1. Michelle Handfield, Assistant Town Engineer, dated April 25, 2017
 2. Raymond Myette, Jr., Design Engineer, dated April 25, 2017,
- and with the condition that the plans presented to the Commission at the meeting be reviewed and approved by Staff.

Mr. Bergin seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The reason for the approval is that the proposal meets the criteria of Art. II Sec. 18.04 and 18.05 of the zoning regulations.

Mr. Stebe requested a five-minute recess.

JIN YOUNG PARK – Special exception modification under Art. II, Sec. 22.04.08 for changes to previously approved health and recreation facility at 608 East Center Street. – Special Exception Modification (2017-029)

Attorney Steve Penny represented the applicant, as well as Andrew Bushnell, Project Engineer with Bushnell and Associates; Jeff Burkhart, an architect with FLB Architecture & Planning in East Hartford; the project architect; and the applicant, Jin Young Park.

Attorney Penny stated that the application is for special exception modification under Art. II, Sec. 22.04.08 of the zoning regulations, relating to a health and recreation use, specifically a martial arts studio in a Special Design Commercial Business (SDC) zone. The site plan for the use, including building elevations, was approved by the Commission on September 19, 2016, he said. Subsequently, however, the applicant's plans changed such that an 8' wide by 45' long addition on the east side of the existing building would no longer be demolished, prompting the need for two additional parking spaces, several other minor changes to the site plan, and a more significant change to the exterior esthetics of the building, Attorney Penny said. He went on to report that on April 3, 2017, the Commission denied the application for the modifications in a 3-2 vote, with the majority decision driven by concerns regarding the architectural changes proposed to the building's exterior. Attorney Penny explained that the applicant is returning tonight with an exterior treatment of the building that more closely resembles the originally-approved design. For purposes of the record, the address is 608 East Center Street, located across from the Manchester Green at the southeasterly corner of the intersection of East Center

Street with Middle Turnpike East, said Attorney Penny. He went on to say that the property is the former location of the VFW post and the applicant owns the subject property.

Attorney Penny reported that the presentation tonight would take a look specifically at the modifications being proposed by the applicant. He referred to Jeff Burkhardt of FLB Architecture & Planning to discuss the exterior design elements of the remodeled building, including the originally-approved design, the one rejected on April 3, and the design being presented tonight in response to the Commission's concerns, which included building elevations, proposed exterior materials and colors, as well as the interior floor plan as it has been revised since the original approval.

Jeff Burkhardt with FLB Architecture & Planning gave a description of the past approvals and submittals. He reminded the Commission that the currently-approved version involved demolishing the east wing, though that will now be saved for use as handicapped bathrooms and changing rooms. The packet before the Commission, Mr. Burkhardt stated, illustrates the existing front elevation and the proposed modified elevation, differing from the proposal that was reviewed on April 3. Mr. Burkhardt illustrated the proposed floor plan changes, which are necessitated by the program's growth. He displayed the earlier elevation, voted down in April, which is now significantly different based on feedback from the Planning and Zoning Commission. The applicant is proposing to maintain the character of the existing brick veneer as best as possible, though the building has taken on water over the past 75 years. He stated the damage is due to water penetration, as in the past the cavities were not vented properly.

Mr. Burkhardt also presented pictures of the building's brick deterioration and explained that the only solution to maintain the building's integrity is to install a new parapet on top. Based on consultation with Ansaldo Construction and the engineers, it was determined the best way to mitigate water penetration into the building would be to install new coping on top. He explained they will utilize an EIFS system and synthetic stucco to follow the exact same configuration at the cornice line. Additionally, because of water migration at the top of the building, the brick is failing and water is getting into the brick, he said, resulting in the faces falling. The only way to maintain the building's integrity, according to Mr. Burkhardt, is to use EIFS once again. There is a low roof that will be emulated with EIFS and the half round overhang over the old door will be left in place as a result of feedback from the Commission, he said.

The entry will be moved to the left side of the building, said Mr. Burkhardt, and he displayed a rendering of the reception area. In order to identify the new entrance to the building, there will be a dormer over the top, he said. Mr. Burkhardt explained that there is currently a flat roof and, by using the dormer as well as the new shed room, the applicant is attempting to maintain some sense of symmetry because of the historical nature of the VFW, which was built in 1938.

