

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
April 2, 2009**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mark Thibeault (Chairman); Diane Clemens, Andrew Boutin, Liza Kilcoyne, John Alden, Aaron Martin. (Dan Kerin was absent.)

ADMINISTRATION: Robin Pierce, Development Director.

1. CALL TO ORDER and AUDIENCE FOR VISITORS

Chairman Mark Thibeault called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. There were no comments from the public.

2. ADDITIONS/AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

None.

3. MINUTES

February 5, 2009

MOTION by Liza Kilcoyne, SECOND by Andrew Boutin, to approve the 2/5/09 minutes with the following correction(s)/clarification(s);

Globally correct the spelling of “Whyte”;

Page 8, top paragraph – delete the sentence reading: “Mark Thibeault stated typically such information is contained in the condominium association documents.”

VOTING: unanimous (6-0); motion carried.

4. PUBLIC MEETING

Mark Thibeault explained the procedure to be followed with applications before the Planning Commission and swore in those individuals to give testimony.

Conceptual Plan to convert the single family dwelling into a duplex and construct 12 additional units at 4 Park Terrace in the Village Center District by Frank and Judy Naef, owners

Frank Naef appeared on behalf of the application.

APPLICANT COMMENTS

Frank Naef reviewed his revised plan for 12 new units in a three story building with underground parking and two units in the existing dwelling at 4 Park Terrace. Mr. Naef submitted a parking plan showing the configuration of the underground parking for 17 vehicles. There will be a curb cut on the west side of the lot to the parking lot for 13 vehicles. There is an access right-of-way across the Park Street Holding Company LLC property. A letter of intent from Poon verbally granting the right-of-way was submitted. The road to serve the Park Street School is another part of the puzzle, stated Mr. Naef. A survey of the property was done. A copy of the mylar signed by a registered surveyor was submitted showing the new boundary lines. These boundary lines are also shown on the

revised site plan. The dumpster will be inside the garage (similar to the set up at Highland Village)

STAFF REPORT

The Planning Commission received a written staff report on the project, dated 4/2/09. Robin Pierce said he has not reviewed the underground parking plan as yet. Two disabled parking spaces are needed on the site. (Mr. Naef suggested one disabled parking space be located inside the garage and one be located at ground level.) Mr. Pierce noted the applicant did respond to comments from the Planning Commission and the neighbors. Density has been increased, the new building has been moved away from the neighbors, and the parking impact has been decreased by locating 60% of the parking underground. An agreement between the Village and the Park Street School is being drafted (not yet received). The access across the Poon property will decrease the number of cars on Park Terrace. Frank Naef clarified the conceptual site plan is for the driveway and right-of-way to be located on the southeast corner of the property.

There was brief discussion of reviewing the application as a Planned Residential Development or a Planned Unit Development. The Commission decided to review the development under site plan review in the Village Center District.

Mark Thibeault suggested moving the building back, creating an alley and green space, and locating the parking in front for more of a row house/city street look. Mr. Naef pointed out the entire northeast corner of the property will be lawn space. Also, with the suggestion by Mr. Thibeault there would be a three story building next to the smaller one and a half story house. As the plan is proposed the three story building will be next to the potential future four **storey** hotel. The goal was to move the three **storey** building to the east as far from the existing single family houses as possible, recalled Mr. Naef.

Mr. Thibeault asked about removal of the existing house. Frank Naef conceded this could occur at some point in the future to be replaced with three units, but it does not make sense presently to raze a structurally sound building. Liza Kilcoyne commented as proposed the development fits with the character of the area. The existing house is historic. Chairman Thibeault noted there is nothing in the regulations currently that prohibit a house being taken down in the village regardless of the historic nature. Ms. Kilcoyne felt the Planning Commission should not be encouraging the removal of historic buildings, especially when the buildings can co-exist with new construction. The proposal by Mr. Naef finds a balance, stated Ms. Kilcoyne. John Alden echoed the comments by Ms. Kilcoyne. Frank Naef said he has met with Michael Dugan to discuss the relationship of building height and size to the building (hotel) Mr. Dugan is designing the Poon property and the access road.

