

**PLANNING BOARD
MARCH 29, 2011 at 7:30 PM
TOWN HALL, 41 SOUTH MAIN STREET**

In attendance:

Members: Bill Dietrich, Judith Esmay, Michael Mayor, Kate Connolly (Selectmen's Representative)

Alternate: Iain Sim

Staff: Vicki Smith, Jonathan Edwards

Others: See attached sheet

1. OTHER BUSINESS:

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the March 17, 2011 site visit were approved.

2. 11-07 CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC HEARING, SITE PLAN REVIEW OF RENOVATIONS AND ADDITIONS TO HANOVER INN BY DARTMOUTH COLLEGE, 2 SOUTH MAIN STREET, TAX MAP 34, LOT 120, 4 SOUTH MAIN STREET, TAX MAP 34, LOT 121, IN THE "D-1" ZONING DISTRICT, AND 4 EAST WHEELOCK STREET, TAX MAP 34, LOT 17, IN THE "I" ZONING DISTRICT.

ESMAY said the Board's last review of this application ended with a discussion of possible conditions of approval. She noted the receipt of Edwards' Memorandum titled, Action on Hanover Inn Proposal, dated March 22, 2011; revised March 23, 24 & 25, 2011. Edwards said the revisions relate to Conditions D.4 (alternatives to the ZBA Building Code Appeal application) and D.8 (construction activity on Saturdays). ESMAY said there are 15 conditions proposed, all of which have been reviewed by the applicant.

CONNOLLY suggested changing the date of the parking and transportation analysis listed in D.1.b of Edwards' Memo from December 31, 2011 to December 31, 2013. ESMAY explained this would be a deadline for an analysis by a consultant to be funded by the Town and College together. Edwards said the study and projections must be done in order to reach an agreed upon action plan and before the College seeks occupancy permits. Edwards said staff and the consultant are persuaded a credible study can be done that will provide a good solid basis to start from. Paul Olsen, applicant, agreed to change the analysis date to 2013. He said this would allow the Town time to decide how quickly to spend the College's \$12,000 contribution. Unused funds could be used toward future studies. ESMAY said she favored an analysis date of 2012. SIM suggested clarifying how this will be funded on an on-going basis. Edwards said a process will be established by which determination is made whether outside consulting is needed for subsequent years and, if so, how to share the cost. The Board reached consensus to change the date at the end of Condition 1.b to December 31, 2013.

The Board reviewed the requested waivers:

1. Design Review
2. Certification, dated within 6 months, of a currently valid boundary survey by a land surveyor licensed to practice in NH
3. Existing and proposed contour intervals
4. Proposed off-street parking spaces
5. A circulation plan of the interior of the lot
6. Article IX, Section B1 – requirements for trash container rooms or enclosures
7. Article IX, Section B3d(1)(a) - screening/buffering requirements and methods
8. Article IX, Section B3d(1)(e) - screening/buffering requirements and methods for a transformer.

Smith said there is no need for Design Review. That kind of review is very appropriate for an empty, vacant site. This proposal is to add to a fully developed site. Edwards said Tim McNamara (of Dartmouth Real Estate) provided a schematic presentation to the Board months ago. He said he recalled that the Board reached consensus at that time to go directly to final review.

It was moved by CONNOLLY to find the application as complete with the above 8 named waivers. DIETRICH seconded. THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.

Public Comment:

Barbara McIlroy asked why the Board approved the waivers for landscaping behind the building and screening of the trash dumpster and transformer. She said this is the perfect time to improve that particularly ugly area, as the entire hotel is being redone. SIM said the Board was told by the applicant during the site walk that it was impractical to put in the screening given the lot lines and different property owners. McIlroy asked what kind of a buffer would be provided for pedestrians from the transformer. Olsen said it is entirely likely that transformer will be eliminated.

McIlroy asked whether the scope of the parking and transportation study has been developed. Edwards said no, not formally, the consultant is putting together a perspective scope for staff to review. McIlroy asked whether the developments in W. Lebanon, referenced in the applicant's Traffic Impact Assessment, could eventually be factored into a traffic study for Hanover. Edwards said traffic is an important but subsidiary element to the purpose of the proposed study, which is parking. The traffic situation cannot be ignored if we want a responsible study.

