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5 **Stratham Planning Board**
6 **Meeting Minutes**
7 **August 7, 2013**
8 **Municipal Center, Selectmen's Meeting Room**
9 **10 Bunker Hill Avenue**
10 **Time: 7:00 PM**
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13 **Members Present:** Mike Houghton, Chairman
14 Bruno Federico, Selectmen's Representative
15 Jameson Paine, Member
16 Tom House, Member
17 Mary Jane Werner, Alternate
18 Steve Doyle, Alternate
19 Christopher Merrick, Alternate
20

21 **Members Absent:** Bob Baskerville, Vice Chairman
22

23 **Staff Present:** Lincoln Daley, Town Planner
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26 **1. Call to Order/Roll Call.**

27 The Chairman took roll call and as Mr. Baskerville was absent, asked Mr. Doyle to be a
28 full voting member. Mr. Doyle agreed.
29

30 **2. Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes.**

31 a. June 19, 2013

32 b. July 17, 2013

33 Mr. Federico made a motion to approve the minutes as amended of June 19th, 2013.
34 Motion seconded by Mr. Paine. Motion carried unanimously. The Chairman deferred
35 the approval of the July 17, 2013 minutes until the next meeting.

36 **3. Public Hearing(s).**

37 a. **Sarnia Properties Inc., 3 Portsmouth Avenue, Stratham, NH, Tax Map 4, Lots 2-6.**
38 Site Plan Review Application for a shopping center redevelopment to construct
39 approximately 17,900 square feet of retail and office space and related lighting,
40 landscaping, drainage, and parking/access improvements.

41 Mr. Daley recommended that the Board make a motion to accept the application as
42 complete. He added that he had received comments from Civilworks about the site

1 plan of this application and the Town will work with the applicant on those areas in a
2 future meeting.

3 Mr. Federico made a motion to accept the Sarnia application as complete as of this date.
4 Motion seconded by Mr. Doyle. Motion carried unanimously.

5 Mr. Todd Baker, Project Manager introduced himself. He explained that there are
6 currently 2 residential homes on the lot which they would like to eliminate to expand a
7 portion of the commercial area. They have a lessee already and would like to relocate
8 the day care.

9 Mr. Baker said the plan has changed a little since the last time they came before the
10 Board. They had been before the Conservation Commission and as a result have
11 amended the plan to try and limit the encroachment into the buffer area by eliminating
12 the dumpster, the additional parking that was originally on the back side of the property
13 and shrunk the size of the building footprint by about 2400'. Although the
14 encroachment has been reduced, there is still a small amount of encroachment. Mr.
15 Baker showed on the plan where a second floor has been added also.

16 Mr. Baker then introduced the CEO of Convenient M.D., Mr. Max Puyanic. Although
17 Mr. Puyanic had introduced himself at a previous meeting, he wished to elaborate on
18 Convenient M.D.'s involvement with community events and the economic impact the
19 business will have on the area.

20 Mr. Baker introduced Mr. Brad Mesquita, civil engineer for the project. Mr. Mesquite
21 talked through the plan pointing out buildings, roads, curb cuts and wetland areas. He
22 explained that they have done quite a bit of reconfiguration to the existing parking,
23 most notably creating a raised side walk in front of the existing tenants where there
24 currently is none. The parking lot in front of the Lindt building has been significantly
25 increased in size both for traffic flow and additional green space. He continued that
26 one of the big hurdles has been dealing with existing wetland and the buffers out back.
27 Another issue is storm water management as the run off is basically a sheet down to the
28 Route 101 ramp and out to the back of the existing wetlands. He said they have
29 proposed a rain garden as well as 2 sections of porous pavement out at the back side of
30 the Lindt building to give the storm water further treatment before it discharges. They
31 are also proposing an underground detention area to provide more treatment, and more
32 retention before it discharges into the municipal system.

33 Mr. Mesquite then discussed the newly configured curb cuts and showed them on the
34 plan. He moved then to landscaping and said they had made an effort to beef up the
35 existing landscaping along the frontage and increase the interior landscaping. They
36 intend to screen the loading areas in the back also.

37 Mr. Mesquite informed the Board that they were looking for several waivers from the
38 Board. He began by saying they would like a reduction of 18% in parking spaces
39 which still gives a ratio that the tenants feel comfortable with but not so much of a
40 reduction that the Board would feel uncomfortable granting it. They would also like a
41 couple of landscaping waivers. He then referred to the lighting saying the current
42 lighting consists mainly of floodlights and are old fashioned. The applicant is
43 proposing taking the heads down and replacing them with LED lighting on the existing

1 poles. Mr. Mesquite said he had received review comments from the Town, but had
2 not yet had the chance to look at them.

