

PLANNING BOARD

DATE: September 7, 2016
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
PLACE: Large Meeting Room
FOR: Regular Meeting
PRESENT: Malcolm Fick, Vice-Chair; Jonathan Hankin; Jeremy Higa
Pedro Pachano, Alternate Member
Chris Rembold, Town Planner

Mr. Fick called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M. Mr. Pachano had not yet arrived.

FORM A'S:

Mike Parsons, from Kelly, Granger, Parsons and Associates was present with a Form A application on behalf of David Hilcoat for a parcel of land located on Haley Road.

Mr. Hankin disclosed that he was the realtor for the previous owner, McCandless. He said he has no financial interest.

Mr. Parsons said the 0.195 acres parcel is to be conveyed to the abutter and is not to be considered a separate building lot. Mr. Hankin made a motion to approve the plan, Mr. Higa seconded, all in favor.

MINUTES: AUGUST 25, 2016

Mr. Hankin made a motion to approve the minutes of August 25, 2016 as amended, Mr. Higa seconded, all in favor.

PRELIMINARY REVIEW/CONCEPTUAL PLANS FOR 34-42 BRIDGE STREET

Brian Cohan and Michael Charles were present to discuss their preliminary plan for 34-42 Bridge Street.

Mr. Charles said the proposal is to combine three parcels, the parcel where the Co-Op Market is currently located, the building where Laramie Cleaners was located and the parcel behind the Co-Op Market, part of the Searles Castle (John Dewey Academy) property. The first phase of the project will be the redevelopment of the Laramie Cleaners site. A three story building will provide mixed use on the site. The Co-Op market will be located in the ground floor space. Access will be from the side of the building and the lower level that will walk out into the parking area on the south side of the building. Retail space will be located at the Bridge Street level. There will be 22 market rate residential units on the top two floors and office space sharing the street level with the retail spaces.

Mr. Charles said the existing Co-Op building will be removed as will the building behind it. A parking area in that location will provide 48 parking spaces. The parking requirements for the project are met based on the requirements for the Village Center Overlay District.

The second building, phase 2 of the project, will be located on the back portion of the existing Co-Op parcel and a new lot to be divided from the Searles Castle property. A lot line adjustment will be needed to create one parcel. In addition the existing Co-Op driveway which is owned by Searles Castle will be purchased to provide a right of way for abutting properties including Searles Castle.

Mr. Charles said phase 2 of the project will be the construction of a 3 story residential condominium building. There will be 36 apartments in the building. There will be studios, 1 bedroom and 2 bedroom units priced at market rate or slightly higher. Underground parking with 51 spaces will be provided for the building. The grade supports construction of the underground parking garage.

Mr. Charles said there will be a fence along the south border with the Searles property with an automatic gate to create a controlled access point.

Mr. Rembold asked about parking for the Bridge Street building.

Mr. Charles said there will be shared parking amongst the various uses. There will not be dedicated parking spaces.

Mr. Higa asked if there will be any affordable units.

Mr. Charles said no.

Mr. Fick asked what the zoning is for the site.

Mr. Rembold said it is located in the B-2 zone with VCOD and Water Quality Protection District overlays. Also the Downtown Business parking applies to the site.

Mr. Charles said he wants as much parking as we can get. We want to satisfy all the requirements. We meet code and will continue to hash through the development process.

Mr. Hankin asked if the Bridge Street building will be 3 stories.

Mr. Charles said it will be three stories from the Bridge Street side and 4 stories from the south side.

Mr. Hankin said it is a great use for the site. He said he would like to see the street wall maintained.

Mr. Cohan said it is not functional for the existing Co-Op site.

Mr. Charles said landscaping, perhaps with a pergola, could maintain the street wall on that portion of the site. Parking will be at the same grade as the business. We are trying to satisfy all requirements for parking and deliveries. This plan is the most functional.

Mr. Cohan said the east side of the Bridge Street building is special because of the view. The view of the East Mountain is above the parking

Mr. Fick said all that will be seen is the parking.

Mr. Cohan said the lot is not huge. The view will be to look at the mountain. He said there will be a café at the east end of the Co-Op building. The intention is to balance all of the requirements of the Co-Op the anchor tenant.

Mr. Hankin asked about the grade of the back lot.

Mr. Charles said the roof of the parking will be at current grade level. People will be able to walk out on to a common space as they leave the building.

