

CITY OF AUBURN PLANNING BOARD
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2013 6:30 PM, MEMORIAL CITY HALL

Present: Sam Giangreco, Anne McCarthy, Frank Reginelli, Crystal Cosentino, Sheli Graney

Absent: Tim Baroody

Staff: Jennifer Haines, Director, OPED; Andy Fusco, Corporation Counsel; Greg Gilfus, APD Traffic Coordinator; Brian Hicks, Code Enforcement Officer

Agenda Items: Major Site Plan 5500 Technology Park Boulevard, Major Site Plan 61& 65 State Street

Chair calls the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance is recited. Roll is called.

Agenda Item 1: Approval of August 6, 2013 Meeting Minutes.

Chair asks for a motion to approve the minutes of the August 6, 2013 meeting. So moved by Anne McCarthy, seconded by Sheli Graney All members vote approval. Motion carried.

**Agenda Item 2: Application for Major Site Plan review for 5500 Technology Park Boulevard.
Applicant: Mack Studios, Inc.**

Chair invites the applicant to present the project.

Bill Murphy, SPACE Architectural Studios, on behalf Mack Studios Inc. – The application was last presented in March to the Board. Mack Studios is looking to expand their current facility in Tech Park Boulevard. We were informed that wetlands were identified on the property and believe that it is due to not having storm sewers when the Park was first developed. When the Park was developed a lot of impermeable surfaces were added and when it rained all of the rain needed a place to go. It picked a low spot in the parcel adjacent to Mack Studios and collected on the property for about thirty years. We now have a delineated wetland in that location. Mack Studios is working with the City to get power to the parcel. This parcel never had power ran to it and running power to the site will cost approximately \$30,000. Mack Studios is currently working with the Army Corps of Engineers to mitigate the wetlands and fill in a portion of them to allow us to build the addition adjacent to the current facility, making it all one facility for Mack Studios to operate from. Mack Studios is currently renting other property for storage and manufacturing and the increasing travel costs are costly. They need a larger facility and if it is not this one then they may need to move out of the City. We have contracted with RZ engineering and completed a SWPP for the property. The wetland has been delineated, it will remain a wetland, and precautions will be in place to keep the wetland viable.

A surveyor has also been hired to complete a boundary survey of the parcel. The City was slated to do this but due to the pressing nature of the project, Mack Studios hired the surveyors to keep the process going.

We have been working with many different people through this process including the City, engineers, surveyors, Army Corps of Engineers, we have also have an environmental lawyer. Everyone has been requesting certain things and we have been doing our best to putting everything together in the application that is before you this evening.

We have kept Jenny Haines involved in every step of the process. Another point is that this property is a taxable parcel and Mack Studios will be making improvements to the site and will be paying taxes. They would like to break ground in early October and have been working on this for about six months now.

Chair asks the public for any comments. There being none closes the public hearing and asks staff for comments.

Jennifer Haines –This should be a straight forward site plan but because some of the encumbrances on the property, it is not so straight forward. This is one of four boards that Mack Studios is going to go in front of for the approvals needed. This board will be looking at site plan approval and SEQRA determination. Tonight we will be looking at SEQRA determination. We anticipate looking for final site plan approval in October. Later this month the Zoning Board of Appeals will be looking at the rear set back variance, and on Thursday the applicant will be interacting with City Council on the transfer of the property and finally next week they will be going to AIDA for financial assistance.

The Chair asks for Board comments or questions.

Frank Reginelli- Were the wetlands always there or was it due to the development of the area?

Jenny Haines- That piece of property was developed without storm sewers. So as that park has developed, patterns of the water have changed.

Frank Reginelli- Are the wetlands natural?

Jenny Haines-The wetlands have been delineated. So they have to be addressed. The City hired Barton and Loguidice, who had done the delineation report previously and they submitted a preconstruction notification to the Army Corps and DEC to mitigate the wetlands. That is the reason why SEQRA could not be completed in March. Now it is in and under review and in order for the DEC to complete their review they need SEQRA to be completed by this board.

Bill Murphy- Deciduous trees do not typically grow in wetlands. This parcel is full of 30+ yrs. old deciduous trees. Those trees are now dying and thus have become the habitat of the Indiana bat. We have been working with the Army Corps of Engineers on that issue. If the wetland was natural the deciduous trees would not be there.

Jenny Haines- The Army Corps of Engineers has been to the site and have taken different samples as part of their review. Reviews and reads part II of SEQRA and staff recommendation is negative declaration.

Chair asks for a motion for a negative declaration on SEQRA. So moved by Frank Reginelli, seconded by Sheli Graney. All members vote approval. Motion carried.

Andy Fusco – For the benefit of the record, you are specifically making a finding in paragraph two of your negative declaration that the wetlands requirement that is being proposed by the Army Corps of Engineers is not significant. It is a relatively small amount of land. The record should be very clear that you are making a specific finding in this particular case of insignificance regarding the wetlands.

Agenda Item 3: Application for Major Site Plan review for 61 & 65 State Street. Applicant: Empower Federal Credit Union.

Chair invites the applicant to introduce the project.

Applicant presents drawings and plans to the Board.

