FINAL

LEBANON PLANNING BOARD
Regular Session
Monday, May 9, 2022, 6:30 PM
City Council Chambers, City Hall
or Remote Via Microsoft Teams
LebanonNH.gov/Live

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bruce Garland (Chair), Karen Zook (City Council Rep), Gregorio Amaro - remote, Kim Chewning, Tom Martz, Kathie Romano, Jeremy Rutter, Laurel Stavis, Thomas Jasinski (Alternate), Cori Hirai (Alternate)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Matthew Hall (Vice-Chair)

STAFF PRESENT: David Brooks (Planning Director), Tim Corwin (Senior Planner), Brian Vincent (City Engineer)

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1. Call to Order

Chair Garland called the meeting to order at 6:37 PM.

Tom Jasinski and Cori Hirai were appointed for the absent and remote board members.

2. Notice of Regional Impact

The following application was received by the Planning and Development Department on or before May 9, 2022:

> **Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hospital, 1 Medical Center Dr (Tax Map 10, Lot 8), zoned MC:** Request for Site Plan Review for a phased expansion of the Outpatient Surgery Center. Phases to include construction of a +/-3,272 sq. ft. addition at the northwest corner of the existing building together with associated site improvements, and a +/-9,960 sq. ft. addition to the west side of the existing building, together with associated site improvements including the alteration of the existing parking. PB2022-23-SPR

Mr. Brooks recommended that the above application has no potential for regional impact.

A MOTION by Laurel Stavis that the application above has no potential for regional impact.
The motion was seconded by Tom Martz.
***The MOTION was approved (9-0).**

3. Public Hearing Items

A. **Recreo, LLC, 2 Mascoma Street (Tax Map 91, Lots 254), zoned LD:** Request for Site Plan Review to construct two (2) multi-family dwellings containing a total of 152 units together with parking, landscaping, utilities, and other associated site improvements. Applicant also requests Conditional Use Permits pursuant to (i) Section 307.3 of the Zoning Ordinance to allow a reduced minimum required rear yard, (ii) Section 307.8.A to allow an increase in the maximum permitted building height, and (iii) Section 307.9.B to allow parking spaces to be located within the front yard. PB2022-17-SPR

Mr. Corwin stated that Staff recommends the application is complete enough for the Planning Board to accept jurisdiction and commence review.

A MOTION by Jeremy Rutter that the application of Recreo, LLC, 2 Mascoma Street (Tax Map 91, Lots 254), zoned LD is complete enough for the Planning Board to accept jurisdiction and commence review.
The motion was seconded by Laurel Stavis.

Mr. Jasinski noted that there was no posting of the meeting on a sign staked in the ground at the project site. Mr. Sidore, the applicant, stated that it was posted in a window of the building as directed by staff. Mr. Corwin stated that the sign could be posted on a stake closer to the street in the future if that is preferred by the Board.

****The MOTION was approved (9-0).***

Mike Davidson, Tim Sidore of Recreo LLC, Adam Portz of the Masse Group, and Jim Wasser and Doug Sonsalla of Nexus Studio appeared in support of the application.

Mr. Wasser introduced all the related consultants and described the proposed project. The site was previously occupied by the Village Market, which closed. Redevelopment, increased density, pedestrian orientation, landscaping, and sustainability are the goals of the project. It would be comprised primarily of studio apartments oriented toward Colburn Park. Retail spaces would be included. Stormwater management and parking capacity were also described.

Corey Mack, transportation engineer, introduced the traffic analysis for the site, which compared the trips of both the current improvements and the proposed development. The resulting data showed a small increase during morning peak hours and a lower number of trips in the evening peak hour for the proposed development. Crash data revealed only one occurrence related to the current site. The site lines would meet the design minimum.

Mr. Davidson described his history of projects in the Upper Valley and his preference for redeveloping existing, underutilized sites especially in downtown areas as opposed to developing on green field sites outside of developed areas. He mentioned that his goal is to improve downtown Lebanon by bringing more people downtown as recommended in the Master Plan and the Downtown Visioning Study.

Mr. Corwin noted that there are a number of items to be discussed by the Board and the applicant:
- Phased development
- Waiver requests that need clarification
- Section 6.10 should be reviewed
- Density determination to be made by the Planning Board
- Parking required
- Off-site parking Conditional Use Permit (CUP)
- Reduced rear setback CUP
- Building heights CUP

Other issues in the Staff Memo regarding Fire Department and Police Department comments also need to be addressed.