Mr. Burkhardt also illustrated the failing brick and pointed to areas where corners of the brick have chipped off. The only way to restore the brick is to actually take the masonry out and put new masonry in, he said, which would be nearly impossible due to the remaining bricks collapsing. He pointed out that the existing brick is 75 years old and would be nearly impossible to replicate. For budgetary reasons, according to Mr. Burkhardt, the applicant will utilize EIFS that will run along the entire top of the building where most of the brick failure is occurring.

However, he said, there are currently two planters that are collapsing, and the contractor intends to take the brick from those in an attempt to weave them into the building.

Mr. Burkhart displayed the existing doorway which will be moved. Unfortunately, due to the lack of brick, the contractor will add additional stucco or EIFS. This will also help regulate the bottom of the building, because the window sills are different and, he stated, architecturally it is very difficult to try to maintain a regulating line across there. According to Mr. Burkhart, Mr. Park has decided to try to restore the existing round windows, which have steel portals on the outside that will be removed. If the surrounding brick is damaged when the portals are removed, it will require an attempt to tooth in brick around the round openings.

Mr. Bergin complimented the design and incorporation of the Commission's comments. He asked whether the height of the parapet in an earlier iteration served to block some of the utilities on the roof, such as HVAC, and whether this issue will be addressed.

Mr. Burkhart informed him that one of the considerations, due to quotes received, was to relocate the HVAC units closer to the front and the right side of the building. However, in the interim, the owner has made the decision to spend the money necessary to install a concealed duct system, which will not be exposed. Mr. Burkhart stated that there will be two units, which would stand approximately 2-1/2 feet over the top of the parapet. This will not present an eyesore to pedestrians, according to Mr. Burkhart. He went on to say that currently, the units on the existing flat roof are dilapidated and moving them to the back of the building will lessen the impact of the rooftop units.

Mr. Bergin stated that in the memo before the Commission, the front design features a sign on the parapet, but the board does not show it.

According to Mr. Burkhart, a sign has not been determined at this point. He stated the applicant understands that he is limited to 100 sq. ft., and is inclined to install individual letters as opposed to one sign. The logo sign is not depicted here because it was uncertain whether it would be used. However, Mr. Park is not using the logo sign in an attempt to respond to the Commission's comments last month, said Mr. Burkhart, and they will try to take the glass block out, taking advantage of the natural light, and put new windows in. As a result, Mr. Park will not have the logo in front of the building.

Mr. Kidd said he appreciates the applicant making the changes. He also stated he does understand and appreciate the restrictions, and feels the design is much better and is more true to the past representation.

Mr. Burkhart appreciated Mr. Kidd's comments. He stated that the intent is to try to save the building as it has good bones and character. The recent decisions were made under the Commission's advisement in an attempt to remain true to the original nature of the structure and get the project moving.

Ms. Scorso questioned if the monument in dedication to the VFW will remain, to which Mr. Burkhart stated the new EIFS will be installed around the stone to make it visible in homage to

the original construction. Ms. Scorso appreciated the retention of the monument and the design work in an attempt to maintain the character of the building.

Mr. Prause questioned what areas of the building will be vinyl, to which Mr. Burkhart replied the siding will be each side of the building.

Mr. Burkhart offered a depiction of the actual construction set and informed Mr. Prause that the vinyl siding will be on the east side and the west side of the building. According to Mr. Burkhart, because of the nature of the original construction, there is no insulation. Furring strips will be utilized along with rigid insulation and vinyl siding, he said. Mr. Burkhart stated that the applicant is trying to match the EIFS/stucco the current depiction is more of an earth tone, a darker finish than the earlier proposal. He stated it will complement the brick better than the original design, which had more of a golden color. The front of the building will be the EIFS, Mr. Burkhart stated.

Mr. Andrew Bushnell introduced himself as a Professional Engineer & Land Surveyor with Bushnell Associates. Additionally, he is a Site Engineer and prepared the site plan. Mr. Bushnell presented the changes to the original plan for the east side of the building. Due to the changes, additional parking is necessary to accommodate the additional square footage within the building, he said, and thus two spaces were created in the front of the building where pavement currently exists. He demonstrated that pavement will be removed in the front and they will create a landscaped island, an 8' buffer to the front of the property line, and an island to delineate it from the entrance driveway.

In addition, according to Mr. Bushnell, they will be extending the sidewalk with a ramp at the driveway entrance and the sidewalk picks back up on the other side with a ramp which will continue down East Center Street.