Daniel Manning of Daniel Manning Architect PLLC on behalf of Empower FCU- I am part of the team that worked to design this site. Napierala and Daniel Manning Architect and GTS were retained to redevelop the two lots on State Street - 61 & 65. The intent of the projects is to demolish of the Budget

Inn and the one story addition on the building that is currently being used as the motel office. What is left is a 4,200 sq. ft. one story building of the historic Osborne Hotel in the C2 zoning district. Empower's intent is to restore the existing structure to be in compliance with your Comprehensive Plan. The building is currently occupied by Cayuga Seneca Action Agency (shows picture of existing building and floor plan). The team obtained original floor plans of the building from the County Historian. The plans include a stand-alone structure that is more than capable of handling snow load. The entrance will be placed on the north side of the building and the south side of the building will be the drive-thru. (North and south elevations of the building are displayed). On the North elevation we created a clock tower that anchors the north-east corner of the building and identifies the two as prominent elevations of the building. The entrance that is closest to the parking area and most convenient to where customers would be entering the building has a smaller tower which becomes an identifiable entrance element. The entrance for the employees will be located on the west side of the building. It is going to be twelve feet off the curb line of State Street.

Neal Zinsmeyer, Napierala Consulting- The challenge has been working with the existing building. We have created two access points one on Water Street and one on Green Street (refers to the displayed site plan.) Which leaves us with the option of the exit only drive thru on State Street. Majority of traffic will go right to the drive thru. There are three drive thru and one by-pass lanes. The curb cut on State Street will be closed at old accesses and curb that is damaged will be replaced. Any sidewalk that is damaged will be replaced as well. The lighting plan was submitted and is within code and meets the bank security requirements. Parking exceeds code. There is parking for employees and for customers.

Chair asks the public for any comments. There being none chair closes the public hearing and asks staff for comments.

Jennifer Haines- Tonight we are looking for action on SEQRA and the submitted site plan tonight. The applicant submitted detailed drawings before they applied to receive feedback from staff. They have been responsive to our concerns. Mr. Manning submitted a letter of explanation regarding some of the more recent changes we requested. They initially had an entrance from State Street into their site but removed it. Our traffic officer was concerned that the entrance would cause stacking issues. They have made several other changes to their plan and have been great to work with. This project does not require coordination for SEQRA so we will be looking at the determination of SEQRA tonight.

Chair asks if Board members have any questions.

Crystal Cosentino asks for description of the outside of the building.

Daniel Manning- The intent is to emulate the historic Osborne Hotel. We will know more about the inside of the building during the selective demolition process.

Sam Giangreco- Nice to see you were sticking with the original intent of the building.

Jennifer Haines reviews and reads part II of the SEQRA and staff recommendation is negative declaration.

Chair asks for a motion for a negative declaration on SEQRA. So moved by Frank Reginelli, seconded by Sheli Graney. All members vote approval. Motion carried.

Jennifer Haines- presents staff comments regarding the site plan. Refers to Daniel Manning's letter of explanation. One of the things I would like to look at and we mentioned with SEQRA is that the Comprehensive Plan talks about pedestrian walkways and front doors in our C2 commercial district. Major Site Plan review included the review of the front stoop at the City's right away and then when the entrance ultimately moved to the back of the building. We would like to see if there is a way to somehow

define the sidewalk that goes into that area or somehow celebrate the fact that there is or feels like there is an entrance off of State Street. Maybe including some type of architectural detail on each side of the sidewalk so that area feels like an entrance to the building. That is something staff would like to work with Mr. Manning and Empower on.

Staff is recommending site plan approval but this is something we can put in the resolution as a condition, if the board wishes to.

Daniel Manning- Absolutely, we can make that work.

Crystal Cosentino questions if the front entrance is there now.

Jennifer Haines- Yes, there is an entrance now, but to make everything work they moved the entrance to the side of the building.

Jennifer Haines continues staff comments- The site plan indicates that there will be a pocket park, which is labeled "pocket park by others". We wanted to make sure that you were aware of what the park was going to be in the meantime and it is going to be a lawn area. As for sidewalks and curbing- the engineering department was interested in curbing all the way around the site and the applicant said that there will be curbing all along State Street, Water Street but not on Green Street or on the Arterial side. On the Arterial side they are doing their draining and Green Street is a dead end which does not have any other buildings. Signage is appropriate and within code. Landscape and lighting were revised with requests from the Design Review Committee. The drive thru was discussed regarding fire access thru the bypass lane and has been approved by the Fire Department. We are looking to remove as much of the fencing as possible along the Arterial. Neal Zinsmeyer has reached out to NYS DOT and will follow up with them.

Frank Reginelli- Curbing is a great thing and will add character and class.

Daniel Manning- The entrance on Green Street will be defined with granite curbs and we will use asphalt curbing on Green Street. Refers to site map and points out the areas where curbing will be installed.

Chair asks for a motion to approve the site plan as submitted. So moved by Frank Reginelli, seconded by Crystal Cosentino. All members vote approval. Motion carried.

Other Matters:

Frank Reginelli asks if there are any updates on the Vitale subdivision. Are they still going with the patio homes?

Andy Fusco- Yes, the attached patio homes.

Frank Reginelli- Questions if research has been done on the design and market feasibility?

Andy Fusco- I do not know if they have done a feasibility study but I did ask Ben Vitale and their attorney that very question and they thought that there was a market for it. The builder they were going to work with believes that there is a market for it too. Apparently, the developer did build and quickly sold homes similar to these in the Camillus area. It was based on the success in the Camillus area that they felt that it was a viable plan for Auburn as well.

Frank Reginelli- Has any associations been discussed?

Andy Fusco- Yes, the Homeowners Association plan has been filed with the State Attorney General. There is a remaining issue regarding the storm retention pond that needs to be resolved.

The date of the November Planning Board meeting is on Election Day and is rescheduled for Wednesday, November 6, 2013 at 6:30p.m.

The date of the next Planning Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 1, 2013 at 6:30p.m.

Motion to adjourn by Frank Reginelli, seconded by Sheli Graney. All members vote approval. Meeting adjourned.

Respectively Submitted by Renee Jensen