Winifred Stearns, of 5 Dorrance Place, asked if physical spaces in the South Block will be used to accommodate Inn conference parking. Olsen said he does not expect to valet park any cars from the Inn to South Block but that could change. Stearns said the South Block garage was only to be used by tenants, not their guests or clients. It was created to service the South Block. The garage empties out onto a residential street, instead of South Street where it belongs. Stearns said there have been things that have not ever been finished on the South Block garage that should have been. There is supposed to be a sign at the exit onto Dorrance Place indicating 'right turn only' or 'no left turn'. Stearns questioned whether the Inn met the 750' requirement for use of parking spaces in the South Block garage. She said

once again, her neighborhood is getting a hit for something they are not responsible for in any way.

Board comments:

SIM asked if a commitment was made that South Block parking would be only for tenants and, if so, how can 8 South Block spaces be used as credits to the Inn project. Edwards said he recalls that the College chose to build additional spaces beyond the requirements. From those additional spaces, 8 are being assigned as parking credits to the benefit of the Inn. SIM asked who specifically will be allowed to park in those 8 spaces. Edwards said they are free to be credited towards anything else the owner wishes within 750'. Olsen said zoning was changed after the South Block project, enabling the use of all downtown lots by businesses, property owners, and visitors of the downtown. SIM asked whether the 8 spaces being credited to the Inn actually relate to physical parking spaces that can be used. Edwards said yes.

DIETRICH asked whether the actual cars to be parked in the lot, as a result of the assignment of these 8 credits, will change. Olsen said that is dependent on whether the Town requires the College to install signs designating spaces for Hanover Inn use only. If so, it is expected those spaces would be used by Inn employees, not for valet or Inn guests. Edwards reported that the Zoning Administrator has not yet determined whether such space assignment will be necessary.

Olsen said if the Inn and Lang Bldg were located on one lot, the Town would look at the requirements for the entire project and say 8 new spaces are needed. Ten new spaces will be provided in the Inn basement. Olsen said the College is actually creating 2 more spaces than the zoning requires between the entirety of the property. Olsen said the issue is that the Town draws a line between the 2 properties, so the College is forced to use parking credits to satisfy the requirements.

Stearns said the whole shtick has been the number of cars and pollution coming out of what she considers an improperly ventilated garage and the Planning Board not sufficiently locking down these things that were done in 2 sessions by request of the College. ESMAY encouraged Stearns to be watchful as the Downtown Committee undertakes parking in the future.

There being no further public comments, ESMAY closed the public hearing.

ESMAY noted the 15 conditions listed in staff's Memorandum dated March 22, 2011; revised March 23, 24, & 25, 2011. **It was moved by DIETRICH to approve the project with the 15 conditions.** ESMAY noted one change to Condition 1.b, to change the date from December 31, 2011 to December 31, 2013. **DIETRICH amended his motion to include the change. MAYOR seconded.** SIM said there are a number of topics identified in a previous staff memo that do not appear in the March 22nd memo. He said his understanding, in speaking with Edwards, is that by virtue of the law, those other issues will still be part of the project. SIM said if it is clear this is not a comprehensive list of all of the issues and their resolution, he would be satisfied. ESMAY said the project will be under the continuing supervision of the Dept. of Public Works and Building Inspector to address those other matters. **THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.**

Edwards stressed to the applicant the importance of expediting what happens after this. He asked that they please prepare one more plan set than required for the Planning Board Chair to sign for inclusion in their application package for the Zoning & Building Permits.

3. OTHER BUSINESS (con't from above):

Parking Study Group:

Edwards said he and Jay Campion are working to include the Chamber of Commerce in the downtown parking issues discussions. ESMAY said the issue of parking inevitably involves talk of public transportation. She said the Board would like to meet with Van Chesnut, of Advanced Transit, for an informal discussion about how AT and public transportation fits into parking and planning.

SIM said the Board should be prepared to speak at Town Meeting about their votes against the petitioned amendments (related to downtown parking). He said he is glad to hear staff is moving forward with assembling a group to study the overall parking issue.

Streetscape Design:

Edwards said another issue that requires attention is to get a coherent downtown streetscape design. CONNOLLY said the streetscape was modified in the 1980's and it was costly. Edwards said staff's main objection is that the current design is difficult and expensive to maintain and repair in kind.

Bus Shelter at the Inn:

Edwards said the Town is seeking grant funding to provide a new, larger, heated bus shelter near the Inn, after the Inn project is finished.

4. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beth Rivard