

**CITY OF KEENE
NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, January 25, 2016

6:30 PM

Council Chambers

Members Present

Gary Spykman, Chairman
Nathaniel Stout, Vice-Chair
Mayor Kendall Lane
Douglas Barrett
Andrew Bohannon
Christine Weeks
Pamela Russell Slack
Tammy Adams, Alternate

Staff:

Rhett Lamb, Planning Director
Tara Kessler, Planner
Michele Chalice, Planner

Members Not Present:

Councilor George Hansel

I. Call to order – Roll Call

Chair Spykman called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. The Board asked that they be given updated agendas as part of their packets and revised agendas be labelled as such.

II. Minutes of previous meeting – December 21, 2015

A motion was made by Christine Weeks to accept the December 21, 2015 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Andrew Bohannon and was unanimously approved.

III. Public Hearings

1. SPR-927 Modification 12 – Monadnock Marketplace – New Storefront – 30 Ash Brook Road – Site Plan – Applicant and owner, Keene MZL, LLC, is proposing to renovate 6,000 square feet of space adjacent to Ulta Beauty into a new storefront and retail space. This property is located at 30 Ash Brook Road (Tax Map Parcel #502-01-001-0200).

A. Board Determination of Completeness

Planner, Tara Kessler recommended to the Board that Application SPR-972 was complete. A motion was made by Nathaniel Stout that the Board accept this application as complete. The motion was seconded by Andrew Bohannon and was unanimously approved.

B. Public Hearing

Mr. David Bergeron of Brickstone Masons, Inc. addressed the Board and called the Board's attention to the location of this site which is located in the Monadnock Marketplace on Ashbrook Court. The space were Ulta is currently located used to be the Borders Books site. The plan before the Board is to renovate the rear portion of this building and add a new entrance to the westerly portion of the building. He referred to the landscape portion which is on the side of the building as well as a sidewalk and also noted to where parking is located. There are two handicap

spaces located currently and this will be revised to be one handicap space to meet ADA requirements as one of the spaces don't meet ADA requirements. Mr. Bergeron added the marketplace itself has ample ADA spaces and eliminating one will not cause issues with compliance.

Mr. Bergeron stated there is a one foot space between the parking and the level of the sidewalk and hence ADA access will be created by installing a ramp. He went on to say that one of the items that came up for discussion during the site visit was the removal of trees. Originally the plan was to remove two trees but after the site visit the applicant has decided to leave one tree (which note has been added to the Plan) but the bottom branches will be trimmed to get it to the level of the windows. There will be additional shrubs added to the landscape area as well as a bike rack next to the sidewalk.

Mr. Bergeron went over the development standards:

Drainage – no additional pavement is being created the applicant is using what exists and hence there will not be any change to the drainage pattern.

Sedimentation and Erosion Control – no reason for erosion control to happen as there is no change being made to any of the building footprint.

Hillside – N/A

Snow Storage – What happens now with snow storage will continue; any excess snow will be removed from the site.

Flooding – There is no floodplain on the property, so flooding is not an issue.

Landscaping – As mentioned earlier, one tree will be preserved and additional shrubs will be added.

Noise – There will be no excess noise as this is a standard retail store.

Roof Top Equipment –Rooftop equipment will be screened by the existing parapet on the building.

Air Quality - N/A

Lighting – No new parking lot lighting is being proposed. There will be a lighting added to light the ADA ramp as well as on the wall to the entrance.

Water & Sewer – Will be provided by the existing facilities. Ulta installed their own water line but this facility will use the old line used by Borders Books.

Traffic – Similar to what exists – one retail use is being replaced by another retail use.

Hazardous or Toxic Material – None exist at this site.

Filling and Excavation – None required

Wetland/Surface Water – There is none at this site that will be impacted.