Mr. Bushnell explained that the previous plan included 25 spaces, and the current plan includes 27 spaces, triggering the need for another handicapped space. Another handicapped space was added in front of the building, he said. In addition, another change involves the need for an egress door, said Mr. Bushnell, which will be on the west side of the building, with a 5 x 5 concrete pad and a 5' wide bituminous sidewalk that will connect with the reconfigured parking area, which is unchanged from the previous plans. He also pointed out that the addition proposed on the previous plan will not be erected. He stated there has been some concern regarding moisture underneath the slab of the building, potential mold issues, and moisture buildup. Mr. Bushnell stated that in reviewing the site, it was found that the roof water runs off the back of the building and is not running away from the building. In Mr. Bushnell's opinion, the water is puddling at the back of the building, which contributes to the moisture issue under the slab. He stated a gutter will be installed and the downspouts will come off at the corners of the building to shed the water off the side of the building. Also, the proposal calls for some spot grading in an attempt to grade the water out and away from the back of the building, he said.

Mr. Prause commented that on the drawing from April 12, there exists an exit on the south side of the building, and wondered if that was the most current update. Mr. Bushnell affirmed that it was the most recent drawing, just done in the last few days. He said that the exit previously

came off the middle of the back, but the design was changed due to grading issues; there was a concern the water would flow back into the building.

Mr. Prause asked if the plans have been to Engineering for review.

Ms. Bertotti replied that the current rendition has not been reviewed. There is an outstanding comment from Engineering on the application, she said. If the Commission approves the application tonight, staff will ask for a modification stating that the plans must be reviewed and approved by Engineering for Ms. Handfield's comment, as well as for any other changes, Ms. Bertotti said.

Mr. Prause inquired whether the students are dropped off for classes; i.e., whether there is an area where a student can be dropped off without actually parking.

Mr. Bushnell stated that nothing is specified in the plan and that he is not aware of the applicant's policy regarding drop-off. At that point, Mr. Bushnell turned to Mr. Park who replied inaudibly, and Mr. Bushnell stated that parents have to bring students into the building and pick them up inside the building.

Mr. Prause said he assumed the radius island on the northwest corner of the building would have aided in drop-off, to which Mr. Bushnell replied that the design allows the 24-foot lane around the landscaped islands.

Attorney Penny stated that Art. IV, Sec. 20 encompasses two areas of regulation before the Commission. One area is suitable structures for use and the other area is neighborhood compatibility. He stated that there will be no fundamental change to the building, and he submitted that it is a suitable structure for the use in this zone. Attorney Penny said the applicant has done everything possible to protect the existing building built in 1938, and the building will remain fundamentally intact. In terms of the second criteria, neighborhood compatibility, Attorney Penny stated the neighborhood is eclectic and the proposed development is attractive and suitable in relation to the site characteristics and style of other buildings in the immediate area. He went on to state that in response to the concerns expressed in the April 3 meeting, the fundamentals of the existing building, i.e., height, shape and materials, have been restored while the proposed renovations will make the existing structure more attractive and will improve the value of this property and that of its neighbors.

Ms. Bertotti advised that the only comment prior to this latest plan came from the Assistant Town Engineer, Michelle Handfield, and is minor and technical in nature. She suggested that in addition to the language in the draft motion, the Commission should add "and any changes since the last plan submission."

Special Exception Modification (2017-029)

MOTION: Ms. Scorso moved to approve the special exception modification with the modifications as specified in staff memorandum from:

1. Michelle Handfield, Assistant Town Engineer, dated April 24, 2017

and with the condition that the plans presented to the Commission at the meeting be reviewed and approved by Staff.

Mr. Stebe seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The reason for the approval is that the proposed special exception modification meets the requirements of Art. IV, Sec. 20.

Mr. Prause stated that, as the applicant's attorney clarified, in meeting the special exception criteria, there are no changes to the structure so it remains suitable and the neighborhood compatibility is fine. There are no other impacts on utilities, public safety or traffic, he said.

