

TOWN OF AUBURN, MASSACHUSETTS
AUBURN PLANNING BOARD
Minutes of the Meeting
Auburn Town Hall Select Board Meeting Room | May 9, 2023 – 7:00 PM

Members Present: Chair John Regan and Member Dwarakesh Nallan

Members Absent: Vice Chair Todd Kirrane, Member Ron Brooks, and Member Sierra Smarra

Also Present: Town Planner Dr. Adam Menard and Staff Assistant Danielle Chamberland Roberts

Mr. Regan called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and provided hybrid participation instructions for meeting attendees and access information to interested viewers. The Town cable staff was present, and the meeting was recorded and televised. No other attendee was recording the meeting.

Mr. Regan announced at 7:02 PM that the meeting would take a 10-minute recess while the Board waits on a third member to arrive in order to have a quorum. Dr. Menard said that he had just received an email from the member in question who was ill and therefore unable to attend. Mr. Regan announced that the recess was no longer necessary, and informed all in attendance that the Board was unable to make any votes without a quorum.

I. **ANR:** None

II. **Public Hearings:**

a. **Applicant Kimley - Horn and Associates requesting Site Plan Approval under section 3.2.6.1 of the Auburn Zoning Bylaw for a self-storage facility at 319 Washington Street, Auburn, MA 01501, Map 42 Parcel 31.** *(Cont. from 4/11/23)*

No one was present to represent the applicant, but Dr. Menard announced that Kimley-Horn and Associates were still working on the peer review changes and were expecting to present at the next meeting on May 23, 2023. Mr. Regan said at 7:03 PM that as a result the hearing will be automatically continued.

b. **Applicant Eastland Partners Inc. requesting Site Plan Approval under section 3.2.6.0 of the Auburn Zoning Bylaw for a warehouse/distribution facility at 190 Washington Street, Lot 1, Auburn, MA 01501, Map 34 Parcel 4.** *(Cont. from 4/11/23)*

Mr. Steve O'Connell of Turning Point Engineering was present to represent the applicant.

Mr. Regan said that he was aware that there were some updates to Graves Engineering's peer review but unfortunately the hearing will be continued due to the lack of quorum. Despite this, he was still interested in hearing Mr. O'Connell's presentation, and Mr. O'Connell agreed to present with the understanding that no votes would be held.

Mr. O'Connell said he has when he considers a final peer review letter from Graves Engineering dated April 25, 2023. All of the items have been acknowledged except for a few that require action by the Planning Board, which he listed by the associated comment numbers from the letter:

- Comment 7, which requests a waiver for the landscaping requirement on the northern end of the building.
- Comment 12, which says that the Board may wish to include a condition in its decision that requires the applicant to submit a geotechnical consultant-based slope design which the Planning Board can also review.

Mr. Nallan said that he agreed with Comment 10, which states that the Planning Board may wish to solicit comments from the Department of Public Works to ensure that the Department has no issues from a maintenance access perspective. Dr. Menard said that he could contact the DPW to solicit their comments.

There was no public comment.

Mr. Regan referenced the foundation landscaping plan from Comment 7 to say that he would like to see the new plan. Mr. O'Connell showed the Board the most recent version on his blueprints, using a laser pointer to highlight the areas that the waiver is requesting. Mr. Regan asked which kind of trees were going to be planted parallel to Route 20; Mr.

2 Auburn Planning Board Meeting Minutes of May 9, 2023

O'Connell replied to say Scarlet Oaks. Mr. Regan asked Mr. O'Connell to confirm that there were no Norway Maples on the plan as they were prohibited by the Town, and Mr. O'Connell did, citing the excellent work of the landscape architect he works with and her familiarity with the Town Bylaws.

Mr. Regan then cited Comment 5, which states that the applicant would place dumpsters on each end of the building. He asked if these would be screened from the road and Mr. O'Connell said they would, with solid fencing. Mr. Regan then mentioned Comment 10 to say that he would also like to solicit the DPW's comments. Mr. O'Connell offered to explain further, saying that on the approved subdivision plan there is a large triangular stormwater basin on the lot. The applicants accounted for a large portion of the lot being impervious, he believes about 90%. The plan showed maintenance access to the basin on two of the three eastern sides, and Graves Engineering said that the grading can now offer access to the third west side as well. Mr. O'Connell said the plan never proposed access to the western side, but this is where the DPW may want to comment. He also reminded the Board that this is intended as a private subdivision road, maintained by the Lot owner's Trust. Mr. Regan replied that that is true only as long as the Trust exists, and as such it might become Town property at some time in the future. Mr. O'Connell replied that he understood, and saw the necessity of addressing all of the Town Departments' comments and requirements.

Mr. Regan returned his line of questioning to the basin, asking about its depth. Mr. O'Connell replied that the deepest elevation of water is five feet, and Mr. Regan suggested that the applicants install a fence around the basin for safety, 4-foot black chain-link with black vinyl coated posts. Mr. O'Connell said that there is another basin that was part of the subdivision but not the site plan, with four feet of operating depth in the water. Mr. Regan asked that the smaller basin be fenced as well.

Mr. Regan moved to Comment 12 to say that he needs more specifics and documentation from the geotechnical consultant including means and methods, testing and compaction, etc. He also suggested that on Comment 17, which references another 1:1 slope, the applicants may also want the geotechnical consultant to review it depending on the size. Mr. O'Connell said that that area is only 1 foot tall, as it's the spillway elevation for the berm of the basin.

