

**MINUTES OF BUSINESS MEETING
HELD BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
JANUARY 20, 2021**

VIRTUAL MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Eric Prause, Chairman
Patrick Kennedy, Vice Chairman
Michael Stebe, Secretary
Jessica Scorso
Jessica Poland

Alternates: Julian Stoppelman
Teresa Ike
Bonnie Potocki

Also Present: Megan Pilla, Senior Planner
Gary Anderson, Director of Planning &
Economic Development
David Laiuppa, Environmental
Planner/Wetlands Agent
Katie Williford, Administrative Secretary

Time Convened: 7:02 P.M.

NEW BUSINESS:

NEW STATE PROPERTIES LLC – For a warehouse addition with associated loading docks, and removal of an existing storage building at 401 New State Road. – Special Exception Modification (2020-079); Erosion & Sedimentation Control Plan (2020-080)

Mr. Frank Borawski, a professional engineer and licensed land surveyor with PDS Engineering & Construction, 107 Old Windsor Road, Bloomfield, CT, presented the application.

Mr. Borawski explained that the applicant proposes to remove an existing exterior storage building on the property. The owner intends to have high rack storage and keep everything self-contained inside the building. The proposal is for a warehouse and dock facility, with the same number of docks as there are presently on the rear of the building; there will be no additional docks, just a better layout. The owner needs more warehousing space for his products, which include condensers and large pieces of equipment. Mr. Borawski explained that the proposal meets the setback requirements and it will be an extension of the current use of the property. The plans have been updated to address issues raised by Town staff, with the exception of some small housekeeping items raised by Water & Sewer. The building will be a large, pre-engineered building with neutral siding colors to match the existing building.

Ms. Pilla displayed the plans for the application, which Mr. Borawski described. He stated that the addition will be to the west of the existing building. The existing area is paved and the

amount of pavement will be reduced by planting grass on the north and west sides. The drainage will flow into the catch basin in front of the loading dock areas and out to the street. The water quality will be improved, Mr. Borawski said, because the majority of the water now is roof water. All the rain leaders will be tied in and put into the catch basin.

Mr. Borawski stated that the building will be the same height as the existing building, so the entire building in the rear will need to come up 5 feet, which will require a lot of fill.

In discussions with the Fire Marshal about fire lanes, he has made it explicit that the fire lane on the south side has to be marked so that no storage can occur in that area, Mr. Borawski said, so it will be maintained to be a clear fire lane. The rear addition will be sprinklered and heated and will have LED lighting. The utilities will be minimal, he said.

Regarding the erosion control plan, Mr. Borawski noted erosion control around the rear of the property. The material stockpile area is strictly temporary stockpiling of the asphalt that will be removed from underneath the building footprint. That asphalt will be hauled away and a lot of fill will be brought in.

Regarding the timeline for the project, Mr. Borawski said the new loading dock wall and that area will be done first to allow loading dock activity to occur, because the owner has to maintain a working warehouse. The existing building will be removed first, then the new wall on the south side of the building will be installed with the drainage, and that area will be binder coated with pavement. Then, on a weekend, it will be filled and a temporary slab will be put in off the back of the existing building so that forklifts can come around and use that foundation wall as the temporary loading dock until the rest of building is complete.

Mr. Borawski noted the location of the loading docks on the floor plan. The building will be 60 ft. tall with high racking of large units. A super flat slab system will be used and the forklifts will have runners in the slab itself, so the forklifts will make movements almost robotically, similar to an Amazon warehouse. The building will have all pre-engineered siding and roofing and the downspouts will be tied into the drainage system, Mr. Borawski said.

Regarding the elevations, Mr. Borawski noted the concrete raised foundation walls and stated that is the amount of fill that has to be brought in around the whole building because of the existing grade.

Mr. Prause asked if the new addition will match the color of the building that is being torn down. Mr. Borawski responded that he believed the rear building is a neutral color, and the addition will be a neutral earth tone. Mr. Prause asked about the type of siding and Mr. Borawski said it is a vertical metal siding panel that has polymer paint on it, which is a baked-on finish that will be long-lasting.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause, Mr. Borawski confirmed that both the west and north sides of the new addition will have grass. The pavement on the south side must remain for the fire lane.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause about the loading dock location, Mr. Borawski said that the loading dock is on the south side, while the existing loading dock is on the west end of the existing building. The location of the loading dock is being rotated 90 degrees.

Mr. Prause asked about the timeline of the project and the impact on residents of the apartment complex to the west. Mr. Borawski responded that the project will probably take 6 to 7 months after getting the building permit. He added that the project will reduce noise and traffic. New insulation code requirements deaden the noise, so neighbors won't hear movements like they do now.

In response to questions from Mr. Prause about the height of the building, Mr. Borawski said the proposed building will be double the height of the existing building, due to the desire for high rack storage with robotic forklifting. Historically, warehouses used to be 20 ft. tall, but now they're all 60 ft. and taller, he said. He confirmed that the proposed height is 66 ft., while most other buildings in the area are around 30-40 ft. tall. He mentioned the concrete plant as an example of a building of comparable height. Mr. Prause mentioned a storage facility south down the road on Adams Street, which is probably about the same height because it is 3 stories. Mr. Borawski added that the factory down off of Adams Street is taller as well.

Mr. Prause noted that part of the special exception criteria is compatibility with the existing area. He added that he did not think the scale of the building was a major concern in an Industrial zone, but the property is also next to a residential property.