TOWN OF MANCHESTER – For extension of Center Springs Park and construction of a parking lot and bituminous concrete multi-use trail at 363 Broad Street. - Inland Wetlands Permit – Determination of Significance (2017-008); Inland Wetlands Permit (2017-008); Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan (2017-009)

Jeff LaMalva, Town Engineer for the Town of Manchester, introduced himself as seeking an inland wetlands and erosion and sedimentation control permit for a project to construct an eight-stall parking lot and a paved multi-use trail at 363 Broad Street. Mr. LaMalva stated the parcel is located on the easterly side of Broad Street between an automotive repair shop and a retail shopping plaza and has been identified by the Redevelopment Agency along with Town Staff and their consultant, LiveWorkLearnPlay, as a desirable location to provide a pedestrian connection to any future development along Broad Street and Center Springs Park. Mr. LaMalva reminded the Commission of a previous project that was recently completed to open up the embankment between this site and Edgerton Street and the installation of a pedestrian bridge, which opened up the view into the park.

Last year, the Town purchased the parcel and demolished the existing restaurant building, according to Mr. LaMalva. The 1.9-acre site is mostly pervious surface consisting of the old bituminous concrete restaurant parking lot, which extends well back into the site, and the compacted gravel that was put in place when the building was demolished, he said. Mr. LaMalva said the eastern half of the site abuts Bigelow Brook and is sparsely vegetated, while the western half of the site drains towards Broad Street. There is a concrete wall along the southern property line, according to Mr. LaMalva, between the shopping plaza and the site; the wall varies in height from 2' to about 6'. The project was brought to the Board of Directors a couple of months ago and was discussed, reviewed, and refined ultimately to the point that the Board of Directors endorsed the project before the Commission.

Mr. LaMalva described the scope of the project. First, he said, stumps along the property line to the north will be removed and some overgrowth and brush at the northern part of the site will be selectively cleared, providing more views down into the brook from the trail. All of the existing bituminous concrete parking lot will be removed, and there will be some regrading of the lot and construction of an eight-stall parking lot adjacent to Broad Street, he said. He reported that storm water from the parking lot will drain to an existing catch basin that is located just behind the existing sidewalk. The storm water will be treated by a hydrodynamic separator on Broad

Street that was installed just downstream as part of the Broad Street reconstruction project. A 570' long, 10' wide bituminous concrete surfaced multi-use trail will be constructed from the sidewalk on Broad Street to the terminus of the trail that was constructed as part of a previous project. Mr. LaMalva explained that the project will connect the existing gap between Broad Street and Edgerton Street and will provide opportunities for pedestrians to travel between Broad Street and Center Springs Park as well as the Cheney Rail Trail. He demonstrated that, in order to get the trail along a tight area by the bridge embankment, there will be a small 4' high retaining wall that would be built just along the embankment and timber fencing would be installed along the top of the slope near the brook. The timber fencing will be the same material utilized on the rail trail as the bridge approaches, a double-sectioned timber rail.

In addition, Mr. LaMalva described that the project involves some heavy revegetation. Fuss & O'Neill provided a landscape design which focused on creating some natural buffers between the properties to the south and to the north, stated Mr. LaMalva, and the plan was reviewed with Town staff and the Town Parks crew, and ultimately came to a plan that includes shade trees, perennials, shrubs and grasses. He explained the construction is proposed to take place in three stages. The first stage will be the construction of a small retaining wall by Town staff, to save on costs, and will be completed most likely in the next month or two. The second stage is the site work, and Mr. LaMalva stated that all of the other work, with the exception of the landscaping, would be the grading, construction of the parking lot, and the construction of the trail. That work would be done by a contractor, stated Mr. LaMalva. He went on to say they went out to bid and the project will be monitored and inspected by Town staff. Lastly, in the fall, Town staff will do all of the landscaping. Therefore, by the end of the fall, the entire site will be completed, he said.

According to Mr. LaMalva, the project will disturb approximately 10,250 sq. ft., or just less than one quarter acre, within the 100' upland review area, primarily in the northeastern section of the project. Temporary erosion and sedimentation control measures include silt fence along the slopes downstream of the disturbed areas and silt sacks within the existing catch basins out near Broad Street, he said. All disturbed areas will be restored and stabilized following construction, according to Mr. LaMalva. The project will have a long-term beneficial impact, stated Mr. LaMalva, by reducing the impervious area by roughly 300%, going from roughly 50% down to 12%.

Mr. Stebe referred to previous projects, keying in on the Bigelow end by the footbridge. He stated there is the connection from the pond to the brook, and the demonstrated path is in the drainage area which crosses over at some point as it goes under the bridge. He reiterated that he was referring to the far east area which has been cleared out at this point, and asked if the path will be dropped on the trail on there.

