

**City of Salem Planning Board
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 2, 2015**

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Salem Planning Board was held on Thursday, April 2, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in Room 313, Third Floor, at 120 Washington Street, Salem, Massachusetts.

Chairman Puleo opened the meeting at 7:10pm.

Roll Call

Those present were: Chuck Puleo, Chair, Ben Anderson, Vice Chair, Helen Sides, Randy Clarke, Kirt Rieder, Bill Griset, Matthew Veno and Noah Koretz. Absent: Dale Yale.

Also present: Erin Schaeffer, Staff Planner, and Pamela Broderick, Planning Board Recording Clerk.

Approval of Minutes

March 19, 2014 Regular Meeting Minutes

No comments or corrections were made by the Planning Board members.

Motion and Vote: *Kirt Rieder made a motion to approve the March 19, 2014 Regular Meeting Minutes, seconded by Randy Clarke. The vote was unanimous with eight (8) in favor and none (0) opposed.*

Regular Agenda

Location: 220 Highland Avenue (Map 8, Lot 0124)
Applicant: Tropical Products, Inc.
Description: A continuation of the public hearing for an application for Site Plan Review, to consider an application to remove the existing silos and to extend the building along Highland Avenue, with a 574 square foot addition to the first floor, and a 3,485 square foot addition to the second floor.

Documents and Exhibitions:

- **Original Submitted Drawings:**
 - Plan of Land Prepared for Berman Properties, LLC | 220 Highland Avenue, Salem, MA, dated 2-17-2015
 - Sheet A-1: South East Building Elevations, dated 2/24/2015
 - Sheet A-2: North East Building Elevations, dated 2/24/2015
 - Sheet A-3: Northwest Building Elevations, dated 2/24/2015
 - Sheet A-4: South West Building Elevations, dated 2/24/2015
- **Additional and Revised Drawings:**
 - Sheet C-1: Site Plan by Graves Engineering Inc., dated 3/25/2015
 - Sheet A-6: Modifications of Proposed New Work Plans, Elevations & Sections, dated 3/24/2015
 - Sheet A-7: Existing/Proposed Building Use Plans & Parking Information, dated 3/24/2015

Atty George Atkins of Ronan, Segal & Harrington, 59 Federal Street, presented for the applicant. Other presenters included:

- William Medinger, AIA, president & principal, MBA International Architects, 44 Washington Street, Melrose MA
- Ed Berman, President, Tropical Products, 220 Highland Avenue, Salem, MA.
- Renee Dionne, Vice President Finance & Operations, Tropical Products, 220 Highland Avenue, Salem, MA.

Atty Atkins introduced the executive team and architect in attendance. The group has worked diligently to address all questions raised at the last meeting. He referenced the revised drawings to illustrate the key updates:

Sheet C-1, Revisions:

- Addition of wetlands and buffer zone to this plan to illustrate this project is far enough away to not require additional approvals or special accommodation.
- Narrow curb cut, driveway and paving adjacent the silos subject to Mass DOT (Massachusetts Department of Transportation) approval.
- “X” (2) on the Highland Avenue (SE corner) of the building indicates existing silos to be removed.
- “X” (2) at the rear of the building and “X” (3) right rear of the building, current dead storage trailers which will be removed if the project goes forward.
- Five (5) new parking spaces sized 9’ X 22’
- Bicycle rack added to the rear, requesting some flexibility regarding number of racks and exact location based on employee preferences.
- Right side overhead doors:
 - four (4) are not used
 - one (1) is used for tractor-trailers (closest to Highland Ave)
 - One (1) adjacent the tractor-trailer dock is used by small box trucks.

As requested, the turn-around for tractor-trailers and turning radii are now noted on the plan. There is a conflict for the exit of a tractor-trailer so they removed the 5 additional parking spaces completely. Parking space requirements are still met.

A-7 1st Floor Plan:

- Atty Atkins first called attention to a misprint on the plan, left side is existing building; the right side drawing is the proposed plan.
- Atty Atkins reviewed the parking calculation as now detailed on the site plan; the project is in compliance with all zoning requirements for parking.

A-6 Floor Plan 2nd floor addition:

- Fork lift used to move goods from 1st to 2nd floor.
- Narrowing of the southern driveway shown on this drawing subject to Mass DOT permitting.

Additional Questions Addressed:

- Board of Health wanted to know about any new trash requirements. Written summary of current trash handling was provided. A compactor is used with private contractor pickup. Cardboard is saved and bailed, picked up by North Shore Arc who sells it to recycling. Drums are

returned to vendor once emptied. New space will not generate different types of waste or handling requirements.

- Proponent has agreed to the draft decision language including the conditions per City Engineer with regards to drainage plan; approval prior to building permit.
- Lighting, no new lighting will be added to the front of the building. On the silos there are 14” square spotlights which will be removed. A small exit door will be added where silos were and will have an outside, downward-directed, hooded light at the entrance as required. Tear sheet example provided.
- Existing landscaping will not be removed, no plans to install additional landscaping as the area is small. Proponent will continue to maintain the shoulder adjacent to Highland Avenue.