3 Mr. Houghton inquired about traffic flows. Mr. Mesquite said the in house traffic
4 consultant had been asked to submit a memorandum on the traffic flow. Calculations
5 were done using different times of day and compared against the new project. The
6 results revealed that week day mornings amounted to 21 additional trips coming off the
7 site and for weekly afternoons there were 14, and Saturday midday 6 additional trips.
8 Mr. Houghton asked what the total was for the existing site. Mr. Mesquite did not
9 know. It was also realized that current vacant sites had not been included in the
10 analysis. Mr. Baker added hat the total of additional square footage would be 5000
11 which he felt would not be dramatic.

12 Mr. Houghton asked where they thought the traffic flow would come from. Would it
13 come from the Route 108 or Stoneybrook or would traffic be directed down towards the
14 lights. Mr. Mesquite said if you're coming from the Route 108 direction Exeter, there
15 would be 2 entrances onto the site, but if a driver is coming from Exeter they would
16 have to use the lights.

17 Mr. Federico asked what size the parking spaces were. Mr. Mesquita replied they are
18 9' x 18'. Mr. Federico asked where the snow storage areas were located. Mr. Mesquita
19 said they were prepared to take it off site if their snow storage area wasn't large
20 enough. Mr. Federico then referred to the proposed raised walkway asking if it would
21 have granite curbing. Mr. Mesquita replied it would. Mr. Federico wanted to know if
22 the dumpster areas would be gated too. Mr. Mesquita said they would be.

23 Mr. Paine asked with regards to the playground area if there would be an issue with
24 trucks idling in the nearby delivery area. Mr. Baker said he would check into it and
25 make sure there wouldn't be. Mr. Merrick felt that the loading area looked extremely
26 congested and couldn't imagine how a truck would be able to reach the area
27 successfully if cars are parked to the right. Mr. Mesquite said the trucks would have to
28 back in. Mr. Merrick commented also that he found it peculiar that the day care facility
29 was located between 2 similar uses and he agreed with Mr. Paine that having the
30 playground near 2 emergency generators, transformers and dumpsters seemed odd. Mr.
31 House referred to Mr. Merrick's comments about trucks accessing the loading area and
32 agreed he didn't see how a truck trailer could access that area without difficulty. Mr.
33 Daley explained that as part of the staff and consultant reviews the applicant is required
34 to provide turning radius movements to demonstrate that a truck can circulate within
35 that area. Mr. House referred to the pervious pavements and the note on the plan that
36 says no salt. Mr. Mesquita said that is to help with the longevity of the pavement and
37 sand can be used. Mr. Daley informed Mr. House that the applicant will have to
38 provide a maintenance plan.

39 Mr. Merrick asked if the applicant really required 2 electrical services with 2 generators
40 and 2 transformers. He wondered if they could save some space by having one of each.
41 He referred also to the fact that they have 2 separate dumpster stations for 3 tenants and
42 wondered if they could be consolidated. Mr. Mesquita said it is a great idea, but 2
43 tenants need their own generators, but if they can get away with just one transformer
44 they are willing to do so.

1 Mr. Daley asked for an explanation about utilities for the property. Mr. Mesquita said
2 there is an existing sewer line that comes across the front of the site which will still be
3 utilized with the Lindt building staying. There is water that exists on the site from
4 Stoneybrook which will be used. There are also gas lines shown coming in to the rear
5 of the building. Electric lines run on the far side of Stoneybrook coming over to a
6 proposed pole. Mr. Daley confirmed that stormwater, water and sewer are being
7 serviced by the Town of Exeter. Mr. Mesquita said water and sewer are and portions of
8 the storm water too. Mr. Daley asked what approvals the applicant needs from the
9 Town of Exeter to access their water and sewer system. Mr. Baker said he has spoken
10 with the water department and they just needed some notice to install some extra
11 meters.

12 Next, Mr. Daley asked the applicant to discuss the visual impact on the abutters in
13 Exeter. Mr. Mesquita said they had tried to provide juniper type screening along the
14 whole back of the site. Mr. Daley asked if there was an opportunity to widen the
15 vegetative area. Mr. Mesquita said they could widen it a little more possibly, but they
16 have to keep the plantings out of the right of way. Mr. Daley asked if there were any
17 considerations of placing a sidewalk along Stoneybrook Lane. Mr. Mesquita said they
18 had not contemplated putting a sidewalk there. Mr. Daley said he had asked as it
19 seemed natural to extend the interior sidewalks onto both sides of Stoneybrook. Mr.
20 Mesquita said he would take a look at it.