Mr. Wasser commented on the Fire Department issue regarding westbound access to the site.

Mr. Vincent noted that there is as third-party engineer, Steve Keach, reviewing the project for the Board and the balance of items to be addressed would be worked out later. The traffic study is consistent with the requirements.

Ms. Romano cited several positives related to the project. She expressed concern over the overall size of the gateway building and suggested eliminating one or two levels. She suggested that all fire department access should be met and commented on the short-term parking issue.

Mr. Wasser noted that multiple materials were proposed to soften the façade and size of the building.

Mr. Jasinski received clarification of building height.

Ms. Hirai asked for more description of the landscaping plan. Mr. Wasser noted that the placement shown is correct, but the species may change. Mr. Portz, the landscaping architect, stated that the landscape renderings give the landscaping concept but not specific species. There would be a mix of sizes and seasonality among the choices for landscaping. Ms. Hirai inquired if that would soften the size of the buildings. Mr. Portz noted that the sizes of the plantings would grow larger over time. The shade trees would be a good size when planted but would grow and make a significant impact. Ms. Hirai asked if this would impact traffic sightlines. Mr. Portz stated that they would confirm that all proposed landscaping would provide adequate sight distance.

Mr. Martz expressed concern over parking and the availability of that parking if the property was sold. Mr. Corwin stated that the requirement would run with the land. Mr. Martz also expressed concern over the Fire Department giving a variance for the distance required for trucks and the presence of sufficient exits. Mr. Wasser stated that the trucks would usually have access to one side, but this site has access on multiple sides.

Chair Garland invited public comment.

Maryann Mastro of Ward 2 presented a chronology of the proposal and the changes to LD requirements related to reduced setbacks and parking. She questioned the use of CUPs to overcome a number of the new requirements as well as the sale of city property to the applicant. She stated that the site may not be adequate for the project if so many waivers and CUPs are required.

Karen Liot Hill, City Councilor, commented as a resident with knowledge of city policy and changes. She stated that zoning issues are being addressed incrementally, bringing those policies into compliance with the vision of Lebanon residents and the guiding principles of reducing sprawl, conserving resources, wise use of infrastructure, creating a walkable downtown, and preserving the character of the city. There have been recent changes in favor of density with new setbacks and building heights. The city boards have been implementing the will of the people in those changes, and the project is consistent with the Master Plan, Visioning Study, and makes the best use of the typography. The project makes every effort to create an attractive entrance for Lebanon.

Robin Carpenter of 41 Bank Street stated that he would like to see a grocery store in the space. He noted that a “sweetheart land deal” made it possible, and the project is noncompliant based on the number of requested waivers. He added that CUP’s are waivers and throw out site plan regulations. The parking plan is a “hot mess” with a mixture of on-site and off-site parking and trucking away snow would be necessary. In his opinion, the project is not ready for site plan approval, Bruce Pacht of Mascoma Street expressed his endorsement of the project, noting that refinements would be coming. He added his hope that it comes to fruition.

Clifton Below, City Counselor, commented as a resident who lives within walking distance of the city center and manages One Court Street. The project provides needed housing, fits within the regulations, uses appropriate materials, and makes good use of parking off site. The proposal is responding to zoning changes that have been scrutinized, and he agrees with Ms. Liot Hill and Mr. Pacht.

Joan Monroe of Ward 3 expressed concern about the proposal, which is the largest of this nature. She cautioned the Board members to be very careful and resist pressure because there are new members and former members returning to the Board. Things have changed including International Fire Codes and limited ladder heights. There is a challenging traffic pattern near building 2. The Board members need to use common sense and their knowledge when evaluating a project. There are questions about landscaping and other areas, and specifics of traffic and landscaping are needed. It is important to use caution and be methodical, taking time to get all additional, needed information.

Victoria Smith of Elm Street inquired about the waivers for plantings in parking lots. Mr. Wasser noted that the drawing is accurate and added that they are hoping to attract a new food market.

Darla Bruno of Spencer St. questioned the parking situation for those using off-site parking, adding that a traffic signal may be needed. There is already too much traffic at Colburn Park and the project could be increasing it. The water supply may also be a problem, and she expressed mixed feelings about the project.

