



Planning Board Minutes

November 4, 2019

Town of Hanover

The following minutes are from the Hanover Planning Board meeting held on Monday, November 4, 2019 in the Hanover Town Hall 1st Floor Advisory Room.

Board Members Present: MaryAnn Brugnoli – Chair, Richard Deluca – Vice Chair, Ken Blanchard, Meaghan Neville-Dunne, and Giuseppe Fornaro – Associate

Absent Board Members: Jeff Puleo and Bernie Campbell – Associate

Others Present: Justin DeBruin, Community Development Director and Ruth Potter, Executive Assistant

Called to Order at 6:45 p.m. by Chairman Brugnoli

The Chairman stated that minutes would be approved at the end of the meeting and opened to the floor to the tree warden, Mr. Stephen McNamara. Mr. McNamara went through the list of trees: an elm on 250 Whiting Street, a tulip tree on 256 Center Street, a pine on 711 Center Street, and a maple on 689 Street and explained why each needed to be taken down: the elm is already dead, the tulip tree is rotting, the pine is in decline, and the maple is split and leaning. All Board Members voted in favor of the trees coming down.

778 Washington Street, Hair Salon

The Chairman gave some background on this area, explaining that there was formerly a hair salon in this location but the hair salon relocated after the Aquifer Protection Zone was enacted. The applicant described the tight tank for their new hair salon and explained that all waste created in the salon will go into the tank. Mr. Joseph Stack, Building Commissioner, explained that even waste from toilets must go into the tank. The applicant explained that the hair salon will focus on creating minimal waste and using natural products. Board Member Mr. Ken Blanchard asked that the Planning Board receives an official letter of approval from the Department of Public Works and the Board of Health. Mr. Stack said he could submit both letters. The Vice Chair asked how you can tell the tank is full. Mr. Stack explained that there is an electronic monitor and alarm will notify when the tank is full.

The Board voted to approve the Special Permit.

1143 Washington Street, Benchmark Assisted Living

Mr. David Kelly of Kelly Engineering Group introduced Mr. Eric Gardner of Benchmark Senior Living, Mr. Ben LaFrance of Hawk Design, Mr. David Udelsman of Udelsman Associates, and Mr. Robert Michaud of MDM Transportation Consultants.

Mr. Gardner presented an overview of Benchmark Senior Living (BSL), which includes a mix of 62 properties with a range of senior living. They have been in business for 23 years and have never sold one of their businesses. BSL wants to build an assisted living facility in Hanover because there is little competition and 1143 Washington Street is centrally located, surrounded by shops, a pharmacy, and the YMCA. BSL has a rental model with no entrance fee. They offer studios, 1 and 2 room bedrooms, assistance with activities of daily living, shuttle service, dining service, programming, wellness centers, treatment rooms for visiting doctors and dentists, and hair salons. The proposed facility would include 97 units, 115 bedroom mix of assisted living and memory care.

Mr. Kelly explained they are asking for a special permit per zoning bylaw section 6.11.0 to allow a Village Planned Unit Development (VPUD), a special permit amendment to PB08-10SP to allow the addition of approximately 43,000 sf of land to the plans and to substitute a 115 bed assisted living facility for the retail previously approved, a site plan approval amendment to permit PB08-10SP per section 10 of the zoning bylaws, a waiver for the required bedrooms in the VPUD, a waiver for the required parking spaces, and a waiver for the existing buffer requirements per Section 4.420 of the Zoning Bylaw. Mr. Kelly also described the pedestrian connectivity plan from the new facility outward and also around the circumference of the facility. He also stated that the sewer onsite is sufficient and there is existing capacity in the onsite wastewater treatment. He mentioned the letter from CEI and stated they should be able to quickly address all the findings.

Mr. LaFrance described the landscaping goal of BSL as making the site look like home. There will be a mix of non-invasive evergreens and deciduous, with trees of different bloom times including some shade trees and bushes. There will be areas for grilling, bocce, a fireplace, shade, and raised vegetable gardens. The service area will be screened by trees and bushes. There is also a proposed public pocket garden in the northeast corner of the property which will serve as an entry feature and destination for the residents.

Mr. Michaud explained that the infrastructure currently in place can more than support the traffic that will be created by the facility, around 20-30 trips per hour at peak which is a reduction in trips relative to what had previously been approved for this site. He also said there is room for emergency vehicles to get in and circulate on site.

Mr. Udelsman went over the architecture plans for the site. The first floor will include the memory care portion which will have 26 units, a central courtyard, circulating courtyard, dining room, hair salon, and a treatment room. The first floor will also include assisted living units as well as other common areas. The second floor will have additional assisted living units, a wellness center, and family kitchen. The top floor will be primarily all assisted living resident units. The rooms range in size from 385-800 sf and include a kitchenette and bathroom. There will be a few companion suite units which will include two private bedrooms and bathrooms. The building will have a 35 foot roofline with parapets 6 feet higher and roof screening that will hide mechanical units on the building. The architecture is unique for each BSL site.

The Chairman asked what type of residents would move in. Mr. Gardner said the average age is 87, but there is no age limit. It is very expensive to live there, with a base rate of \$6,000/month so it is needs driven and residents need help with things like bathing, dressing, and medication reminders.

The Board asked for comments from DPW, Police, and Fire to be in writing for the next meeting. The applicant was also informed they will be asked to pay for new water meters for the town as part of mitigation. Board member Mr. Giuseppe Fornaro commented that VPUD zoning states there should be a “New England” feel. The Vice Chair suggested replacing the parapets with dormers. The Vice Chair asked if there could be a walkable route connecting the YMCA and the facility. Mr. Kelly explained there aren’t plans but it’s possible one will be created in the future. The Vice Chair also asked why they don’t eliminate the main entrance or make it no left turn out. Mr. Michaud explained the entrance is good for new visitors and employees. The Vice Chair inquired about ambulance services and Mr. Gardner stated that they have a contract with a private ambulance service and local town ambulances are used for 911 calls. Board Member Mrs. Meaghan Neville-Dunne asked if pets were allowed. Mr. Gardner said yes, but not many residents have pets. Board Member Mr. Blanchard inquired why they are submitting under VPUD and not commercial. Mr. Kelly answered that they would like to explore the issue further before the next meeting. The Chairman asked what they would do if they couldn’t find occupants. Mr. Gardner answered that that has never happened before and the demographics are in their favor. The Chairman proposed meeting on December 9th for follow-up. The Board voted in favor.

The Chairman then discussed the agenda for the November 18th mall meeting. She proposed talking about water meters, the Affordable Housing Trust making a presentation, closing the hearing, then instructing staff to write a decision for December 16th. On December 16th, the Board would vote on the decision.

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the October 28 meeting as amended and the Board voted in favor.

Meeting ended and adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted by: Ruth Potter, Executive Assistant

Documents Submitted

Tree Warden: List and pictures of trees for removal by tree warden

778 Washington Street, PB-19-18: application for special permit 778 Washington Street, PB-19-18, septic system and tight tank plans for 778 Washington Street

1143 Washington Street, PB-19-19: application for site plan and special permit 1143 Washington Street, PB-19-19, development impact statement incorporated in the application for PB-19-19, site development plans for 1143 Washington Street dated 10/10/19, Landscape Plans dated 10/10/19, Building Elevations and Renderings dated 10/9/19, Transportation Impact Assessment dated 10/10/19, and letter from CEI dated 11/4/19