Stump Dumps - None

Architectural Elevations – Mr. Patrick Moore, architect addressed this item. Mr. Moore referred to the new entrance which at the present time is a blacked out glazing system and the blank wall that currently occupies the center of this area will be opened up. All the new glazing systems for this new store will be clear. There will be awnings installed which will be similar to what exist at the Ultra site but will be most likely be a different color. There will be some sort of element above the entrance to locate the sign which would give the tenant some prominence.

Mr. Moore talked about the trees that are going to be removed, which are located where the storefront would exist. The material being proposed for the façade will be a continuation of what exists there right now; brick pilasters, EIFS façade and cornice treatment. Mr. Moore indicated there was a comment made during the site visit about the relocation of the metal artistic framework which would be relocated to the northwest corner of the building. This concluded Mr. Moore's presentation.

Ms. Weeks stated she was concerned about the handicap parking being so far away from the ramp and asked if one could be located closer. Mr. Bergeron stated because of the grade of the parking lot which is too steep to meet the ADA requirements to locate a space closer. Ms. Weeks asked if Mr. Bergeron feels one space is sufficient. Mr. Bergeron referred to the handicap spaces in front of the other stores.

Mr. Stout asked about the parking accommodation. Mr. Bergeron explained this building was part of a condominium association and spaces are assigned for each unit. However, in addition to that in the association agreement there is provision for anyone to park anywhere else on the site to access any store. Everyone has cross easements to park anywhere in the parking lot. He further stated for the Home Depart site as per zoning, they are required to have 502 parking spaces. In the front lot there are 656 spaces, hence there is an excess of 154 spaces (just in the front lot) which could help serve this use as well as the 75-80 spaces assigned just for the new use. Mr. Stout noted the spaces to the north, near the proposed storefront, are filled with equipment and asked whether this would be an issue. Mr. Bergeron stated as negotiation progress this is something the owner will address with the tenant. It was decided this does not fall under the purview of the Board; the Board's purview is to make sure enough parking is provided.

Staff comments were next. Planner, Tara Kessler stated the applicant has done a good job explaining the project. She stated that only thing staff would like to point out is the preservation of the two northern most pin oak trees on the property. Ms. Kessler stated the site plan talks about preserving at least one of those trees and staff feels preserving these two trees is important not only for landscaping but more from an architectural and aesthetic standpoint to break up the façade.

Mr. Stout asked how many trees will be removed. Mr. Bergeron stated four trees will be removed but added as far as zoning is concerned the trees on this site is well beyond what zoning requires. He explained this site has 2,600 parking spaces and zoning requires one tree per ten spaces which would be 260 trees. This site has well over 500 trees. He went on to say the other store fronts in the site are not blocked by trees and this is what the applicant is trying to do here as well. Ms. Kessler stated staff addressed this issue based on architectural and aesthetic appearance of the building. When this site was first developed, these trees were seen as an important feature for breaking up the scale of the building.

Ms. Weeks asked whether there will be an irrigation system for these trees as they used to be with the trees that were located at the former Olive Garden site. Mr. Bergeron stated there is an irrigation line that comes through the rear of this site.

Ms. Russell Slack noted when this site plan was first proposed Borders was the only site in this location and at that time the trees were placed based on that one store. Now there are going to be two businesses and felt what the applicant is proposing was acceptable and added she welcomes this business to the city.

The Chair asked for public comment. With no comments from the public, Chair Spykman closed the public hearing

Mayor Lane felt the applicant has done a good job in presenting this plan; taking one retail space and dividing it into two and felt they have done a good job in trying to preserve one tree. He added he also sees the need for removing four trees so they don't block the store front and felt the Board should support this project and welcome the business to Keene.

Ms. Weeks asked whether these trees could be used elsewhere. The Chair stated unfortunately because of their size and their close proximity to the sidewalk it is impossible to get the roots out in a condition to allow the trees to survive.

Mr. Barrett stated he was sympathetic to staff's concern about trying to preserve the two northern most tree but also understands the applicant's desire to provide an attractive location for a business and make it visible to customers. Mt. Barrett felt the awning being proposed will help break up the façade and will make it more pedestrian friendly. Chair Spykman noted the applicant is also proposing plantings under the windows.

C. Board Discussion and Action

A motion was made by Mayor Kendall Lane that the Planning Board grant SPR-927 Modification #12, as shown on the site plan, "Monadnock Marketplace Renovations of Existing Space (Vacant Space Adjacent to Ulta-Unit 2B)," drawn by SVE Associates dated December 18, 2015, last revised on January 8, 2015 at a scale of 1" = 20' and the architectural elevations, "Proposed Alterations to Exterior Elevations," drawn Pepin Associates Architects dated December 18, 2015, last revised on January 20, 2016 at a scale of 3/32" – 1' with the following conditions:

1. Prior to signature by Planning Board Chair, Owner's signature on plan.

The motion was seconded by Pamela Russell Slack and was unanimously approved.

IV. Driveways

1. 27 Baker Street – Request for an additional driveway

Mr. Don Alex of 27 Baker Street stated his request was to locate an additional driveway at his residence located at 27 Baker Street. He indicated they have difficulty parking three cars during the winter months because of the snow that comes off the roof which damages the car.

Chair Spykman asked Mr. Alex to address the Board's standards for a second driveway. Mr. Alex stated his understanding is that the driveway needs to be 10 feet back from the sidewalk

with an additional 18 feet and at least 12 wide. Mr. Alex stated this is laid out in his drawing. He also added the driveway needs to be five feet from neighbor's existing driveway and four feet from their property line, which it is. He also noted that the drainage will flow towards the rear of the house.

Mayor Lane asked whether this was a single or multi family home. Mr. Alex stated it was a single family home. The Mayor stated he had noticed there were two electric meters. Mr. Alex stated he wasn't sure why this was the case but stated it was a single family home. He added his daughter has been using the area being proposed for the third vehicle but this became an issue about a month ago and this is the reason he is before the Board today. Mr. Stout stated he wasn't sure how the second driveway would prevent damage from snow. Mr. Alex stated they park one as close to the garage as possible and one towards the road away from the roof – the snow from the roof comes towards the center of the driveway.

Ms. Weeks asked why one of the cars couldn't be parked in the garage. Mr. Alex stated the garage was not structurally stable to hold a vehicle; the only thing the garage could hold is a 14-foot boat.

Chair Spykman went over the waiver criteria and asked Mr. Alex to address them individually.

1. *Issuance of the exception will not reduce the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles using adjacent streets and intersections.*

Mr. Alex stated this would not be a problem and felt it would be no different to what exists at the present time trying to back out of the existing driveway. Chair Spykman stated the question of conflict arises having a second location crossing a sidewalk causing conflict between pedestrians and vehicles; going from one curb cut to two curb cuts you are potentially adding more conflict at a second point. Mr. Alex noted there is at least one other house on the street that has a second driveway.

2. *Issuance of the exception does not adversely affect the efficiency and capacity of the street or intersection.*

Mr. Alex stated he does not see any issues.

3. *There are unique characteristics of the land or property, which present a physical hardship to the requestor.*

Mr. Alex stated he did not understand these criteria. He added that he needs the additional space because he is unable to park three cars in this driveway.

4. *In no case shall financial hardship be used to justify the granting of the exception.*

Chair Spykman stated financial hardship has is not an issue raised by the applicant.

Ms. Kessler addressed the Board next. Ms. Kessler stated Mr. Alex was referring to the Board's standards for a driveway – Section 102-794 of the Zoning Code, having sufficient room behind the front setback of a building. Mr. Alex is proposing to locate parking behind the front line of the building. The other requirement is that it is located three feet from the property line. The

applicant's design calls for the driveway to be located five feet from the property line. Ms. Kessler stated based on what she has just explained, his design meets the zoning requirements.

Ms. Kessler went on to say, based on the Driveway Standards, Chapter 70, Section 135 outlines the exception the criteria which the Chairman went through. Ms. Kessler referred to the first criteria.

Issuance of the exception will not reduce the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles using adjacent streets and intersections.

Ms. Kessler stated there are a number of curb cuts along this section of Baker Street and staff's concern is the addition of another curb cut could impact pedestrian and bicycle safety. Also, the addition of this curb cut impact the efficiency of Baker Street. Baker Street sees about 1,700 vehicle trips per day and this area of Baker Street is narrow.

There are unique characteristics of the land or property, which present a physical hardship to the requestor.

Ms. Kessler stated the applicant has identified the issue of falling ice on vehicles as a hardship and he cannot fit three vehicles in the existing driveway to avoid the ice. She indicated staff has gone through several options and this is the option preferred by the applicant. She further stated the applicant has not identified financial hardship as reason for requesting this exception. Ms. Kessler went on to say another key item to keep in mind is the proximity of this curb cut to the neighboring driveway; the width of the driveway is supposed to be 12 feet but the width of the curb cut is supposed to be 14 feet which may have an impact on the neighboring driveway.

Ms. Weeks asked what was located on the opposite side of where this driveway is being requested. Ms. Kessler stated she thinks it is a neighbor's lawn. Ms. Weeks asked whether the existing driveway couldn't be widened. Ms. Kessler stated she doesn't think it is possible but couldn't be sure without reviewing a survey map. Ms. Weeks asked whether there isn't a city ordinance that prevents parking on lawns and asked if this has been an illegal use of the property. Ms. Kessler stated a complaint was filed and that is what prompted the applicant's request. Ms. Weeks asked whether it was the intention of the City to not permit second driveways for single family homes. Mr. Lamb stated that is apparent in the regulations – Chapter 70; the city wants to minimize the number of curb cuts on most streets, especially on those streets that act more as collector streets. Ms. Weeks clarified there is no existing curb cut at this location. Ms. Kessler agreed and added that there is also no break in the sidewalk.

Mr. Stout asked whether there were any city standards that would refer to aesthetic concerns. Ms. Kessler stated the only standard she can think of refers to materials used. However, if this was a parking lot there are standards that refer to aesthetic with respect to landscaping.

Mr. Bohannon asked if this proposed driveway is going to be located directly across the street. Ms. Kessler stated that it is across the street but is slightly offset.

Mr. Barrett noted the staff report refers to other alternatives other than the location of a second driveway and asked what those alternatives were. Ms. Kessler stated staff had suggested the installation of an ice dam, parking in the garage and extending the driveway out. Mr. Barrett stated he has a similar issue in his driveway but he is fortunate to have a driveway that is wide enough so he can park his vehicle away from the house. Mr. Barrett asked whether another option could be to widen the driveway slightly. Chair Spykman stated absent a survey it appears

the existing driveway seems to be directly on the property line right now and unless the applicant can make an arrangement with the neighbor, this is not a viable option.

Ms. Weeks felt it is difficult to make a decision without knowing where the property line is. Ms. Weeks went on to say that it seems like a vehicle has been parking on this lawn area which is against city code and this is also an area the city is trying to discourage multiple vehicles at dwellings. She felt this would be bad precedent to set without knowing where the property line is located and whether accommodations could be made to widen the driveway. She also did not feel asking for the construction of an ice dam was an unreasonable request.

Mayor Lane stated with respect to parking on the lawn, according to the aerial photography this is something that has been going on for a long period of time and is likely to pre-date the ordinance and felt it might be something that is grandfathered in, prior to the ordinance being adopted. As a result it would probably not be an illegal use of the property. The Mayor went on to say, that the third vehicle belongs to Mr. Alex's daughter and hence could be a temporary situation and if the Board approves this the Board is creating a permanent situation.

Mr. Lamb stated the City's standard dates back to 1990. When the complaint came before staff, staff looked at the 1990 aerial photograph and in the 1990 photo the driveway was not obvious. If the use was obvious in the 1990 photograph, the applicant would have been entitled to an automatic curb cut.

Ms. Kessler stated even if it was grandfathered in, it would still have been a non-conforming use.

The Chair asked for public comment. With no comments from the public, the Chair closed the public hearing.