The proponent researched the matter of adding a sidewalk and curbing along the Highland Avenue portion of their property:

- This is a substantial cost and out of proportion to the cost and scope of the project. The City Building inspector was able to source estimates which range from \$40,000-\$50,000.
- Mass DOT permitting would be required and Conservation Commission approval as the sidewalk/curb reaches the wetlands buffer zone at one end of the property.
- This week the City learned that Route 107 improvements long- planned by Mass DOT are to be activated shortly. Highland Avenue abutters are required to keep the frontage area as open as possible so as not to obstruct the DOT improvements.

Board Discussion:

Chair Puleo asked the proponent, if MassDOT requires repair of some curbing and sidewalk, are you willing to do the work? Atty Atkins advised yes.

Chair Puelo advised he has met with the City Planner and they have learned from Mass DOT that Route 107 from Maple Street (Lynn) to Salem Hospital will be covered under the state’s improvement plan.

The Board collectively stated their appreciation of the completeness of the presentation, noting it to be a thorough response to their previous questions. They Board agree that in light of the Mass DOT project and the small scale of the project it is not reasonable to require curbing and sidewalks along Highland Avenue to be added to this project. The Board also noted this is a desirable project for Salem as it adds to our economic diversity with light manufacturing that does not add environmental risk.

The Board recommended the bicycle rack capacity be added to the site plan drawings to avoid any future criticism. After brief discussion, the Board and proponent agreed a capacity of 3-5 bicycles was appropriate; more to be added based on employee interest.

The Board confirmed no additional HVAC units will be added; no additional or changes to current signage.

Motion and Vote: Ben Anderson made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Bill Grisct. The vote was unanimous with eight (8) in favor (Mr. Puleo, Mr. Anderson, Ms. Sides, Mr. Clarke, Mr. Rieder, Mr. Grisct, Mr. Veno and Mr. Koretz) and none (0) opposed.

Board Discussion:

The Board reviewed in detail the draft decision prepared by planning staff. Minor edits and changes were made.

Motion and Vote: Helen Sides made a motion to approve the Site Review Plan application subject to all conditions as itemized in the attached decision, seconded by Randy Clarke. The vote was unanimous with eight (8) in favor (Mr. Puleo, Mr. Anderson, Ms. Sides, Mr. Clarke, Mr. Rieder, Mr. Griset, Mr. Veno and Mr. Koretz) and none (0) opposed. The decision is hereby incorporated and made a part of these minutes.

Old/New Business

- **28 Goodhue update**
 - Staff has inspected and observed the gate has been removed from the common path but post and hardware are still in place. The Board directed planning staff to send correspondence directing the removal of the post and hardware—all elements of the gate.
- **Recycling and composting update**
 - Planning staff is still researching the matter.
 - Mr. Clarke suggested the staff draft correspondence from the Planning Board to City Council recommending they take any necessary action to require recycling be included at all larger residential developments. The Planning Board is looking for a way to support a requirement to include recycling as a requirement on appropriate site review plans. The Planning Board would also like to strongly encourage or even require composting for larger residential developments, in support of the City’s green policies.
- **107 Highland Avenue update**
 - Staff provided photographs of the project; on the south and north sides of the building the developer has enclosed what was previously open “pigeon shelves” trim under the eaves (they have been left open on the front of the building). This was not the agreement; this trim was to be preserved and painted.
 - Planning Board directed staff to send correspondence to the developer indicating the work must be brought into compliance with the approved plan as noted on the drawings during the recent staff inspection. Failure to comply will result in the Planning Board withdrawing approval of the site plan and notification to the Building Department not to issue an occupancy permit.
 - The Board agreed there are some modifications from the approved plan that could be considered for approval, but revised drawings should be formally submitted along with any such request. Significant elements not in compliance that must be fixed include:
 - Under the eave “pigeon shelves” all around the building
 - Panels under the windows (not siding as currently installed)
 - Pediment over the basement door should be removed.

Adjournment

Motion and Vote: Randy Clarke made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Kirt Rieder. The vote was unanimous with eight (8) in favor (Mr. Puleo, Mr. Anderson, Ms. Sides, Mr. Clarke, Mr. Rieder, Mr. Griset and Mr. Veno) and none (0) opposed.

Chairman Puleo adjourned the meeting at 8:10pm.

For actions where the decisions have not been fully written into these minutes, copies of the decisions have been posted separately by address or project at: http://www.salem.com/Pages/SalemMA_PlanMin/

Respectfully submitted,
Pamela Broderick, Recording Clerk

Know your rights under the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. c. 30A § 18-25 and City Ordinance § 2-2028 through § 2-2033.