Mr. LaMalva stated there will be very little grading. The only grading necessary in the area will be cutting about two to three feet into the embankment for a 40' length, he said, and other than that, the trail will sit along the existing contours. The path was purposely designed to meander through and, according to Mr. LaMalva, there were directives from the Board of Directors that this is to be pedestrian only with no vehicles, and there were some design elements that took that into consideration.

Mr. Stebe questioned how much water actually ends up in that area during the wet season.

Mr. LaMalva explained that the watershed that comes through is extremely large and drains a very large portion of Manchester. However, Center Springs Pond acts as a natural detention basin, according to Mr. LaMalva, and goes through an outlet structure before flowing into the new culvert that was built. He explained that in that fashion, it meters the amount of water that goes through there, though he did not know the exact number offhand.

Mr. Stebe requested clarification that some of the extra vegetation would be part of relocating the drainage. Mr. LaMalva stated that was correct. He explained that this project will be focused at the top of the embankment and there are no plans to doing anything along the slope of the brook.

Mr. Prause asked Mr. LaMalva to indicate where the upland review area boundary is on the illustration, with which Mr. LaMalva complied. Mr. Prause further asked if the grading is going to change in the area. Mr. LaMalva stated the grading would change slightly, probably a maximum of one foot or less. Mr. Prause inquired if that is due to the grades going towards the northwest. Mr. LaMalva explained the site does drain out toward the brook and then to where there is essentially a high spot, and he pointed to where the remainder drains out.

Mr. Prause said he assumed there will be disturbances for the path but that the hill is not going to be impacted. Mr. LaMalva stated that the hill will not be impacted and the primary disturbance will be the removal of the bituminous parking lot.

Mr. Kidd questioned the size of the parking lot, as it seemed on the smaller side, and if there had been much thought about the parking lot. Mr. LaMalva stated there was a great deal of discussion on the subject. The Redevelopment Agency's initial idea was to have 10 parking spots, but if in the future more spaces were needed to expand it, the lot could easily be expanded to the east. However, he stated, in going before the Board of Directors, the size of the parking lot came up, along with the associated costs; therefore, it was pared down to eight, he said. He also stated that, if in the future the trail becomes as popular as many people hope it will be, the parking area can be easily extended at a future stage. Mr. Kidd reiterated that it was a cost issue to which Mr. LaMalva concurred.

Mr. Anderson added that this will not ultimately be the terminus of the trail, as the Redevelopment Plan calls for the greenway to go all the way around the Parkade at some point, so there will be other areas to park vehicles. He pointed out that there is parking within Center Springs Park as well.

Mr. Bergin inquired about the label stating "lawn area" and wondered if that was designed to be a recreational area with some low profile grass. Mr. LaMalva replied the initial part of the landscape was designed as a maintained lawn area, while another area would be a different seed mixture, meadow mix, that is allowed to be more natural. Again, being a very narrow corridor, the landscape designers focused on the buffering aspects on each side while also making it somewhat pleasing to walk through, according to Mr. LaMalva, noting that it was a difficult design.

Mr. Bordeaux stated there are no outstanding Staff comments.

Mr. Prause questioned the application coming from the Town of Manchester and not the Public Works Department. Ms. Bertotti replied the reason is the application was filed under the Town of Manchester. She added that the application was initiated by the Engineering Department and Mr. LaMalva is the agent on this application.

Inland Wetlands Permit – Determination of Significance (2017-008)

MOTION: Mr. Kidd moved to find the proposed activity at the above-referenced location as shown on the inland wetlands permit application 2017-008 will not have a significant impact on the wetlands and, therefore, will not require a public hearing.

Mr. Bergin seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Inland Wetlands Permit (2017-008)

MOTION: Mr. Kidd moved to approve the inland wetlands permit for extension of Center Springs Park and construction of a parking lot and bituminous concrete multi-use trail at 363 Broad Street. Ms. Scorso seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The reason for the approval is that the proposed activity does not disturb the natural or indigenous character of the land by significant impact or major effect.

The approval is valid for five years. The work in the regulated area must be completed within one year of commencement.

Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan (2017-009)

MOTION: Mr. Kidd moved to certify the Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan. Mr. Bergin seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

TOWN OF MANCHESTER PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT – For reconstruction of North Main Street from Tolland Turnpike to the Hockanum River. – Inland Wetlands Permit – Determination of Significance (2017-026); Inland Wetlands Permit (2017-026); Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan (2017-027)

Michelle Handfield introduced herself as the Assistant Town Engineer and stated she will be presenting the first of two different applications. She said the first is for reconstruction of North Main Street, which is currently under review for an Inland Wetlands Permit and Determination of Significance as well as an Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan. Ms. Handfield stated she will demonstrate the overall road reconstruction, erosion control measures and the wetland impacts. She explained that North Main Street is a two-lane minor arterial road in fair to poor condition with limited provisions for pedestrians and bicyclists. She illustrated that the project area extends from Tolland Turnpike on the west to the Hockanum River on the east. It is bounded by residential homes on the north and the south as well as a regulated upland review area of the Hockanum River to the east. In general, according to Ms. Handfield, the project

includes road reconstruction and minor drainage improvements, installation of sidewalks along the north side, and reduction of the driveway opening at the Tilcon plant. Ms. Handfield went on to say that the proposal includes a full depth reconstruction of the roadway from Tolland Turnpike extending to approximately 250' west of the Hockanum River, and explained that there will be a mill and overlay of 2" to address recent trenching from the relocation of the existing gas main. Over the entire project, a minimum of 32' roadway width will be provided, stated Ms. Handfield, which will accommodate 11' travel lanes as well as 5' shoulders to accommodate bicycle traffic. She stated that other work as part of the project will include minor regrading, installation of granite curb, replacement of deteriorated drainage structures along the entire length of the project, driveway apron repair, and new pavement markings.

To address pedestrian safety, the proposal is to install sidewalks along the north side of the project as well as to reduce the existing driveway opening at the Tilcon Plant, Ms. Handfield said. There will also be a sidewalk extension which will close the existing gap between Tolland Turnpike and the Hockanum River, she said. Ms. Handfield stated further that as part of the reconstruction and the sidewalk installation, minor grading will be required, which includes the installation of three retaining walls, each with a maximum height of 4' for placement of concrete steps, and private sidewalk extensions and relocation of mailboxes and signage. All of the work will be completed in accordance with Connecticut Guidelines for Soil Erosion and Sediment control and will include silt sacks installed in all catch basins and silt fence installed down-gradient of all work, according to Ms. Handfield. She pointed to the topography of the existing site, which varies extensively; a silt fence is only proposed in those areas down gradient. According to Ms. Handfield, the eastern end of the project lies within the regulated 100' upland review area of the Hockanum River wetlands, and she delineated the wetland. She pointed to the 100' regulated upland review area and work within the upland review area which will include mill and overlay of the roadway, removal of existing driveway aprons, an existing sidewalk extension, installation of new sidewalk ramps and restoration of all disturbed areas to grass. She further projected areas with no change and no change to the existing grade.

Ms. Handfield delineated three walls, stating that all of the walls are located within the right-of-way and, therefore, the Town is working with the property owners. She stated that all owners have signed off on the easements. Ms. Handfield demonstrated where there will be one retaining wall at 655 North Main Street where there are two driveway openings; the wall will extend between both. She also illustrated where the Town will replace an existing set of stairs at that location. Additionally, Ms. Handfield pointed to two other retaining walls, one of which is in a fairly steep section that drops down toward the Hockanum River. She also projected the area in front of 611, 605 and 599 North Main Street, and the existing stairs that will be removed and replaced, as well as the retaining that will be extended and will wrap the staircase down to allow for adequate breaks for the driveway and site lines, and then extend again down. Additionally, Ms. Handfield illustrated an existing concrete retaining wall that the homeowner installed within the right-of-way, which extends up the length of the driveway, and is cast in place concrete with rebar. She stated that the Town does not want to dismantle this wall and proposes to tie into it at the end.

Mr. Prause inquired if there would be just one lane closure during this type of work. Ms. Handfield stated that the proposal for this project would be maintaining one lane of traffic at all

times. As such, she stated, there will not be a full road closure, given the amount of traffic and lack of a reasonable detour.

Mr. Prause asked about the duration of this project, to which Ms. Handfield responded that the Town is estimating an eight-month duration. The project is fully funded by the State, she explained, and the final design will be submitted in the next couple of weeks. Ms. Handfield stated the Town is hoping to start construction in the late summer, continue until winter shutdown in November, pick up again in the spring next year, and wrap up by the summertime.

