

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
PLANNING COMMISSION
MAY 16, 2019
AGENDA
6:00 P.M.**

I. Audience for Visitors

II. Additions or Amendments to Agenda

III. Minutes

- A. Regular Meeting – April 4, 2019
- B. Regular Meeting – April 18, 2019

IV. Public Hearing

- A. Site Plan review for Phase 1 of an approved Master Plan for a proposed mixed use development of 10.7 acre parcels for 12,285 s.f. commercial/retail, 116 residential units and parking at 4-36 Park Street and 3 Maple Street in the VC District by Essex Downtown Development, LLC, agents for LI Park St. Properties, McEwing Properties, LLC, Robbins Mountain Towers and 3 Maple Street Essex, LLC, owners.

V. Other Planning Commissions Items

VI. Adjournment

Pursuant to 24 VSA Section 4464(a)(1)(C) Participation during the public hearing before the Essex Junction Planning Commission is a prerequisite to the right to take any subsequent appeal.

Members of the public are encouraged to speak during the Public-To-Be-Heard agenda item, during a Public Hearing, or, when recognized by the Chair, during consideration of a specific agenda item.

Public comments are limited to a three minute rule unless waived by the Planning Commission Chair.

NOTE: The Planning Commission may choose to postpone consideration of any application not started before 10:00 P.M.

This meeting will be held in the conference room of the Essex Junction municipal building at 2 Lincoln St., Essex Jct., VT. Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request to the Village, 878-6950, to assure that Village meetings are accessible to all individuals regardless of disability.

For information on subsequent meetings on the above mentioned applications, please contact the Community Development Department from 8 – 4:30 at 878-6950 or the website www.essexjunction.org.

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
May 16, 2019**

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Alden, Andrew Boutin, Diane Clemens, Steven Shaw
(David Nistico was absent)

ADMINISTRATION: Robin Pierce, Community Development Director.

OTHERS PRESENT: Dustin Bruso, Robert McEwing, Marc Dowling, Benjamin Avery, Alex McEwing, Kris McEwing, David Knox, Laurie Knox, Andrew Antell, Michael Buscher, Bobby Harriman.

- AGENDA:**
1. Call to Order
 2. Audience for Visitors
 3. Additions/Amendments to the Agenda
 4. Minutes
 5. Public Hearing
 - Site Plan, Mixed Use Development, 4-36 Park St and 3 Maple St, Essex Downtown Development, LLC
 6. Other Planning Commission Items
 7. Adjournment

1. CALL TO ORDER

In the absence of David Nistico, John Alden called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM. There were no announcements or disclosures. Individuals to give testimony on applications before the Planning Commission were sworn in.

2. AUDIENCE FOR VISITORS

There were no comments from the public at this time.

3. ADDITIONS/AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions or amendments to the agenda at this time.

4. MINUTES

April 4, 2019

MOTION by Diane Clemens, SECOND by Andrew Boutin, to approve the minutes of April 4, 2019 as written. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

April 18, 2019

MOTION by Diane Clemens, SECOND by Steven Shaw, to approve the minutes of April 18, 2019 as written. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

5. PUBLIC MEETING

Site Plan review for Phase 1 of an approved Master Plan for a proposed mixed use development on 10.7 acres for 12,285 s.f. commercial/retail, 116 residential units and parking at 4-36 Park Street and 3 Maple Street in the VC District by Essex Downtown

Development, LLC, agents for LI Park St. Properties, McEwing Properties, LLC, Robbins Mountain Towers and 3 Maple Street Essex, LLC, owners.

Benjamin Avery of Blackrock Construction, Michael Buscher of T.J. Boyle Associates, Bobby Harriman of G4 Design, Cleary Buckley of Smith Buckley Architecture, and Andrew Antell of O'Leary-Burke Civil Associates, appeared on behalf of the application.

Benjamin Avery provided an overview of discussion topics for the site plan review, including the following:

- Updated drawings were provided for the concept building at 12 Park St, which will be reviewed at this meeting;
- The applicants are seeking approval for the first three buildings in the Master Plan, which consist of 116 residential units;
- In addition to buildings, the first phase of construction will build out the majority of the green spaces and community amenities for this project, ensuring that the public and residents will be able to enjoy amenities sooner;
- Construction on the southern parcel will be coordinated with the Crescent Connector build-out, once that project begins.

