

**SEEKONK PLANNING BOARD**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**June 9, 2015**

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Present: Ch. Abelson, M. Bourque, R. Bennett, D. Sullivan, L. Dunn  
S. Foulkes absent with cause  
7:00PM Ch. Abelson opened the meeting

**Discussion: Planning Board Member Candidates**

Ch. Abelson briefly summarized the candidates running for Planning Board. He advised that one person withdrew, one had been appointed to the Housing Authority Board, and candidate, James Roach, looks like a good candidate for us.

J. Roach introduced himself and explained that he works for Citizens Financial Group in the Supply Chain Services and manages strategic vendors for technology services; he was in strategic sourcing, partnered up with the property division, and worked with major construction projects.

Ch. Abelson advised there was another candidate named Chris Zorra. Chris is also on the Housing Authority and there is a question of whether he can be on the Planning Board because the Housing Authority is an elected Board, but it is also involved with the State.

C. Zorra believes the Town Charter only states if you are on two town boards...

J. Aubin said that the language states, "No person shall simultaneously hold more than one elected office" and does not make a designation between State and Municipal (Article 3, Sect. 2).

D. Sullivan said the Housing Authority is not mentioned as an elected position in the Town Charter and asked how that restriction relates since it is not an elected board.

J. Aubin said that is why we will defer to BOS and Town Clerk.

Ch. Abelson said even if it is a state board, the person is elected at the town election by the town and not a state election.

J. Aubin said he would look into whether or not a formal request for determination can be made with the Town Clerk and the Town Administrator. It will need to be continued and discussed at the next meeting. He then asked Chris to introduce himself.

Ch. Abelson explained the process if it would be allowed; both candidates would go to a joint meeting with the BOS and the Planning Board. At that time, both boards would vote for the appointment.

C. Zorra introduced himself as a lifelong resident, having done construction work and knows how to read blue prints.”

Ch. Abelson advised that they would be in touch with them when they had a determination. We will have to table this until next meeting when we have the legal opinion.

**Discussion: Woodward Meadows Surety Release and Rescission of Definitive Subdivision Plan**

D. Bray summarized that Seekonk Meadows, LLC sold the property and the new property owner would like to have the Planning Board rescind the subdivision since they do not desire to build a roadway. They want it to be one parcel of land as opposed to building a road and having 5 parcels. D. Bray drafted a covenant release and a rescission document. Once that document is signed and notarized by the Board, it can be recorded at the Registry of Deeds with the map of land releasing the covenant and rescinding the Definitive Subdivision Plan.

**A motion was made by L. Dunn and seconded by R. Bennett, and voted unanimously to approve to release the covenant and rescind the Definitive Subdivision for Woodward Estates.**

**Discussion: Site Plan Review 540, 546 Arcade Avenue, Senior Center**

David Potter from PAR Corporation, representing the Senior Center Building Committee and provided a brief explanation of the proposed renovations to the building on Arcade Avenue to create the Senior Center. The office building was purchased in 2014 by the Town and consists of office space and a pool showroom. There is a residential house to the South, Taunton Avenue is on the other side, the parking lot is situated on the west of the building, and there are pools and a lawn area to the North. Topographically, everything slopes away from the building towards Arcade Avenue, and to the north towards the Knights of Columbus. The building is only 4 feet away from the property line to the YMCA but has already gone through zoning and a Special Permit was granted to use the property as a Senior Center. David Potter explained the proposed accessibility to the existing building with the intention of making the parking lot ADA compliant; creating 2 drop-off stations for visitors and 2 points of egress with the main point of access on the north side. The main entrance will be the northwest corner of the building and there will be a crosswalk to provide pedestrian access to the existing sidewalk. Currently, there are 2 curb cuts (South and North) and they will be increasing the curb cut at the northwest of the property. The pool will be removed in the north area and a patio will replace the lawn area. There will be a concrete walkway that extends across the property for pedestrians to get to the Knights of Columbus’s property. There is also concrete walkway on the east side of property (YMCA) and another connector on the other side of the building. There is an existing easement on the property since a portion of an abutter’s leaching field extends onto the property. Grading will be required on the east of the property and the YMCA has granted a 15 foot wide easement from the property line to allow that to happen.

J. Aubin asked if there will be a connection between the two properties.

D. Potter said yes and explained they found value in having a connection to the back of the property. There are 2 egress doors on the east side of the building and there is a walkway that runs the whole length. There will be a new fence around the property and a gate within that fence to allow access. The parking lot shows 36 spaces. There is an anticipated use of the facility and part of this will remain office space, with the remainder being used as the community center. They calculated the parking required based on zoning and the 36 spaces meet the minimum for normal use of the building. It is anticipated to have 40 people every day between the existing office space and the community center. There is an agreement with the Knights of Columbus to use their parking lot if the senior center has special events and there is a walkway that extends from the entry door to the back of Knights of Columbus.

Ch. Abelson asked if it was a written agreement.

D. Potter answered yes. He also said, another reason for an entrance in the back allows the main entrance to be an open lobby area that allows for some seating, a small café and social space. Each of the individual multipurpose rooms, office spaces, bathrooms, classroom, nurse's office, will also be accessed from that one area. There is egress in the back of the building from the larger multipurpose room and the smaller room, and two rooms can be combined to have a larger space that will hold up to 100 people for dinner. There is a proposed new entry canopy with a covered walkway, but they are constrained by budget. There will be a Phase II eventually and they are trying to map out how the building will be used.