Mr. Regan thanked Mr. O'Connell for his time and apologized for lack of a quorum. Mr. O'Connell said that it was a good discussion, and he wanted to report to the Board on behalf of Mr. Chris Horne of Eastland Partners with respect to the previous meeting. At said meeting the Board had discussed conditioning the Certificate of Occupancy on completion of the roadway work, and Mr. Horne has no objection to the request. Mr. Regan and Mr. O'Connell reviewed the proposed timeline of the site plan completion and roadwork improvements and agreed that they were compatible.

Mr. O'Connell was also prepared to report on the traffic reduction from an automotive dealership to a warehouse, both of which were considerations for use. During the AM peak hour, 56 vehicle trips were estimated, with 76 during the PM peak hour for an automobile dealership. For a warehouse, the new traffic estimates are 36 trips during the AM peak hour and 39 during PM peak hour. Mr. Regan said he believes that's a very conservative estimate. Mr. O'Connell explained that the estimates are skewed by the outlier data on Saturdays, which for an automobile dealership is extremely high. For a dealership, the Saturday midday peak hour traffic estimate was 162 trips, and the warehouse estimate is 5 trips. The weekday total for a dealership is an estimated 830 trips, now at 200 for a warehouse, and the Saturday total is an estimated 1568 trips for a dealership and 16 for a warehouse.

Mr. O'Connell finished by noting that the original subdivision showed that the Lot would have its own access driveway from Washington Street, and that is no longer the case. The only access is now the subdivision road off of Washington Street, which both the Fire Department and MassDOT greatly approved of. Mr. Regan agreed that this was a good idea and would be much safer. He also stated that if a car dealership does want to move into this Lot there would be a strict prohibition on unloading cars on Route 20. Mr. O'Connell agreed, but stated that the potential dealerships are no longer interested and the only current plan is for a 100,000 square foot storage warehouse.

Mr. Regan said at 7:22 PM he would presume that the Board would allow a motion to pass for a continuance, so it will be automatically continued.

c. **Applicant Robert Lemansky for G. L. McKinstry Trust, for a Definitive Subdivision Plan for a two lot single family home development with site improvements on property located at Claire Drive and Linda Avenue, Auburn, MA 01501 (Cont. from 4/11/2023)**

Mr. Robert Lemansky of 157 Sunset Drive in Charlton presented. He extended his gratitude to the Planning Board for its patience on the project. The issue that he wanted to present was the difficulty that his engineer, Jason Dubois, was

3 Auburn Planning Board Meeting Minutes of May 9, 2023

having in scheduling a meeting with Joanna Paquin, Town Engineer and Director of the DPW. Mr. Lemansky is aware that Mr. Dubois has been in contact with Dr. Menard about this issue but Mr. Lemansky is committed to continuing to move forward. Mr. Dubois had met with Ms. Paquin on April 5, 2023. She didn't have any plans so he dropped off another full set on April 12, 2023. Mr. Dubois sent her an email on April 26, 2023 with no response, but in order to go forward Ms. Paquin's input is necessary. Mr. Regan asked for clarification: has Mr. Dubois made appointments that Ms. Paquin cancels? Mr. Lemansky read some emails between Ms. Paquin and Mr. Dubois detailing their attempts to schedule a meeting, including one from March 30, 2023 where Ms. Paquin says that she is available between 9:00 and 12:00 on April 5, 2023. Mr. Dubois replied that he would meet her at 9:00 on April 5, 2023. At the scheduled time, Mr. Dubois met with and gave Ms. Paquin all of the plans that she had asked for, and there's been no response from her since. Mr. Lemansky shared the emails with the Board for its review.

He continued to say that he does not wish to complain. The Board has been very gracious and everyone has busy times in their lives, but Mr. Dubois and Ms. Paquin do need to meet and work through this plan. Dr. Menard said that he can follow up with DPW tomorrow, and Mr. Regan said that it's likely Ms. Paquin is not reviewing the plans herself as she has several P.E.s in the DPW. He proffered that there may have been employee absences due to illness or there may be too much work to do.

Mr. Lemansky and Mr. Regan reminisced about businesses that used to be in Auburn and the way that things have changed over the years. Both men thanked each other for their time before parting ways.

III. Other Business:

- a. **Discussion:** None
- b. **Modification:** None
- c. **Decisions:** None
- d. **Minutes:** The Minutes could not be voted upon for acceptance due to lack of a quorum but Mr. Nallan commented to Ms. Chamberland Roberts that the April 25, 2023 Minutes were helpful. He was unable to attend the meeting and found Section IIc to be particularly helpful.
- e. **New Business Unforeseen by the Chair:** None
- f. **Member/Town Planner Update:** None
- g. **Adjournment / Next Meeting: 5/23/2023**

Again, due to lack of quorum a vote to adjourn was not possible, so at 7:31 PM Mr. Regan made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Next meeting will be May 23, 2023 at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Danielle Chamberland Roberts, Staff Assistant to the Town Manager

To access video playback of the Planning Board meetings, please visit www.auburnguide.com and click the YouTube icon on the homepage to go directly to ACTVAuburn's page.

Planning Board Packet Documents:

- [Auburn Commerce Park at 190 Washington Street, Lot 1](#)
 - [Site Plan Review response letter from Graves Engineering, Inc.](#)
- [Planning Board Agenda](#)
 - [May 9, 2023](#)
- [Planning Board Meeting Minutes](#)
 - [April 11, 2023](#)
 - [April 25, 2023](#)