Mr. Borawski reiterated that pre-engineered buildings are much quieter. There will be no rooftop AC, condensers, or anything around the perimeter of the building, so the proposal will have a better effect for the apartment. The truck turning movement is all in that alcove, so it will be quieter. The wall will be taller, but everything will be self-contained more than it is now. Currently, there are trucks moving on the exterior of the building and forklifts going in and out of the storage building in the rear. He added that the height is probably equivalent to the old Allied Printing building up the road.

Ms. Pilla said that there are a couple of minor technical staff comments, some of which regard the existing property survey. A revised survey has already been submitted, but Engineering has not had a chance to review it yet.

Special Exception Modification (2020-079)

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to approve the special exception modification under Article II, Section 16.15.02(a) for a warehouse addition with associated loading docks, and removal of an existing storage building at 401 New State Road, with the modifications as specified in staff memoranda from:

1. John DiBiasi, Assistant Town Engineer, dated January 19, 2021.

Ms. Scorso seconded the motion.

Mr. Prause asked whether the apartments to the west are completely built out. Mr. Anderson replied that there is at least another building that hasn't been constructed yet. Ms. Pilla noted that she believed that building would be on the other side.

Regarding the large wall to face the apartments, Mr. Stebe noted that there is mature foliage, and referred to the applicant's statement that activities are now going to be inside instead of outside and the noise will be reduced, making it more compatible with neighborhood. He pointed out that there is public storage across the street that is only 45 ft. in height, but this stretch of New State Road is zoned Industrial. Mr. Stebe said he thought enclosing the activities and storage

that might be happening outside right now outweighs any issue of having a 60 ft. wall facing somebody on the other side in the Broadleaf area. He noted that there is the ring road on Broadleaf with parking on both sides before you even get to any apartments, so there is enough of a barrier and plenty of space to accommodate the growth of this business.

Mr. Prause inquired about a right-of-way between Evergreen Crossing and the proposed work area, and whether plantings are proposed, or just grass. Mr. Borawski responded that there would be just grass in the rear. He noted that the right-of-way is actually on the other side of the property line. There is an existing chain link fence on the rear of the applicant's property that will remain.

All members voted in favor of the motion.

The reason for the approval is that the proposed activity meets the special exception criteria in Article IV, Section 20.

Erosion & Sedimentation Control Plan (2020-080)

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to certify the erosion and sedimentation control plan for a warehouse addition with associated loading docks, and removal of an existing storage building at 401 New State Road, with the modifications as specified in staff memoranda from:

1. John DiBiasi, Assistant Town Engineer, dated January 19, 2021.

Ms. Scorso seconded the motion.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause about the concrete truck washout area, Mr. Borawski said that it is for aquifer protection. Trucks wash out their chutes into the washout area, and then once the concrete is hardened it can be removed or used as general fill. This way there is no slurry that goes into the groundwater system, Mr. Borawski explained.

All members voted in favor.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Ms. Pilla reminded the Commission that the Connecticut Bar Association's Connecticut Land Use Law seminar is being held March 6 via Zoom. Mr. Anderson noted that the seminar is a very valuable opportunity that only comes up every 2 years.

Ms. Pilla informed the Commission that West Hartford recently approved regulation changes to allow accessory dwelling units in all single family residential zones. Following some discussion, Mr. Stoppelman suggested having a workshop to educate the Commission about the subject. Mr. Prause noted that it would be helpful to see the language from West Hartford's regulations.

Mr. Laiuppa updated the Commission on the Boynton subdivision, where there have been issues with elicit discharge of turbid water getting into the stormwater system, some wetlands, a brook, and some ponds. Mr. Laiuppa stated that he worked with Mr. Boynton and they put some measures in place, but not enough. There have been multiple instances of unacceptable amounts of discharge getting into the regulated resources, Mr. Laiuppa said, so he is working towards a Cease and Correct order. The Commission can expect a show cause hearing with Mr. Boynton at

the next meeting, he said. Notification will be sent to Mr. Boynton probably by this Friday, so the 10-day window will be met and there will be no need to schedule a special hearing for it. Mr. Anderson noted that a show cause hearing is a chance for the developer to disagree with the agent's order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

January 4, 2021 – Business Meeting

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

RECEIPT OF NEW APPLICATIONS:

MANCHESTER PARKADE I, LLC – Inland Wetlands Permit (2021-001); Special Exception and Preliminary Plan of Development (2021-002) – Special Exception and Preliminary Plan of Development per Art. II, Sec. 26.09.02(A)(3) for alternative compliance under Art. II, Sec. 26.04.06 (Ground Floor Limitations) to allow residential on the first floor in some areas and under Art. II, Sec. 26.09.04 E (Parking Standards Relief) for the proposed Silk City.Green development at 296, 324, 330, 334 & 340 Broad Street; 418 Middle Turnpike West; and a portion of Green Manor Boulevard.

TOWN OF MANCHESTER PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION – Zoning Regulation Amendment (2021-003) – To revise the zoning regulations at Art. II, Sec. 15.04.01 to change the requirements for the maximum setback from Main Street; at Art. II, Sec. 15.05 to remove tattoo parlors and/or body piercing studios from the list of prohibited uses in the Central Business District zone; and at Art. IV, Sec. 23 to provide greater flexibility for sidewalk cafes and seasonal vestibules.

GARRETT HOMES, LLC – Resubdivision (2021-005); Erosion & Sedimentation Control Plan (2021-006) – For proposed activity including a 9,100 S.F. retail building with 37 parking spaces and associated grading, drainage, lighting, utilities, sidewalks, etc. at 120 Spencer Street.

The Chairman closed the business meeting at 7:50 p.m.

I certify these minutes were adopted on the following date:

February 1, 2021
Date

Eric Prause, Chairman

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