Mr. Prause asked if the one-year limitation on the permit deals with the regulated area and thus only that portion of the work would be required to be completed within a year. He asked if it would be acceptable if the project were to run over and take a year and a half, as long as the work in the regulated area was completed within a year. Mr. Bordeaux stated that that is up to the Commission's discretion, or the applicant could request an extension at the time that it becomes necessary, so there is flexibility.

Inland Wetlands Permit – Determination of Significance (2017-026)

MOTION: Mr. Bergin moved to find the proposed activity at the above-referenced location as shown on the inland wetlands permit application 2017-026 will not have a significant impact on the wetlands and, therefore, will not require a public hearing. Ms. Scorso seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Ms. Handfield stated that, depending on the scheduling and what the contractor wants to do, if any soil stockpiles are required, those stockpiles would be surrounded by silt fencing. The Town does not anticipate construction entrances at this point, given the type of project, but if that changes, silt fences will be installed as directed by construction inspectors or the Town Engineer, and any disturbed areas will be restored to grass, she stated.

Mr. Prause pointed to a demonstrated restored area to the west of the driveway and questioned if that will be the standard grass mixture used, and Ms. Handfield replied that is her understanding.

Inland Wetlands Permit (2017-026)

MOTION: Mr. Bergin moved to approve the inland wetlands permit for reconstruction of North Main Street from Tolland turnpike to the Hockanum River, with the permit to be valid for five years and with the work in the regulated area to be completed within one year of commencement. Ms. Scorso seconded the motion.

Mr. Kidd questioned whether it would be prudent to change the completion date to 18 months in order to prevent a secondary action.

Mr. Prause inquired whether the work would start on the east end or the west end by Tolland Turnpike.

Ms. Handfield stated she did not have that information. She pointed to an area that is the Tilcon plant access, and said the company was agreeable to closing the two driveways. The Town will work closely with Tilcon on this project, she said.

Mr. Anderson informed the Commission that the completion date could be 18 months or two years, whatever is deemed appropriate.

Mr. Kidd inquired what a reasonable timeframe might be.

Mr. Bordeaux stated that because of the activity in the 100' upland review area including the final coat of asphalt, it is his opinion that two years would be appropriate.

Inland Wetlands Permit (2017-026)

AMENDED MOTION: Mr. Kidd moved to amend the motion to change from “the work in the regulated area must be completed within one year of commencement” to “the work in the regulated area must be completed within two years of commencement.”

Mr. Bergin seconded the amendment and all members voted in favor of the amended motion.

MOTION: Mr. Bergin moved to extend the meeting past 11:00 PM.

Ms. Ike seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan (2017-027)

MOTION: Mr. Stebe moved to certify the Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan. Mr. Bergin seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

TOWN OF MANCHESTER PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT – For reconstruction of the southern Lincoln Center parking lot and adjacent access drives at 494 Main Street, 41 Center Street, 99 Edgerton Street, and 35 Center Street – Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan (2017-028)

Ms. Handfield, Assistant Town Engineer, presented the application for the Lincoln Center parking lot reconstruction, which is under review for the Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan. Lincoln Center is a municipal building and parking area which is part of the Town government complex located at the corner of Main, Center and East Center Street, she explained. The project area extends onto the following Town-owned parcels according to Ms. Handfield: 494 Main Street, which is known as Lincoln Center; 99 Edgerton Street, which is known as Center Springs Park; and 41 Center Street, the Town Hall. The project also extends onto one privately-owned parcel, 35 Center Street, owned by the Center Congregational Church, according to Ms. Handfield, and she summarized a description of the property lines. Center Congregational Church actually owns about half of the Lincoln Center parking lot to the south, said Ms. Handfield. She projected the proposed improvements on this plan, which in general include reconstruction of the southern Lincoln Center parking lot and adjacent access driveways, minor drainage improvements, new pavement markings, and curbing throughout the entire parking lot because of significant deterioration, she explained.

Ms. Handfield illustrated the parking lot reconstruction, which will include reclamation and reconstruction of the area, removal of existing pavement, and the restoration of lawn and mulch for future landscaping.

