

AMHERST PLANNING BOARD
Wednesday, November 15, 2006 – 7:00 PM
Town Room, Town Hall
MINUTES

PRESENT: Aaron Hayden, Chair; Mary Scipioni, Rod Francis, Richard Howland, Kathleen Anderson, Eduardo Suarez (7:18 PM)

ABSENT: Carl Mailler, Susan Pynchon, Leandro Rivera

STAFF: Niels la Cour, Senior Planner; Sue Krzanowski, Management Assistant

Mr. Hayden opened the meeting at 7:12 PM.

II. PUBLIC HEARING – SITE PLAN REVIEW

SPR2007-00003, 170 University Drive – Cooley Dickinson Hospital

Mr. Hayden read the preamble and opened the hearing for this request for Site Plan Review approval to construct a concrete structure 20' x 40' on the south side of the building. (Map 13D/Parcel 49; OP zoning district)

Representing Cooley Dickinson Hospital were Ed Etheredge, attorney, and Norm Welch, Director of Facilities.

Attorney Etheredge said that the proposed concrete shed would be used for a new MRI machine. The current MRI in Northampton is being used at 90% capacity, he told the Board. Having one in Amherst would be an advantage for people on this side of the river, he noted. The parking requirements on the University Drive site are already satisfied, and only three new technicians will be needed for the new facility

Mr. Welch described the proposed addition for the Board. He said that 50% of the building will be below ground. The MRI needs 11 feet clearance and can't be tipped too much. The current building has approximately 9 foot high ceilings so the best option is to put in an addition to accommodate it.

Mr. Hayden asked about number of people using the facility on an hourly basis, electricity, radiation, the previous permit and wetlands.

Mr. la Cour noted that the applicant would be required to file a Notice of Intent with the Conservation Commission because there are wetlands on the site.

Mr. Etheredge told the Board that the building would be constructed on entirely existing impervious surface.

Mr. Walter Wolnik, 8 Hillcrest Place, expressed concern that the faucets in the public restroom shut off before one can properly wash one's hands which is a public health concern, he said.

Mr. Suarez asked about universal precautions concerning radiation produced by the MRI and about traffic patterns.

Mr. Welch said the field would not extend beyond the envelope of the room and summarized the predicted traffic patterns.

Mr. Wolnik said that he would like pedestrian accommodations on the site, either a sidewalk or pedestrian walk leading up to the building. He also said that he has observed trespassing on an abutting property going into the facility and suggested that the applicant consider putting in a pedestrian pathway from Northampton Road for pedestrian access.

Mr. Suarez had a concern about handicap access to the new facility. Mr. Welch explained that both entrances to the building were accessible with elevators nearby to get to the new facility.

There was no additional public comment.

Mr. Howland MOVED: to close the public hearing. Mr. Francis seconded.

Ms. Anderson said that she wanted to pursue Mr. Wolnik's suggestion for a sidewalk into the site from Northampton Road. Mr. la Cour and Mr. Francis explained that it would be difficult because of a stream on the site.

The Motion passed 6-0.

Mr. Howland MOVED: to approve the plans for SPR2007-00003, 170 University Drive, as presented and subject to the following conditions and waiver:

Conditions

- 1) The applicant shall acquire all applicable state, federal and local permits.
- 2) Four (4) copies of the final plans shall be submitted to the Planning Department.
- 3) This permit will expire in two (2) years if sufficient construction has not begun.

Waiver

Traffic Impact Statement

Mr. Suarez seconded, and the Motion passed 6-0.

I. MINUTES

October 4, 2006

Ms. Scipioni MOVED: to accept the Minutes of October 4, 2006. Mr. Howland seconded, and the Motion passed 6-0.

November 1, 2006

Mr. Francis MOVED: to accept the Minutes of November 1, 2006 as submitted. Mr. Howland seconded, and the Motion passed 5-0-1 (Suarez abstained).

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. **Smart Growth Conference – December 1, 2006** – brochure in packet
- B. **Planning Commissioners Journal** – in packet
- C. **Other** – None

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Town Meeting – Update

The Board signed the forms for submittal to the Attorney General for the Wetland District amendment which was adopted by Town Meeting.

Mr. Hayden said that he wanted the Zoning Subcommittee to keep the two articles that were referred back by Town Meeting at the top of the list so they would be ready for Spring Town Meeting (Main Street rezoning & FC Development).

B. Agricultural Commission Representative

Mr. Francis MOVED: to postpone this appointment until Ms. Pynchon is present. Mr. Howland seconded, and the Motion passed 6-0.

V. FORM A (ANR) SUBDIVISION APPLICATIONS – None

VI. UPCOMING ZBA APPLICATIONS

The Board decided not to review the following:

ZBA2007-00016, Henry Street – Tom Lane

VII. UPCOMING SPP/SPR/SUB APPLICATIONS

Mr. la Cour reminded the Board that Haskins View will be coming up on December 6th. Amherst College has submitted a Site Plan Review application for changes to the athletic fields on Northampton Road.

Mr. Suarez noted that he will not be here on December 6th. Ms. Scipioni and Mr. Francis will not be here on December 20th.

Mr. Hayden requested that discussion of the Mullin Rule be scheduled on an early January agenda.

VIII. PLANNING BOARD SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS – No Reports

IX. PLANNING BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Pioneer Valley Planning Commission** – There were two pieces of correspondence from PVPC, “The Regional Reporter” and a letter about the Veridian Village at Hampshire College proposed project.
- B. Community Preservation Act Committee** – Mr. Francis said that he was happy to note that the ½ percent increase sought at Town Meeting was adopted.
- C. Agricultural Commission** – No Report
- D. Comprehensive Planning Committee** – Ms. Scipioni said that the Committee is proceeding with forming work groups for the various elements of a Master Plan. She said that discussion about Planning Board approval of the comprehensive plan should be put on a future agenda so the Board will be prepared to respond to activity which is underfoot to have the comprehensive plan approved by Town Meeting.

Mr. Howland noted that Town Meeting will have to ratify any zoning changes.

Mr. Suarez said he didn’t know what had transpired so far and wanted an up-to-date report. Mr. la Cour suggested this could be a future agenda item.

X. REPORT OF THE CHAIR – No Report

XI. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR - No Report

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Anderson MOVED: to adjourn this meeting at 8:37 PM. Mr. Howland seconded, and the Motion passed 6-0.

Respectfully submitted:

Sue Krzanowski, Management Assistant

Approved:

Aaron A. Hayden, Chair

DATE: _____