21 The applicant was asked about the height and guard rail of the retaining wall. Mr.
22 Mesquita said the walls vary in height, but they are around 4' to 6' in the middle. The
23 guard rail will be a D.O.T. approved guard rail.

24 Mr. Federico asked if they were adding any additional signage to what is there now.
25 Mr. Baker said there is one on-site sign which they intend to replace with a larger sign
26 in accordance with the sign allowance regulations.

27 Mr. Paine asked if the Lindt chocolate building was being improved and is the 2 storey
28 addition going to tie into the existing building. Mr. Baker said the idea is to have a user
29 on the second floor. Lindt is working independently on renovating their store. For the
30 2 storey addition, they have a verbal agreement with a bank that is interested in opening
31 a lending business on the first floor and there is interest from the tenant next door for
32 the second floor as it would just require a door to be installed for them to access that
33 addition from their current space.

34 Mr. Houghton addressed the Board members and asked given the unique proximity
35 with the Town of Exeter, do the effects of these changes warrant that there is enough
36 regional impact to Exeter to broaden these proceedings to include their input? Mr.
37 Daley said this also includes the sharing of services as it will add extra usage to their
38 system. He added that regional impact looks at the impacts on traffic circulation onto
39 neighboring streets. If the Board does determine there is regional impact, the next step
40 is for the Town to notify the Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC) and the Town
41 of Exeter so they become official abutters in these proceedings. The Board discussed
42 whether or not they thought there would be regional impact. Mr. Doug Green from the
43 project asked if conditions could be put on the application about deliveries from tractor
44 trailers to minimize their impact on the site. Mr. Daley said that would be possible.

1 Mr. Paine pointed out that Exeter will be responsible for some of the storm water and
2 with the new storm water regulations, Exeter would probably want to see how much
3 storm water there will be because of the redevelopment of this site.

4 Mr. Deschaine reminded the Board that regional impact finding is not in terms of
5 getting permitting from service providers; it is to provide the adjacent community
6 notice that this is happening and gives the opportunity to participate as an abutter. As
7 the applicant expressed concern at the delay this would cause, Mr. Daley suggested the
8 Board meet a week earlier than scheduled which would allow time also for the
9 notification process and for the applicant to meet with Town staff.

10 Mr. George St. Amore, 4 Stoneybrook Lane, said he was concerned by the extra loads
11 that would be caused should this development use the existing Exeter water and sewer.
12 He pointed out that their lot is lower than the proposed development so they will need
13 to build a swale on either side to prevent the water running off straight onto their
14 property.

15 Mr. Houghton asked if there were any more public comments regarding the regional
16 impact issue. One abutter said she did not understand how trucks could get through
17 there and stressed how terrible the traffic is currently with people running red lights.
18 With the added cars from the proposed redevelopment, it will become worse. Mr.
19 Barden, abutter asked how wide Stoneybrook Lane is. He was told about 30'. Mr.
20 Barden responded saying if cars start to park on there it will cause problems. Don
21 Adams, abutter referred to the water problems saying they had been flooded out many
22 times because the drain can't take care of all the water. They have to pump water out
23 of the first floor. He feels that being opposite the loading dock will be problematic as
24 there is already an existing problem with delivery trucks. Mr. Green said that they were
25 intending to improve the drain by enlarging the pipe and adding additional drainage. A
26 member of the public asked if Subway was still going to exist because at noon time
27 there is a lot of extra traffic. Mr. Baker said they would be staying as they are under
28 lease.

29 Mr. Paine made a motion to determine that there is regional impact. Mr. House
30 seconded the motion. Motion carried 3:2 in favor of regional impact. Mr. Federico and
31 Mr. Doyle were opposed.

32 Mr. Paine made a motion to continue the application until August 28, 2013. Mr. House
33 seconded the motion. Motion carried 4:1. Mr. Federico was opposed.

34 **b. AutoFair Realty II, LLC, 1477 South Willow Street, Manchester, NH 03103 for**
35 **the property located at 41 Portsmouth Avenue, Stratham, NH Tax Map 9, Lot 4.**
36 Site Plan Review Application to construct a 25,600 square foot auto dealership and
37 related lighting, landscaping, drainage, and parking/access improvements.

38 Mr. Federico made a motion to accept the application as complete as per the Town
39 Planner. Motion seconded by Mr. Paine. Motion carried unanimously.