Mr. Charles said the Bridge Street building will have 4 retail spaces at street level. The space will be tailored toward specialty shops requiring only 1,000 square feet space. The intention is to have businesses that will complement the Co-Op use. He said there are plenty of specialty businesses that will want a small space.

Mr. Hankin said the side walk appears to go down in front of the retail spaces creating a challenge.

Mr. Charles said there is about a 12 foot drop from the west end of the building to entry to the parking lot on the east end.

Mr. Hankin said the retail spaces will be difficult to see from the street.

Mr. Charles said the sidewalk will divide at the west end—one following the street level and the other being level with the store fronts..

Mr. Hankin asked who will rent the office space?

Mr. Charles said he had spoken with some professionals who are interested in class A office space that does not currently exist.

Mr. Hankin asked where will snow be stored.

Mr. Charles said we are discussing that with property maintenance people. It might have to be trucked off site depending on the winter.

Mr. Hankin said the ball field needs parking as well.

Mr. Charles said he understands. He said he intends to talk to Craig Okerstrom Lang about plans he might have for the area. We will attempt to work something out.

Mr. Hankin asked about the phasing.

Mr. Charles said the garage will be torn down first to build some parking spaces in the back portion of the lot. It will also provide for staging and temporary parking for the field office.

Eileen Mooney asked what the status of the property is now.

Mr. Charles said all three parcels are under contract.

Mrs. Mooney asked when the closing would be.

Mr. Charles said when all the permits are in place.

Mrs. Mooney asked if a special permit would be needed.

Mr. Charles said yes.

Mrs. Mooney asked what impact this project would have on 100 Bridge Street.

Mr. Charles said that project is viable.

Mr. Cohan said this project could add value to that project. It will close the gap between Main Street and 100 Bridge Street.

Mr. Charles said he anticipates the project will start early next year. Phase 1 will take a year. The goal is to have the Co-Op in their new space by early spring of 2018.

Mr. Fick asked if there would be on street parking in front of the existing Bridge Street building.

Mr. Charles said yes. We want to keep all of the parking.

Mr. Cohan said we are not deficient in parking but we want to create the streetscape.

Mr. Pachano arrived at 7:48 P.M.

Mr. Fick said he doesn't have a lot of questions at this point.

Mr. Hankin said he would like to see a streetscape and elevations.

Mr. Cohan said even though we own the roadway going into the parcels it will be a "public way" as it will provide easements.

Mr. Rembold said permitting will include a VCOD special permit, mixed use is allowed by-right in the VCOD. The Business Parking District will apply. A special permit for the Water Quality Protection District will be required.

Mr. Hankin asked if there is a height restriction.

Mr. Charles said 40 feet.

Mr. Cohan said from our review with Mr. May the Building Inspector we determined that we will not need any variances. He said the Co-Op is a valuable client we want to make it work.

Mr. Hankin he thinks visibility is an issue for the retail spaces and the Co-Op.

Mr. Charles said there are design challenges but we are working on the plan and hope to figure everything out.

Ms. Mooney asked if there is a requirement for affordable housing.

Mr. Rembold said no. It is not required by zoning. He said the Design Advisory Committee will review the plans and the Planning Board will need to make recommendations on the special permits.

Mr. Pachano said he also has concerns about visibility.

Mr. Charles said there is more work to do. He said he appreciated the Board's comments. They will be back.

TOWN PLANNER'S REPORT:

Mr. Rembold said the next meeting will include a public hearing for a six foot high fence at 624 South Egremont Road. He said it is in the front yard setback. The Board scheduled a site visit at 6:00 P.M.

Mr. Rembold said the Board will review applications for 47 Railroad Street. The Board scheduled a site visit for 6:20 P.M.

Mr. Rembold he is trying to schedule a joint meeting with the Agricultural Commission. It looks like that will take place at a meeting in October. He said he will work on a draft solar bylaw prior to that meeting. He reminded the Board that there would be a joint meeting with the Selectboard on September 26.

BOARD & COMMITTEE UPDATES OTHER ISSUES & CONCERNS:

There were no updates or concerns.

CITIZEN'S SPEAK TIME:

There were no comments.

Having concluded their business, Mr. Fick adjourned the meeting at 8:16 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Kimberly L. Shaw
Planning Board Secretary

Material Submitted at the Meeting:

--Bridge Street Project, Great Barrington MA dated September 6, 2016