Michael Buscher provided an overview of the Master Plan. He described Phase 1 construction in both the southern and northern parcels of the proposed development. He described the three new buildings proposed for construction in this phase (the Maple St building, the Wye building and the Chittenden Crossing building), which will include a mix of 116 new multi-family residential units, 12,000 s.f. of commercial/restaurant space, and a shared park between the two parcels of land. He noted that the concept for the development was to integrate it into the village center as much as possible.

Michael Buscher additionally provided an overview of proposed Buildings D and E, both of which would include residential units and parking spaces. Benjamin Avery noted that Building E would be the parking hub for the project, and would help absorb any parking overflow as other phases of the project are built out.

The application representatives focused discussion on comments from the staff report that require Planning Commission action, including an extensive discussion of parking, landscaping, and traffic.

The applicants described the parking analysis they conducted, which used data from 5 other local projects in Chittenden County and the Urban Land Institute, and which concluded that there would be an overall net surplus in parking.

John Alden noted that though there was an overall surplus, demand could vary by location and time of day, and would need to be managed accordingly. He noted that parking could be an issue for the businesses with storefronts in the new proposed buildings, and that parking has been a perceived problem for commercial spaces in the past.

Benjamin Avery stated that municipal parking is currently underutilized, and that the first phase of construction would rely more heavily on municipal parking.

Andrew Boutin asked whether analysis was conducted on the water table and soils around the areas proposed for underground parking. Mr. Avery replied that the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission conducted testing and put together a remediation plan, and that the building as proposed will have a slab foundation.

John Alden asked if traffic studies had been conducted for this proposal. Mr. Avery replied that Phase 1 should be timed such that it will be coordinated and completed in tandem with the Crescent Connector next construction season.

Bobby Harriman provided a summary of the proposed Building A, including design intent, inspiration for the building, amenities, and economic value. Features of the building were modeled on the Brownell Block. The building will also be blocked into three sections and glass will feature prominently in design, in an effort to make the building look less massive.

Andrew Boutin asked if there were currently any plans to utilize roof space. Mr. Avery noted that they had considered solar infrastructure, but that it is difficult to build out solar infrastructure prior to building whatever the panels would eventually power, but that the southern orientation of the building make solar considerations feasible.

John Alden commented that he liked the blocking of the building, the brick detailing, and the projections and façade articulations. He asked about the darker vertical metal components on the back of the building. Mr. Harriman responded that most of the back façade will be covered by the Lincoln Street Inn, and darker material was used to minimize its appearance.

Clearly Buckley provided a design summary of the Chittenden Crossing and Wye buildings, noting that they were designed in a more contemporary style. The Chittenden Crossing building will have a drive through center option, be situated on the new Crescent Connector, and will be made of brick, metal paneling, cement siding, and will have commercial space on the ground floor and mixed residential unit types on upper floors. The Wye building will be curved, and will also have mixed residential unit types. Mr. Buckley also exhibited some of the materials that will be used for siding.

John Alden noted that the buildings were a good pair, and would present a refreshing character to the Village center, while also enriching the current landscape. Diane Clemens asked about siding color and whether it would match the existing Flanders Building. Mr. Avery commented that parts of the Flanders building would need to be re-sided, so new siding could be adjusted to match coloring of new buildings.

Andrew Boutin asked if railroad traffic noise would be an issue, citing close proximity of railroad tracks to proposed buildings. Mr. Avery replied that noise should not be an issue,

and Mr. Alden added that modern building materials and their ability to control noise has improved greatly.

Public Discussion:

Dustin Brusco commented that he appreciated the pedestrian orientation and streetscape designs. He also noted that the majority of the year is not pedestrian-friendly in terms of weather, and asked what the anticipated impact of winter will be to outdoor areas and overall flow. He also asked if parking projections were adjusted for seasonality. Michael Buscher replied that the numbers used in the analysis don't necessarily take advantage of the mixed-use urban components of the land. Benjamin Avery added that Winooski is a good local example of commercial success with parking dispersed throughout the downtown.