40 Mr. Bruce Scamman, Emanuel Engineering introduced himself as representing
41 AutoFair Realty. He started by stating the location of the lot which is adjacent to the
42 current AutoFair Nissan dealership. They are proposing putting in a new car dealership

1 next to the Nissan dealership. The lot will be serviced by the existing driveways
2 coming in off of Portsmouth Avenue. They are hoping to do a mirror image of the
3 existing Nissan dealership. With today's regulations, they are proposing 5 bio retention
4 infiltration basements for stormwater and there will be landscaping.

5 Mr. Scamman said that for the record they were before the Board a year ago for a
6 preliminary consultation on this application and so they are working under the 2011
7 zoning ordinance.

8 Next, Mr. Scamman addressed the issue of unloading tractor trailers. He said both
9 dealerships have the ability for tractor trailers to unload on their sites. Another area of
10 concern was garage doors facing Portsmouth Avenue. He reminded the Board a waiver
11 was granted for that for the Nissan dealership. He said they were planning to request
12 the same waiver as this project progresses. He then talked about pitched roofs; there
13 will be a pitched roof all the way around the building which the previous building
14 didn't have.

15 Mr. Scamman shared that the AutoFair has won some awards for national energy
16 efficiency. This new building will be no exception. LED lighting will be used which
17 saves a lot of energy and money. Mr. Scamman said he was aware from talking with
18 Mr. Daley that there is an issue with displaced spots out front; right now there is in the
19 vicinity of 400 parking spots on the site development, most of which are display
20 parking.

21 Mr. Scamman said landscaping would be discussed at tonight's meeting and took the
22 opportunity to introduce Robbie Woodburn, Landscape Architect, Mike Cheever, the
23 architect from Archcon, Mr. Andy Crews, the CEO of AutoFair and Nick Lazzo the
24 attorney for AutoFair.

25 Mr. Scamman touched on traffic flow saying car dealerships are very small users when
26 it comes to traffic flow. With the large driveway already there, it is not something that
27 the Board should request, but the applicant hasn't done any traffic studies to date using
28 all of the existing driveways. He continued that there are no wetlands within the
29 driveway area that will be impacted and they will actually be reducing the water flow
30 off the site due to the infiltration basins mentioned earlier.

31 Mr. Scamman asked Mr. Cheever to talk about the architecture of the building. Mr.
32 Cheever said he was the original project manager for the Nissan building. Aside from
33 minor differences, this new building will be the same as the Nissan one.

34 Mr. Daley asked Mr. Cheever to discuss the pitched roof as the previous building has a
35 flat roof at the back. Mr. Cheever said there are mansard roofs around the entire
36 perimeter. He also mentioned the fact that there will probably be some branding
37 requests from whoever decides to move into the dealership.

38 Mr. Paine asked if there was an opportunity to use the reciprocal materials on the
39 opposite building with the gray concrete wall for instance to break up the appearance.
40 Mr. Cheever said he would take it into consideration and confer with the owner about
41 it, although he would prefer not to.

1 Mr. Merrick asked which drawing showed the parking spaces as it didn't look like there
2 were 400 spaces to him. Mr. Cheever explained that there are 2 different types of
3 parking spaces: delineated spaces which are 9' x 18' which are for employees,
4 customers and service parking and the remainder of the parking will be unpainted for
5 display and storage. The display will be in the front of the building and the storage in
6 the back. He added that loading will take place in the back also. Mr. Merrick
7 confirmed that the driveway between the 2 dealerships is a common one. Mr. Cheever
8 confirmed that was the case. Mr. Merrick was made aware that easement language
9 already exists so if in the future the properties are sold, the driveway will remain
10 shared.

11 Mr. Houghton asked if there would be an opportunity to discuss aligning River Road
12 and Frying Pan Lane and making River Road run behind the new proposed building.
13 Mr. Cheever said that would obviously be a very complicated issue as there would be a
14 lot of people involved. He continued that AutoFair has expressed an interest in
15 discussing what it might mean so they are willing to at least listen. He added that there
16 will also be legal ramifications if the road goes over to the Nissan side. Mr. Daley said
17 the realignment of these 2 roads is actually part of the Master Plan.

18 Mr. Crews asked if any conversations had been had with the Shell station. Mr. Daley
19 said he hadn't spoken with them yet, but he is meeting with them about another topic so
20 he will bring it up then. Mr. Deschaine said there were conversations many years ago.

21 Ms. Woodburn, spoke next. She explained that the landscaping is a general mirroring
22 of the Nissan Dealership, with a few differences. There will be street trees, bio
23 retention areas, screening and the foundation planting for the building itself. The street
24 trees will be varied; the bio retention areas will be rain gardens, a screening will exist
25 along River Road and as mentioned plantings around the foundation area.

