

PLANNING BOARD

DATE: March 23, 2017
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
PLACE: Large Meeting Room
FOR: Regular Meeting
PRESENT: Brandee Nelson, Chair; Malcolm Fick; Jonathan Hankin; Jeremy Higa
Pedro Pachano, Associate Member
Chris Rembold, Town Planner

Ms. Nelson called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

FORM A'S:

Joseph Aberdale was present with a Form A application for a parcel of land located on the eastside of Linda Lane. The parcel is to be combined with Mr. Aberdale's existing parcel. Parcel A contain 0.081 acres of land and is not to be considered a separate building lot.

Mr. Fick made a motion to approve the Form A, Mr. Higa seconded, all in favor.

MINUTES: FEBRUARY 23, 2017 & MARCH 9, 2017

Mr. Hankin made a motion to approve the minutes of February 23, 2017 as amended, Mr. Fick seconded, all in favor.

Mr. Hankin made a motion to approve the minutes of March 9, 2017 as amended, Mr. Fick seconded, all in favor.

BLACK WATER REALTY TRUST:

Engineer Nick Anderson was present on behalf of Black Water Realty Trust to discuss a special permit application for the construction of a new commercial and retail building in the Water Quality Protection District. The property is located on the north side of Maple Avenue.

The Board conducted a site visit prior to the meeting.

Mr. Anderson said project is in keeping with the Master Plan and the MXD zone. There is parking proposed for the rear of the building. The construction will go with the contours of the site. The building will have two levels. The site is served by Town water and sewer. The curb cut has been applied for.

Mr. Anderson said the parking is proposed to have a dense graded surface but it might be paved. Storm water management will be on site. There is not a lot of water shed through the site. The drainage will consist of bio-retention cells. Vegetated swales will also be part of the drainage management consistent with good engineering practices.

Mr. Anderson said the lighting on the site will be minimal. There will be sconces next to the entrances and an overhead light for the parking.

Mr. Anderson said the building will have clapboard siding and an asphalt roof. He said the traffic impact created by the new building will be minimal with 15 trips during the peak morning hours and 7 trips during the afternoon hours.

Mr. Anderson said there will be minimal impact on municipal services. There will be no substantial increase on the sewer. He said the building will not be required to have sprinklers. Natural gas will be connected.

Mr. Anderson said most of the parking is in the rear but there will be some in the front. There are 17 parking spaces required and 18 spaces shown. There are two handicap spaces.

Mr. Anderson said there is dense landscape to the west. There will be some additional grading that will be in compliance with the neighbor. The structure is in compliance with zoning setback and requirements. The setbacks will exceed the minimum.

There was discussion of the parking.

Mr. Hankin said the MXD zone doesn't require as many parking spaces.

Ms. Nelson said nine parking spaces would be required for this project.

Mr. Anderson said he would be happy to reduce the number of parking spaces. He said he could eliminate five parking spaces along the west side as well as soften the slope and driveway along that side.

Mr. Hankin said there is a lot of parking in the front.

Mr. Anderson said he would be happy to reduce the number of spaces in the front but there is a handicap space in the front and parking is needed for the front entrance.

Ms. Nelson said it looks like there will be a lot of grading. What is the net cut?

Mr. Anderson said there will be less than 200 yards of fill on the site. The building can not be lowered any more than proposed as it would then be lower than the street.

Mr. Hankin said he would like to have Mr. Anderson come back with a revised site plan as we have two different plans one for site Plan Review and one for the architectural plans for a special permit.

Mr. Rembold said there is time for them to come back.

Mr. Hankin said the parking needs to be reduced. He suggested keeping the building closer to the street.

Mr. Rembold said the MXD zone doesn't want parking in the front yard but it is probably necessary to meet ADA requirements.

Mr. Hankin suggested the building might be reoriented when the parking is reduced.

Mr. Anderson said the cross slope was too great for the handicap space. He said he would play around with it.

Mr. Hankin asked if trees could be planted in the bio retention area.

Mr. Anderson said no trees maybe some dense bushes. We don't want the area to fill in with roots as it would impact the water treatment. He said he would look at it as things are shifted around.

Mr. Fick read through the site plan review.

Mr. Hankin said the abutter expressed concern about the dumpster location.

Ms. Nelson asked that specific dumpster location or screening be provided when Mr. Anderson comes back with the revised plans. She reminded Mr. Anderson that the MXD does not want parking in the front. She asked what the height of the wall pack is at the west gable end.

Mr. Anderson said it is 25 feet up, he said it could be lowered.

Ms. Nelson said cut offs are required so the light can't be seen.

There was further discussion of lighting. It was determined that lighting would be shown in the revised renderings.

There was a brief discussion of the HVAC units. They will need to be screened.

Mr. Anderson will return to the Planning Board meeting on April 13. Mr. Hankin suggested the special permit recommendation be made at that time. The Board agreed.