L. Dunn asked for the square footage of the senior center.

D. Potter answered the office space is 2 stories so this is 6,000 sq ft. and pointed out that an existing loading dock is now level with the parking lot and Meals on Wheels can directly deliver to the kitchen area. The entire space will have sprinklers.

Ch. Abelson asked if there had been any discussion with the police department about the entrances and exits as it is close to the intersection.

J. Aubin said that Dave Cabral with DPW also raised that issue and pointed out that the entrance is also used as an ingress and egress for the residential property. One possible solution may be to have enter and exit signs on the northern most entry way for parking, and leave the other entrance/exit with no sign, so in time, hopefully, it will only be used for residents. The other issue was with the four spaces on the left hand side on the northern side of the property. I would suggest marking that as employee or tenant parking because of the last 2 conflicts we discussed regarding the vehicles.

D. Potter mentioned his concern with having people enter on this end, and if they were dropping someone off, they would need to enter from that side.

J. Aubin suggested putting a sign for drop-off entrance only to control the traffic a little more.

D. Potter discussed the parking for the 2-3 times per year for a big event such as a large supper. Even if they do not have the ability to cook on site, they can bring food in and warm it in the kitchen. The parking required for one of those is a maximum of 79 with a minimum of 34 spaces. So the 36 spaces on-site would meet that requirement. But as a precaution, the K of C parking area (as agreed) provides parking on the nights they have larger events. That document has a requirement to have advanced notice to avoid any conflict.

D. Bowden advised if they decide to sell the property down the road, we have the right of first refusal and it has been filed with the Registry of Deeds.

L. Dunn asked if there was going to be a below ground floor during phase I.

D. Potter said it will all be one floor. He also said there is a below ground floor because it is a split level, but the pool will be filled in and made one level.

D. Bowden clarified that Phase I is in the retail area but Phase II will need an elevator to access the lower level; in the meantime, you still have a senior center.

J. Aubin asked if there are any other existing drainage structures other than sheet flow.

D. Potter replied everything right now is sheet flow off the site and the soil is really good here. For the landscaping, plantings are proposed throughout the site. On the 2 islands that we had in front, new trees are proposed, trees along the northern edge between the Knights of Columbus property line, space for perennials, the island between the sidewalk on Arcade Avenue and the parking lot will be landscaped with low bushes, shrubs and groundcover, and the northern edge will also have some plantings.

J. Aubin advised that according to a provision and state fire regulations, mulch and plantings can't occur within 18 inches of the building. He recommends making it a condition on the decision as opposed to doing a plan sheet over again.

D. Potter discussed the lighting plan. There are lights on each of the new islands. They are all 20 ft. lights that will light the back parking lot and two lights along the building to light the walkway. There is a post light along the walkway and the entrances are pretty well lit.

J. Aubin said since this is a senior center he assumes the primary purpose for night lighting is for security purposes as opposed to nightly functions. The building appears to be pretty well lit. The YMCA is only 4 feet from the property line and that is also well lit.

D. Potter mentioned the director of center said they don't have functions at night, however, in the winter, it starts to get darker earlier so they may have people in the dark, but not at nighttime.

D. Bowden said they currently close at 4:30.

D. Sullivan asked D. Bowden if the Town Hall could use the space as an alternative place to hold committee meetings.

D. Bowden said the space in this building is limited. If we get to Phase II, we will have more space and if it is not being used by the seniors, and all the files are locked, the town could meet with clearance from the director.

Ch. Abelson asked Mr. Bowden if there was a restriction on the deed and if the agreement passes with the property. Ch. Abelson also questioned if the right of first refusal is recorded.

D. Bowden said the right of first refusal will go to town meeting next Monday for final approval; but the cross easement parking is in writing and has been filed.

D. Potter explained the types of trees they plan on planting. Along the K of C parking area, there will be evergreen trees, deciduous trees along the front, as well as deciduous shrubs and ornamental grasses. Deciduous trees are proposed in the parking lot as well to create shade. Construction is anticipated to begin in the fall.

R. Bennett asked if anyone considered a vegetable garden that the seniors could enjoy.

D. Potter mentioned that there has been discussion about what could happen out there with the possibility of raised beds but they are focused on the interior with the budget they have.

**D. Sullivan made a motion to approve with the restriction requested by the Fire Chief.**

J. Aubin asked if they should also make a reference to the parking signage.

Ch. Abelson agreed.

L. Dunn asked to make sure of the agreement with K of C in regard with overflow parking.

Ch. Abelson advised that it has been recorded.

J. Aubin recommended that the Board stipulate that there will be no mulch and plantings within 18" of the building, the 4 spaces in the northwest corner of the site include a sign for employee parking, a sign for drop-off at the southern curb cut and signs for ingress and egress at the northern curb cuts all need to be added.

**D. Bourque included those recommendations in his motion and R. Bennett seconded, and it was unanimously approved.**

### **Adjournment**

**A motion was made, seconded, and voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:00PM**

Respectfully Submitted by,

Kristen L'Heureux