26 Mr. Daley suggested examining the Town's regulations for interior landscaping for
27 parking. The bio retention areas may comply but when it comes to the front part of the
28 property, the regulations talk about large areas of impervious surface and breaking it up
29 in a more natural setting. Ms. Woodburn said if they did that the line of parking would
30 have to move forward. Mr. Daley said that there is a front setback for open space and
31 he assumed that the green area shown on the property complies with that setback. Mr.
32 Scamman said the open space setback is approximately 15' further out than the
33 regulated 35' open space so there could be paving. They were trying to hold it back by
34 50' from the setback line to match the other side. He continued that they thought they
35 were trying to have more green space out front as the larger buffer that people see as
36 they go down the road is more important than a small strip of planting in the middle of
37 the lot. Mr. Daley said the Town will work with them.

38 Mr. Paine said it looks like some of the suggested tree plantings are in some of the
39 snow storage areas. Mr. Houghton asked about permits. Mr. Scamman explained that
40 they had requested that the plans not be sent to Civilworks for a formal review until
41 they had been before the Board. He had also talked to Mr. Houghton about getting
42 together with Mr. Daley to put a schedule in place. At this point he envisages taking a
43 60 day continuance and starting to work on any necessary permits.

1 Mr. Daley addressed the Board. He said in the past there have been issues concerning
2 site elements of car dealerships in town and he wondered if the Board was comfortable
3 with the number of parking spaces. Mr. Scamman said the adjacent lot had less parking
4 in the rear and had more parking on the side and front whereas this one, they have triple
5 stacked cars in certain places and instead of having an aisle in the middle, they have
6 made more green space. Originally there were 5 aisles, but now there are only 2. Mr.
7 Scamman said they have tried to design it so there is more storage of vehicles in the
8 rear of the property. Mr. Houghton asked if most of the stacking is going to take place
9 at the rear and not the front and sides. Mr. Scamman confirmed that was correct. He
10 continued that traditionally they have double stacked cars facing the road so clients can
11 see them.

12 Mr. Merrick asked what comments had been heard from residents or other Towns that
13 could be addressed with the design of this new car dealership. He had heard comments
14 about the use. Mr. Daley said the Town has a standard practice of 9' x 18' which is
15 what the engineer utilized to create the areas for stacked parking. Maybe that could be
16 reduced to a minimal amount that meets the needs for the applicant to park vehicles, but
17 also reduces the level of impervious surface required to construct the parking spaces.
18 Mr. Scamman said there is some potential for that, but they need to know which kind of
19 dealership will be going into the site. Mr. Crews said they don't have site control, the
20 manufacturer dictates that and while he can't disclose which manufacturer is moving in,
21 he can say that it will require the same specs as the Nissan dealership. Mr. Crews made
22 the Board aware that this parcel is larger so they are requesting the same amount of
23 parking, but on more land.

24 Mr. Houghton opened the floor up to the public. Mr. Deschaine asked about the gas
25 transmission line that follows along River Road, he wanted to know if the landscaping
26 is right up against the easement or is there still distance between the easement and the
27 landscaping. Mr. Scamman said the landscaping is in the easement. Mr. Deschaine
28 said he wasn't sure if they were allowed plantings in that easement. Mr. Crews said
29 they had to do some researching about that. Mr. Deschaine continued; the probability if
30 River Road was aligned to the private drive and then result in the abandonment of that
31 section of River Road between the 2 properties, that property would then revert back to
32 the 2 abutting property owners and therefore there would be green space on the other
33 side of the easement allowing more elbow room.

34 Mr. Scamman observed that a 30 day continuance would probably be manageable. Mr.
35 Daley offered October 2 or 16, 2013. The Board decided on October 2, 2013.

36 Mr. House made a motion to continue the public hearing to October 2, 2013. Motion
37 seconded by Mr. Paine. Motion carried unanimously.

38

39 **4. Miscellaneous.**

40 a. Report of Officers/Committees.

41 i. Economic Development Committee

42 ii. Exeter-Swampscott River Local Advisory Committee

- 1 iii. Heritage Commission
- 2 iv. Public Works Commission
- 3 v. Stormwater Management Committee
- 4 vi. Town Center Revitalization Committee

5 b. Member Comments.

6 c. Other.

7 There were no more items to report

8 **5. Adjournment.**

9 Mr. Federico made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 pm. Motion seconded by Mr.
10 House. Motion carried unanimously.