BERKSHIRE AVIATION ENTERPRISES: SITE PLAN REVIEW

Attorney Lori Robbins was present with applicant Ken Krentsa for Berkshire Aviation Enterprises at 70 Egremont Plain Road. This is a continued discussion.

Ms. Robbins said the Board previously asked how many tie downs are currently at the airport. She said there are approximately 50. She said there was also a question about how many planes fly in and out on a given day. She said the answer depends on weather and the number of students. She said on average there are 50 trips in and out.

Ms. Robbins addressed the lights. She said the runway lights come when the airplane comes in or out. All of the lights are down lit. The lights are not on when the runway is not being used.

Ms. Robbins discussed soil conditions saying there are different soil conditions on the site. The new hangar location would not experience flooding and there would be no run off from the site.

Ms. Robbins said she read in the newspaper that there is concern about the wellhead. She said she made some phone calls and found that the well is off of Hurlburt Road a mile or more away.

Ms. Robbins provided a Source Water and Protection Report from the Great Barrington Fire District dated March 12, 2003.

Ms. Robbins said an abutter is opposed to the location of the hangars because of impact on the view. Other potential sites have been considered. It has been determined that the hangars might be able to located near the old hangar near the tree line. She said that if it is decided to try to relocate the hangars Natural Heritage will have to be contacted regarding the habitat as the site is within the PH1364 area. She said the proposed location is outside the protected habitat area. She said a proposal would be submitted for them to make a determination.

Ms. Nelson said if an alternate location is proposed it would be helpful to have all of the pros and cons of the two locations.

There was a question regarding access to the hangars.

Ms. Robbins said it would not be necessary to build a driveway. People usually walk from the hangar to the parking area.

Ms. Nelson said if a new location is truly being proposed we need a completed proposal.

Ms. Nelson said she had received a number of communications regarding the application. She asked if any of the property is in Chapter 61A.

Mr. Robbins said there are hayfields and cornfield on the property that are in Chapter 61A. The runway and buildings are not in Chapter 61A. If the permit is granted the fields would have to come out of Chapter 61A.

Ms. Robbins said there has been concern about the chemicals being used at the airport. Mr. Krentsa sent an e-mail to the Fire Chief with a list of the chemicals used. The Fire Chief responded that he was satisfied with the list. The correspondence dated February 27, 2017 was read and submitted to the Board.

There was discussion about the drinking water for the Town. Ms. Robbins said she has been in contact with Peter Marks from the Fire District. She will get more information from him.

Mr. Pachano asked if the underground tanks on the property will be replaced.

Mr. Krentsa said the tanks are scheduled to be removed by August. The tanks have reached their life expectancy so their removal is part of a regular schedule. He said the replacement tank will be double walled and above ground.

Ms. Nelson asked how much fuel is on site.

Mr. Krentsa said there is 20,000 gallons of aviation fuel underground in a single walled tank. This will be replaced. The existing tank has a leak detection system built in and it is checked by the Fire Department. There is 4,000 gallons of heating oil in the ground on the north side of the maintenance hangar. There is one other tank below ground with automotive fuel that has been defunct for years. It is sealed and locked.

Mr. Hankin asked if the defunct tank will be removed.

Mr. Krentsa said yes.

Ms. Nelson asked if the tank had been tested for leaks.

Mr. Krentsa said yes. He said there is one other tank. There is a 275 gallon oil tank above the floor in the basement of the office building.

Ms. Nelson said that is different from what we are talking about.

Mr. Krentsa said yes.

Ms. Nelson asked if there will be any fuel in the proposed hangars.

Mr. Kentsa said no. He said there are 50 tie downs. Approximately 30 of those are occupied. He said he does not imagine there will be any great increase occupancy. Some of the current occupants will take space in the new hangars. He said no one is clambering to bring more planes.

Mr. Fick asked how much of the business is casual or infrequent visits.

Mr. Krentsa said flight school is a big part of the business. Maybe 20% of the business is from outside people coming in to fuel or go into Great Barrington.

Ms. Nelson asked about Blackhawk helicopters coming in to do maneuvers.

Mr. Krentsa said he gets three or four calls a year about the helicopters. He said since the project was submitted the calls have been overwhelming. He said the new hangars have nothing to do with the Blackhawks or the frequency of their visits.

Ms. Nelson asked if the airport is publically operated. She said she understands that the area mimics what the Blackhawks experience in the conditions for their operations. She asked if their training could be restricted.

Mr. Krentsa said he would not restrict their access.

Ed Ives was present. He said they can not be restricted.

Mr. Krentsa said he is sorry not to have more information about the new location. He said he didn't think the hangars could be located by the river. When we found that the restrictions no longer existed we decided to make a new proposal. He said he has spoken to the neighbors, provided them with his phone number and made himself available. He said only a couple of people have reached out. He said the new location is near the existing clam shell hangar. The proposed relocation should address the issues about the view.