There were no further comments.

MOTION by Diane Clemens, SECOND by Steven Shaw, to close the public portion of site plan review for Mixed Use Development, 4-36 Park St and 3 Maple St, Essex Downtown Development, LLC. VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

DELIBERATION/DECISION:

Site plan review for Mixed Use Development, 4-36 Park St and 3 Maple St, Essex Downtown Development, LLC.

MOTION by Diane Clemens, SECOND by Steven Shaw, to approve the Site Plan for Mixed Use Development, 4-36 Park St and 3 Maple St, Essex Downtown Development, LLC with the following stipulations:

- 1. All Staff comments in this Staff Report shall be addressed to the satisfaction of Village Staff prior to any Permits being issued.**
- 2. Stormwater management will be provided entirely on-site. The Village Engineer shall review and approve the site prior to a Certificate of Occupancy.**
- 3. If the landscaping proposed does not reach the 2% funding required for this project, Applicant shall provide funding to the Village at a level that will ensure that 2% of the construction costs have been expended on landscaping. This funding shall be specifically used for street tree development for the Village.**
- 4. All work shall comply with the Village of Essex Junction Land Development Code.**
- 5. Upon approval of building use a change request will be submitted to obtain additional water and sewer use allocations by the applicant to the Village.**
- 6. The Village reserves the right to require drainage improvements in the future if drainage problems arise as a result of this project.**
- 7. All staff comments in the Staff Report shall be addressed and satisfied prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.**

8. The materials and colours proposed shall receive approval from the Planning Commission. Samples of the materials and colours shall be provided to the Planning Commission by the applicant.
9. The applicant shall complete and sign a Sewer Capacity Voluntary Permit Revocation Form prior to the Village releasing a Letter of Capacity to the State of Vermont.
10. The applicant will be required to request and obtain water and wastewater allocations from the Village of Essex Junction for the additional project flows.
11. Temporary traffic control plans and details be submitted for final review and approval by the Village of Essex Junction a minimum of 1 days prior to the start of construction.
12. The applicant shall perform a follow-up traffic study within 6 months of 50% occupancy, and within 6 months of 100% occupancy, of the proposed Phase 1 buildings in order to confirm the trip generation and to determine if traffic improvements are necessary.
13. Grant applicant's waiver request to allow for proposed light fixtures in the parking areas to be mounted at a height of 20'.
14. The final location of the relocated hydrant be reviewed and approved by the Village of Essex Junction Public Works Superintendent prior to its installation.
15. The proposed opening width of the one-way access to Maple Street should be increased to 24' from 22', to allow for a possible two-way access in the future without roadway and curb disruption.
16. The Village of Essex Junction should be granted an access easement into the site for access to the isolation valves for the building services.
17. All staff comments in this Staff report shall be satisfied by the applicant prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.
18. The computations indicate that the applicant is relying on 21 on-street parking spaces along the Crescent Connector as the buildout of the Master Plan site advances. These spaces are not part of the current Crescent Connector design, nor are they part of the proposed project. Unless parking designation is increased moving forward there may be a parking deficiency on the South Parcel (south of the Connector Road) for Phases I and II.
19. The next two phases must contain affordable housing components that meet the criteria of the Neighborhood Area Designation in the Village Center as determined by the State of Vermont.
20. The submission of a final revised Boundary Plat, for review and approval by the Village of Essex Junction shall be required before a Permit is issued for this project.
21. Snow storage and management be noted in the Final Plan.
22. Bicycle parking will be added near business entry points noted on the Final Plan.
23. The applicant is encouraged by the Planning Commission to consider adding solar panels to building roofs.

24. The construction schedule will be compatible with the Crescent Connector project.

25. Modify stipulation #15 above to replace reference of “Maple Street” to read “Park Street”.

VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

6. OTHER PLANNING COMMISSION ITEMS

John Alden asked about the Planning Commission meeting schedule. There is a public hearing on May 23rd, but no meetings after that are currently scheduled.

7. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Steven Shaw, SECOND by Andrew Boutin, to adjourn the meeting.

VOTING: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 PM.

RScty: AACoonrad