Mr. Rutter inquired about changing the landforms by modifying the slope and wondered if there was enough oversight on what relics or antiquities might be destroyed in the process.

Ms. Stavis questioned the affordable housing aspect of the project. Mr. Davidson stated that it would be predominantly market rate, but with 10% at workforce housing rates. Ms. Stavis also noted that it would be an ambitious project and suggested revitalization of West Lebanon and reexamining Route 120.

Ms. Hirai questioned whether bike parking would be sufficient. She also noted that there is no weekend transit available and inquired about EV charging and energy efficiency with solar potential. The roof angles and towers may cause snow sliding. Other concerns focused on the lack of a common area for Bldg. 1, parking for shoppers, snow storage, a name for the complex and signs.

Mr. Jasinski inquired if Board members could write and submit questions. Mr. Corwin stated that they could always submit questions to Staff, adding that he would include those questions in the Staff Memo for the next meeting.

Ms. Romano expressed concerns regarding access, traffic, parking, and the difficulty of snow removal if there is parking overnight.

Chair Garland suggested expanding the fiscal impact study and using examples such as the Mt. Support projects. He noted the incremental cost for fire and police.

Chair Garland noted that he would like to continue the application to subsequent meeting to allow the applicant to address the questions and comments raised tonight.

Mr. Brooks suggested the June 13, 2022, meeting to go through waivers and Staff and Board comments.

A MOTION by Kathie Romano to continue the hearing of Recreo, LLC, 2 Mascoma Street (Tax Map 91, Lots 254), zoned LD to June 13, 2022, at 6:30 PM.
The motion was seconded by Laurel Stavis.
****The MOTION was approved (9-0).***

B. **Recreo, LLC, Water Street Mill, LLC, and 21 Agua Street, LLC, regarding 2 Mascoma Street (Tax Map 91, Lot 254), 0 Water Street (Tax Map 91, Lot 255) and 21 Water Street (Tax Map 91, Lot 257), zoned LD:** The applicants request a Conditional Use Permit pursuant to Section 607.5.A of the Zoning Ordinance to allow off-lot parking at 0 Water Street for the benefit of Recreo, LLC's proposed mixed use development at 2 Mascoma Street (PB2022-17-SPR), and to allow off-lot parking at 2 Mascoma Street and 21 Water Street for the benefit of the office building use at 10 Water Street (Tax Map 91, Lot 259). PB2022-22-CUP.

This project was discussed simultaneously with the prior agenda item.

4. Other Business

A. Planning Board endorsement of the final Open Space Plan, as adopted by the Conservation Commission on 11/18/2021

Ms. Hirai inquired if changes were made since the last meeting. Mr. Brooks did not recall having received any proposed changes from Board members. Mr. Goodwin suggested Board members send along comments and edits to his attention.

Mr. Goodwin stated that the creation of the Open Space Plan was not the typical process due to COVID. It caused the presentation of a finished document without enough context. More feedback was needed. He reviewed four primary messages from the plan:

- Smarter planning process
- Benchmarks and methods for open space to remain functional
- Plan alignment with the Master Plan and future land use plan
- Vibrant open space does not negatively impact development opportunities

Mr. Goodwin explained the essence of the Open Space Plan and the metrics and methods of evaluation.

A MOTION by Kathie Romano for the Planning Board to endorse the Open Space Plan.
The motion was seconded by Laurel Stavis.
****The MOTION was approved (9-0).***

Chair Garland appointed Laurel Stavis as the Board's representative for the West Lebanon Revitalization Advisory Committee.

Mr. Brooks noted there would be some upcoming transitions within the Planning & Development Department as he would be moving into the City Manager's Office later this year and a new Planning Director was being sought.

5. Approval of Minutes

A. April 11, 2022

A MOTION by Cori Hirai to approve the Planning Board Minutes of April 11, 2022, as presented.
The motion was seconded by Laurel Stavis.
****The MOTION was approved (9-0).***

6. Adjournment

A MOTION by Tom Martz to adjourn the meeting.
The motion was seconded by Kathie Romano.
****The MOTION was approved (9-0).***

The meeting was adjourned at 9:28 PM**.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Holly Howes
Recording Secretary