Ms. Handfield stated that the access driveway from Town Hall will be reconstructed with minor regrading to provide an improved 23' roadway width, the two-way portion of the Lincoln Center parking lot will be reconstructed to provide a 24' roadway width, and the one-way portion will be reconstructed to provide a 16' roadway width. In addition to this work, according to Ms. Handfield, the project also includes replacement of existing drainage structures, minor regrading to improve drainage patterns and access, installation of extruded concrete curb throughout the parking lot, sidewalk repair, sidewalk ramp replacement, accessibility improvements, addition of bicycle racks near the accessible entrance, installation of signage, and pavement markings throughout the project. She stated that all work will be completed in accordance with the Connecticut Guidelines for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control and will include silt sacks installed in all catch basins within the project area, silt fence installed around any required soil stockpiles, construction entrances, if required, during construction, and restoration to lawn of all disturbed grass areas.

Mr. Prause inquired whether the plan is to narrow the roadway down to 24' in the Lincoln Center lot.

Ms. Handfield replied that the width varies substantially. In an effort to create a landscaped buffer from the sidewalk and to provide a better environment for a tree as well as any future shade trees that the church property may elect to install, according to Ms. Handfield, the plan is to reduce the roadway to maintain 24' standard width, which is typical for two-way traffic. She stated the plan does not reduce the distance to the building at all and the 24' width will wrap all the way around. She illustrated a minor narrowing, an area which would be about 1-1/2' to 2' wide where there will be removal of some of the pavement and restoration with grass. In addition, Ms. Handfield pointed to a substantial opening with traffic entering from different angles, making it difficult to navigate. Therefore, the proposal is to reduce the opening and extend a flush sidewalk as well as provide a dumpster pad in order to move the current dumpsters farther from pedestrian access, she said.

Mr. Prause asked whether there were any comments from the church. Ms. Handfield replied the church has signed off on the project. The church is eager for their patrons to be able to maneuver all the way through, she stated. According to Ms. Handfield, the Town worked with the church. There is shrubbery that is in poor condition and the church requested, as part of the project, to remove the shrubs and provide mulch for new landscaping, stated Ms. Handfield. She then stated that the Town intends to improve access to the parking lot, and will be providing a new accessible ramp.

Ms. Handfield illustrated the current dumpster for the church and the proposed dumpster pad. The plan is to pull out the radius and reduce the current amount of pavement, according to Ms. Handfield. She also stated the catch basin, which currently sits a few feet into the roadway, will be replaced and the sidewalk will be brought out to that point.

Mr. Kidd inquired whether there will be obstruction to the sightline. Ms. Handfield replied that, to her knowledge, there are no issues with the sightline and pointed to the creation of a dedicated area to maintain pedestrian access as well as an existing sidewalk that is along the access road.

Mr. Prause asked for clarification about the erosion control measures. Ms. Handfield reiterated that the proposal is to install, typical with all projects, silt sacks in all the existing and proposed catch basins. Downgradient of the work, silt fencing will be installed, she stated. Ms. Handfield explained that, depending on contractors' needs, if soil stockpiles are required, there will be silt fencing installed, and if a construction entrance is required, all disturbed grassy areas will be restored to lawn. She pointed to the four different properties involved in this project - Town Hall, Center Springs Park, the church, and the Lincoln Center property.

Mr. Prause inquired whether a new crosswalk will be added, to which Ms. Handfield replied that there will be a crosswalk with pavement markings.

Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan (2017-028)

MOTION: Ms. Scorso moved to certify the Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan. Mr. Bergin seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

There were no administrative reports.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

March 20, 2017 – Public Hearing/Business Meeting/Workshop

MOTION: Mr. Stebe moved to approve the minutes as written. Ms. Scorso seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

RECEIPT OF NEW APPLICATIONS:

SHOPPES AT BUCKLAND HILLS, LLC / GENERAL GROWTH PROPERTIES – CUD

Detailed Site Development Plan (2017-032) - For construction of solar photovoltaic canopies over an existing paved parking area at 150, 170, and 260 Buckland Hills Drive.

Ms. Bertotti stated the units look similar to a carport and solar array units are placed on top.

Mr. Anderson clarified for the Commission that the proposed area is close to Sears, on the northwest corner.

Ms. Bertotti reported that the application is tentatively scheduled for June.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Mr. Bergin moved to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Kidd seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The Chairman closed the business meeting at 11:16 PM.

I certify these minutes were adopted on the following date:

June 5, 2017

Date

Eric Prause, Chairman

NOTICE: A DIGITAL RECORDING OF THIS BUSINESS MEETING CAN BE HEARD IN THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT.