

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
SITE REVIEW TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

2:00 PM

NOVEMBER 8, 2011

**EILEEN DONDERO FOLEY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MUNICIPAL COMPLEX, 1 JUNKINS AVENUE
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rick Taintor, Chairman; David Desfosses, Engineering Technician; Jared Sheehan, Engineering Technician; Peter Britz, Environmental Planner; Stephen Dubois, Police Chief; and Jon Frederick, Director of Parking & Transportation

I. OLD BUSINESS

A. The application of **Portwalk Office, LLC, Owner**, for property located at **195 Hanover Street**, requesting Site Plan Approval to construct a 5-story, 71,500 ± s.f. (footprint) building, to include a 124 room hotel, 92 dwelling units, 10,335 s.f. of restaurant use, a surface level parking deck and a one-story underground parking garage, with related paving, lighting, utilities, landscaping, drainage and associated site improvements. Said property is shown on Assessor Map 125 as Lot 1 and lies within the Central Business B (CBB) District, the Downtown Overlay District (DOD) and the Historic District. (This matter was postponed at the November 1, 2011 TAC meeting)

The Chair read the notice into the record.

SPEAKING TO THE APPLICATION:

Jeff Johnson of Parade Office, LLC, introduced Patrick Crimmins of Appledore Engineering to go through the changes they have made since their last meeting.

Mr. Crimmins stated that since the last meeting there had been a discussion with staff regarding additional retail along Maplewood Avenue. They had a subsequent meeting with DPW and Planning staff. This morning at the TAC Work Session they submitted two revised Site Plans which were a Phase 1 and a Phase 2 and they have since amended the Phase 2 Site Plan which was distributed to the Committee.

On the Phase 1 Site Plan they reconfigured the parking to gain more spaces and improve circulation and they came up with the same 124 hotel rooms and 92 dwelling units, 2,280 s.f. of retail and 8,675 s.f. of restaurant. The parking spaces required for that design are 260 new parking spaces and 286 parking spaces is the maximum allowed. Between the revised surface level plan and the revised basement level they now have 286 spaces for the Phase 1 Site Plan. They also created a subsequent plan based on discussions about the Maplewood corridor. They have also revised that since this morning's meeting and they now include two retail options along Maplewood Avenue and a third retail

option "C" along Hanover Street. The parking requirements remain the same, or 260 spaces required and 286 maximum. They have 254 parking spaces provided on the Site Plan with the retail space so they are 6 spaces short which they would pay the in-lieu fee for. However, if they lost 600 s.f. in the restaurant they would be conforming. That would provide some movement based on the demand of the retail and restaurants to allow that parking to work.

Mr. Crimmins reviewed some of the comments from last week's meeting. Regarding what the materials would be for the crosswalks they have added a notation that they will be a decorative crosswalk with the final design to be coordinated with DPW prior to construction.

On the Easement Plan they added to Sheet C-3A a footing and cornice easement for the buildings along the City right of ways.

With respect to the sidewalk along Maplewood Avenue they continued the sidewalk all the way along. It will tip down and be a flush sidewalk so the waste management truck can still pull up. Mr. Desfosses asked for a detail. Mr. Crimmins confirmed they will coordinate that detail.

They received a comment from DPW about going with a trench drain configuration in the basement rather than some drains that were pumped into the sewer. They have changed that sheet to show trench drains. It is just a schematic plan and the final design will be in the building plans. They called out a sump pump in the basement as well just in case there was flooding in the basement and water needs to get out. That was included in the plans from this morning.

Along Portwalk Place, there was a discussion about the angle of the boxed planters. With the bumpouts and the configuration they have, they changed them to triangle planters to keep a clear sidewalk all along the face of the building of at least 6'.

There was a discussion about height of the lighting fixtures and they agree the lighting fixtures on the side of Portwalk Place should be at least 2' higher to avoid any conflicts with vehicles.

Regarding the location of the traffic signal box, they noted on the plan that the final location needs to be coordinated with DPW if it needs to be relocated. They are currently working through the building design to determine how that will be located.

Mr. Taintor asked if they are saying the revised plans they submitted show the higher light fixtures? Mr. Crimmins confirmed they will be shown on the final lighting design but they are not reflected on the current plan. It will be shown on the detail for the Planning Board.

Mr. Crimmins stated there was a discussion about the Photometric Plan. They provided a Photometric Plan for the City sidewalks and the Portwalk Place sidewalks but they are working with the building design right now so the final location of the building fixtures has not been worked out yet to show how they are going to light the parking deck.

Mr. Johnston indicated that the discussions they have had regarding the control box is to keep it black and flush with the building on the corner of Maplewood and Deer. Attorney Loughlin has drafted a proposed condition to address the Phase 1 and Phase 2 discussion.

Mr. Taintor asked what was meant by having the control box flush with the building. Mr. Johnston stated there was a similar control box by Breaking New Grounds which was black and up against a big building and it wasn't very intrusive. They will try to use that as an example. Mr. Taintor asked about what was reflected on Sheet C-5A which is the current location but it will not be there on the final plan. Mr. Crimmins confirmed it is their goal to get it out of the sidewalk.

Mr. Taintor noted on the Site Plan that there is an easement that wraps round from Portwalk Place, along Hanover Street, and wraps around to Maplewood Avenue. There is another one on the north side that goes from Maplewood and wraps around to Portwalk Place. In the middle of the property they have portions of buildings protruding over the property line into the sidewalk. Mr. Crimmins stated those are the planters. Mr. Taintor asked if there was another easement for that. Ms. Johnston stated they want to have those on their property. Mr. Taintor confirmed that the revised plan should show the planters within the property line.

Attorney Peter Loughlin stated that they talked about doing a Phase 1 and Phase 2 proposal this morning. Phase 1 would be the plan that was previous submitted and Phase 2 would include the additional commercial space at either end on Maplewood Avenue and Phase 3 would include the additional commercial space on Hanover Street. He came up with some language to discuss that and he handed it to the Chair. Mr. Taintor reviewed the document and indicated it just stated that they could do either one.

Mr. Johnston indicated that was the end of their presentation.

With respect to parking, Mr. Taintor felt if they did not have the restaurants, then they would need a variance for their parking as they would exceed the maximum number of parking spaces. He will want that to be reflected in their approval and they will be stuck with their uses. Mr. Johnston understood that.

Mr. Taintor had a question about more detail along Maplewood Avenue and he thought someone was putting together a Landscaping Plan for the area. Mr. Johnston stated all they have is a sketch now from their architect and that will be part of their elevations that they will present to the Planning Board on the 17th and the HDC tomorrow night. Mr. Taintor was more interested in the plan view as it is very sketchy. Tim Levine provided their 8 ½" x 11" "sketch" for Mr. Taintor to look at.

The Chair asked if there was anyone wishing to speak to, for or against the application. Seeing no one rise, the Chair closed the public hearing for this matter.

DISCUSSION AND DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE:

Mr. Desfosses made a motion to recommend Site Plan approval with stipulations. Mr. Britz seconded the motion.

Mr. Desfosses felt there were still final details to work out and he recommended that a meeting be held between the Planning Department, DPW and the applicant once final details are coordinated for a final review before the building permit is issued.

Mr. Frederick confirmed that the applicant is scheduled to appear before the Parking Committee and the Traffic & Safety Committee on Thursday, November 10th.

Mr. Taintor indicated that he would like to see revised plans before the Planning Board meeting. Mr. Desfosses would like to see details for the decorative sidewalk cross sections and trash enclosure area and the final lighting plan. Mr. Johnston asked if they would want those before the building permit or before the Planning Board meeting. Mr. Taintor requested them before the Planning Board meeting. He wants to go to the Planning Board with as few stipulations left as possible. Mr. Taintor requested an easement addressing the planter area on Maplewood Avenue to make sure the planters are within the property line or an easement is shown to encompass the planters.

Mr. Taintor requested that the Lighting Plan will include the revised lighting fixtures. The TAC approval would be subject to further review of the Phasing Plan. Mr. Britz asked about the Phase 2 plan where they have Option A, B or C and if that meant they could do any of these options or all of them at the same time. Mr. Taintor would prefer to see Phase 2 implemented immediately so he wouldn't want to put a time limit on Phase 2. The Phasing Plan would be subject to review and approval by the City Attorney and the Planning Department. Mr. Britz asked about the terms of timing, if Options A, B or C came in several years from now and the Site Review Regulations had changed they might have issues with the parking so that might be something to consider.

A Construction Management & Mitigation Plan will be required.

Mr. Taintor stated that he did not feel that he has had enough time to review some of the revisions that just came in this morning. He still has concerns about the Hanover Street entrance and the impact on the Hanover/Maplewood intersection.

Mr. Levine stated that he went back and looked at the 2007 Memorandums from VHB and the Maplewood/Hanover existing condition was level of service B & C. Mr. Taintor felt that was all based on the traffic flow from Maplewood Avenue and if you look at the details, the 90% queue on Hanover Street is 292', bringing them back to the driveway, or beyond, and the 50% queue was 192'. Mr. Levine stated that was specifically looked at with memos to the City that Deborah Finnigan had requested. That was when the City was considering participating with the 2-story garage. Mr. Taintor understood that but when he asked about it last week they told him to go back to the last report and the last report shows that it is not going to work. Now they say to use the report but the counts aren't right.

Mr. Taintor indicated that he is going to look more carefully at traffic and he would prefer to postpone the matter today. His feeling is that he needs more time to look at it, but it is up to the Committee.

Deputy Police Chief Dubois asked what would be a way to move it forward but still allowing Mr. Taintor the time he needs. Mr. Taintor can look at it between now and the Planning Board meeting. TAC can recommend approval with stipulations and his staff recommendation to the Planning Board may not be exactly what TAC recommends.

Mr. Britz was concerned about not knowing how the phasing will work. He likes the Phase 2 for Maplewood. They have never had an application like this before. It is actually more like options than phasing. He doesn't know what is actually going to be built so they don't even know what they are approving. He is most comfortable with the Phase 2 plan than Phase 1. Mr. Taintor indicated they can convey that to the Planning Board.

Mr. Taintor asked them to look at the option of clipping back the corners of the entry and exit as the driveway hits the sidewalk on Hanover Street. Mr. Desfosses felt that next to the wall and the back of the sidewalk are the same spot and there is a blind spot for pedestrians. Traffic coming out of the garage will not be able to see a pedestrian as there is no sight distance. Mr. Levine suggested an alarm for when a car is coming. Mr. Britz asked about a stop bar. Mr. Desfosses felt no one is going to stop because they can't see. They will drive right through it until they can see. By that point they have already driven past the sidewalk.

Mr. Johnston pointed out they have a notation for a wall mounted sign warning cars about pedestrians. Mr. Desfosses did not feel that people would read the sign. He felt it would be nice to trim those corners back for a little interaction. Mr. Johnston indicated they can look at that. Mr. Desfosses pointed out that there are safety zones on either side of the driveway coming out of Portwalk Place whereas this is so tight there is no way to do that. Deputy Police Chief Dubois suggested a wall mounted mirror. Mr. Desfosses felt that would only work if drivers looked in them.

Mr. Frederick asked if the proposed wall mounted sign was passive or active. Mr. Johnston stated it was just a sign and they haven't gotten that far. It will be part of the final details.

Mr. Taintor noted that the sidewalk dimension on Maplewood Avenue just north of Retail Option A says 6.9' and the sidewalk dimension on Hanover at the planter says 6.3'. He assumes there is a 0.6' difference between the two dimensions. He asked how narrow the sidewalks get. Mr. Crimmins indicated they are flush with grade so people are walking on it. It is a similar condition to what they have on Lot #2. Mr. Johnston stated they matched the two they put on Hanover Street.

Mr. Taintor asked if the planters on Hanover are the only ones where people are walking on grates. Mr. Desfosses was concerned if the trees get bigger they will have a situation like Porter Street where there isn't enough room to plow the sidewalks but he is not sure they will ever get that big or it is something to worry about. Mr. Britz noted they are in the right of way and would have to go to the Trees & Greenery Committee. Attorney Loughlin indicated the Trees & Greenery Committee does not review projects that go through site review. Mr. Johnston confirmed the species are all the same as when they appeared before the Trees & Greenery Committee for the first lot. Mr. Crimmins reviewed the types of species. Mr. Desfosses felt that the Trees & Greenery Committee should approve the species of the trees for their appropriateness.

Mr. Taintor requested a stipulation that the plans may be changed to reflect the suggestions that have been made for parking and the loading zones along Maplewood Avenue, pending further review by Planning and DPW.

Mr. Frederick asked about the two parking spaces on the southerly side of Deer Street towards the west of Portwalk Way that are not shown on the Existing Conditions Plan. He is assuming the spaces will

have to be removed but they need to be put back on the plan. There are single space meters there. Mr. Crimmins stated that when the Municipal lot was approved the spaces were removed. Mr. Desfosses confirmed that, as they are in limbo, they should be shown on the Existing Conditions and Site Plan.

Attorney Loughlin asked how they wanted to handle the phasing. Mr. Taintor responded that he would speak to City Attorney Robert Sullivan and get back in touch with him.

The motion to recommend approval of Site Plan review passed with Mr. Taintor voting in the negative.

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II. ADJOURNMENT was had at approximately 3:00 pm.

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Respectfully submitted,

Jane M. Shouse
Administrative Assistant