There were some comments from the audience directed at Mr. Krentsa.

Ms. Nelson said any comments need to be directed to the Board. She said there was not going to be a debate at this meeting. She said prior to discussing the Site Plan Review new plans drawn to scale need to be submitted.

Mr. Fick said there has been a lot of concern about the airport expanding and the associated impacts such as noise, traffic and potential impacts on the water. These issues need to be addressed going forward.

Ms. Nelson said the entire site will be reviewed.

Mr. Krentsa said the airport is not expanding. The runway is not going to be expanded or the boundaries.

Mr. Higa asked if the 18 spaces in the hangars will be used by the current 30 occupants.

Mr. Krentsa said yes.

Mr. Pachano said the airport is in the Water Quality Protection District so there needs to be this oversight.

Mr. Higa asked if additional mechanics will be hired.

Mr. Krentsa said he currently employs two full time mechanics and two assistants. He said there is not room for more mechanics.

Mr. Rembold asked what uses will take place in the hangars.

Mr. Krentsa said the hangars are to house planes. He said there are no other uses. There will be no plumbing. There will be lights.

Mr. Higa asked if there will be any office space in the hangars.

Mr. Kentsa said no. He said there may be a little room in the corners for the lawn mower and snow blower.

Ms. Nelson asked why four mechanics are needed.

Mr. Krentsa said maintenance is provided for planes that come in from other places. It is part of the business plan for the airport.

Mr. Pachano said he is concerned about the airport expanding in general. He asked if there are other big plans.

Mr. Krentsa said there are no big plans. He said there is a statewide building program available to airports. He said we would be barely eligible for funding. The money usually runs out before it is available to municipal airports.

Mr. Ives said the Pittsfield airport had a very expensive expansion. The State provided 80% of the money but the city of Pittsfield could not come up with the other 20%. It is costly to expand.

Mr. Krentsa said there are no plans to expand beyond the addition of the hangars.

Mr. Rembold said a formal extension of the Site Plan Review period needs to be submitted.

Ms. Robbins said she would e-mail the request to extend the review period to April 13.

Ms. Nelson said the plans will be needed prior to that date.

Mr. Krentsa said anyone with any questions, concerns or comments is welcome to contact him.

TOWN PLANNER'S REPORT:

Mr. Rembold had nothing to report.

BOARD & COMMITTEE UPDATES:

There were no updates.

CITIZEN'S SPEAK TIME:

William Weigle handed out a copy of his comments dated March 22, 2017. He spoke in favor of the airport application.

Attorney Richard Dohoney was present on behalf of his clients Anne Fredericks and Marc Fasteau who oppose the hangars at the airport. Mr. Dohoney said he is not clear on the process for the SPR.

Ms. Nelson said the process is in play. She said there is much more to do.

Mr. Dohoney requested that the SPR not be approved until the special permit has been granted.

Mr. Fasteau from 77 Seekonk Cross Road said the scope of the project keeps changing. He said the actual scope of the project needs to be determined.

Ms. Nelson said we have just received the revised plans.

Mr. Fasteau said he thinks the goal of the airport is to expand their operation. They won't stop with three hangars. He said before the Town acts they should know what the intent is. He said there is a risk to the water supply.

Holly Hamer said the Board asked for a balloon test at the first meeting as well as renderings of the hangars and measurements to the nearest neighbor. She said it is disturbing that there are no renderings. It is difficult to know what the site will look like.

Claudia Shapiro said no plot plan has been submitted. No survey has been submitted. She said the underground tanks are in the Board's jurisdiction. She suggested the Board get a plot plan and a survey. She said there is also a toxic waste dump on the site behind the existing hangar that should be checked out.

Dennis Mareb from Windy Hill Farm on Stockbridge Road said the water quality and the aquifer are the biggest concern. He said there was a problem with an airport on Cape Cod that created an environmental issue. He said he is concerned about the aquifer and how the expansion will impact the recharge area.

Chris Ire said there is so much rumor and innuendo. The Board has an application for three hangars. He said he does not believe the aquifer is an issue. He suggested the Board make their decision about the hangars as part of the airport property.

Sharon Gregory asked if the Planning Board had any input into the special permit process.

Ms. Nelson said the Board already made a recommendation to the Selectboard.

Mr. Rembold said the special permit is for the airport use. The hangars are not part of the use.

Ms. Robbins said the hangars are an accessory use. She said even if the special permit is not granted the Planning Board could issue SPR for the accessory use.

Mr. Krentsa said we are all responsible to the aquifer. He said he feels it is being protected.

Mr. Dohoney said he doesn't think there is any situation where the hangars don't need a special permit.

There were no new comments. Having concluded their business, Ms. Nelson adjourned without objection at 9:11 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Kimberly L. Shaw
Planning Board Secretary.