John Alden asked about the right-of-way going to Park Terrace. Robin Pierce noted there will be a pedestrian link to Park Terrace, but not a road. Mr. Naef said there will be a two foot wide strip of land provided to the village for a sidewalk in the village right-of-way along Park Terrace.

Aaron Martin asked if the access road will be built regardless of the hotel being built. Mr. Naef stated the access will be constructed to the garage. The access is a driveway into the underground garage. John Alden asked about using the existing driveway to access the underground parking. Mr. Naef stated the grade change in the back corner works well with the proposed plan and cars will not be directed to Park Terrace.

The Planning Commission asked staff to research how much land is needed on Park Terrace for turn lanes.

John Alden observed there is landscaping to the west, but there needs to be a balance on the property and some screening on the east side. All the landscaping seems to be in one location. The building is large and can handle more landscaping. Frank Naef mentioned his intention to involve a landscape consultant. It was noted the trees shown on the site plan are existing trees on the site.

The Planning Commission spoke in support of the use of porous paving for the driveway as proposed.

There was discussion of moving the elevator in the existing building to allow access to the green space on the property. The space could be a picnic/grilling area. Mr. Naef also suggested moving the sidewalk onto his property to the proposed addition and then reconnecting to the Poon property.

There was discussion of toning down the horizontal flat, blank mass of the building with vertical elements while still capturing the character of the area. Liza Kilcoyne suggested carrying through the aesthetics of the existing house.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Linda McKenna, 9 School Street, said the neighbors are more resigned to the revised plan. The buffer between the buildings is good. There is concern about the size of the building in a residential neighborhood full of families. Ms. McKenna acknowledged the area is the Village Center District, but pointed out the proposed building will have families in it as well. Ms. McKenna requested the parking lot lighting be adjusted so the neighbors do not feel they are "living downtown". There is concern about volume of traffic through the school lot which is used by the ACE program. Ms. McKenna stated if the access road as proposed does not happen and Park Terrace is used to access the property, then there will be many questions. Regarding the recent land survey, Ms. McKenna said she does lose some land, but an agreement with Mr. Naef has been met. Regarding land on Park Terrace for a sidewalk, Ms. McKenna said she is not interested in this.

The Planning Commission noted lighting standards for the parking lot must be met by the applicant.

There were no further comments.

MOTION by Andrew Boutin, SECOND by Diane Clemens, to close the public portion of the conceptual plan for a duplex and 12 units at 4 Park Terrace.
VOTING: unanimous (6-0); motion carried.

DELIBERATION/DECISION

Conceptual Plan, Duplex plus 12 Units, 4 Park Terrace, Naef

MOTION by Mark Thibeault, SECOND by John Alden, to approve the conceptual plan by Frank and Judy Naef to convert the single family dwelling to a duplex and construct 12 additional units at 4 Park Terrace with the following conditions:

- 1. Land shall be dedicated to the Village of Essex Junction for future widening of Park Terrace and for a sidewalk.**
- 2. A door shall be added to the east corner of the new building (fronting Park Street).**
- 3. A landscaped courtyard shall be created.**
- 4. A landscape plan shall be submitted.**
- 5. Elevations shall be developed with more detail in color with a materials list.**
- 6. Two disabled parking spaces shall be shown on the site plan.**
- 7. A lighting plan with photometrics shall be submitted.**
- 8. A permanent easement for access to the parking garage shall be secured and associated documents submitted.**
- 9. The elevator will be moved to permit a pedestrian connection from the interior portion of the site to the green space on the north east corner of the site. This movement of the elevator will give opportunity to add appropriate detail to the elevations.**

VOTING: unanimous (6-0); motion carried.

5. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Andrew Boutin, SECOND by Liza Kilcoyne, to adjourn the meeting.

VOTING: unanimous (6-0); motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

RScty: M.E.Riordan