Ms. Weeks asked if abutters are notified on this application. The Chair stated there is no requirement to notify abutters on a driveway application.

Mr. Stout stated he was opposed to this application primarily for safety reasons – the driveway across the street as well as the additional traffic being caused.

Mr. Barrett asked for more information on the complaint that was filed. He felt if a neighbor had complained about parking on the lawn, which was a non-conforming use, it would have been a reasonable complaint. By approving this driveway the Board will turn a non-conforming use to a conforming use. Chair Spykman stated for the most part enforcement for something like this is usually complaint driven. Mr. Lamb stated whatever the nature of the complaint, this is the process the Board will take and the owner has the option of fixing the complaint by obtaining a permit. He added the nature of the complaint might matter, whether parking was happening on the grass and this approval would solve that. Ms. Kessler stated the complaint was due to an observation made by a housing inspector.

Mr. Stout stated his understanding is that there was an effort to change the enforcement method in the zoning department. Mr. Lamb stated the city has adopted a more proactive effort to enforcement when it comes to housing. The Council approved funding to hire two part-time enforcement officers and their task is to ensure safe housing and to make sure voluntary housing inspections are taking place which is more in collaboration with Keene State College and landlords. Mr. Stout felt it was important to note zoning enforcement is not meant to punish but more to comply with zoning.

Ms. Weeks stated she too will be voting against this request and commended the city for keeping up with enforcement especially in neighborhoods where parking was an issue. She indicated she understands this is a single family home but felt having a second driveway will have an impact on the neighborhood and will reduce property values in the area.

Chair Spykman stated safety is a concern for him as well especially because of how busy this street is.

A motion was made by Mayor Kendall Lane to approve the plan, "Proposed Additional Driveway Plan" submitted by Donald and Lisa Alex to the Planning Department on December 16, 2015 and revised on December 22, 2015 for a second residential driveway at 27 Baker Street (TMP# 034-02-006) subject to the following conditions:

1. Driveway design shall not direct storm water flow or disrupt existing drainage in the City of Keene right of way.
2. The Applicant will procure all necessary permits and approvals prior to commencing construction.

The motion was seconded by Pamela Russell Slack.

Mr. Bohannon asked whether the language which talks about "*necessary permits*" refer to other city departments. Mr. Lamb stated it would be a street opening permit obtained through the Public Works Department, they are administrative permits.

Mr. Bohannon stated this would mean the Board could approve this application but it could go to Public Works and they could deny the permit. Mr. Lamb stated if it doesn't meet Public Works criteria such as the depth of the concrete, crossing of the sidewalk etc. it could be denied.

Ms. Weeks clarified the permits will be at the expense of the homeowner. Staff answered in the affirmative.

The motion failed on a 1-6 vote with Pamela Russell Slack voting in favor.

V. **Extension Request**

1. **SPR-01-13, Mod. 1 – 19 Ferry Brook Road – Cheshire County Shooting Sport Education Foundation**

Mr. David Bergeron stated they have been working on this project for a while and it is moving forward. A modification was requested a year ago and the applicant is still working on permits and this is reason for the extension request. The plan is to start construction this year. Mr. Bergeron showed the Board a copy of the site plan which was approved by the Board. Cheshire County Fish and Game own 180 acres on Ferry Brook Road where they have operated a shooting range since the 1920s. Their proposal is to construct an indoor range (20,000 square feet in size) adjacent to the existing range. There will be two ranges with other uses such as locker rooms and a cafeteria. The site will have a gravel parking lot.

Mr. Bergeron stated the applicant is still in a fund raising mode and have received quite a bit of monetary support from donors. He indicated the local police departments are in support of this range as they would have a place for shooting practice.

Staff comments were next. Planner, Michele Chalice stated that it has been a while since this plan first came before the Board. She indicated staff did not have a chance to discuss the issue of precedent with the City Attorney because of the fact the plan had not been signed before a modification to the plan was made. She indicated she did review the minutes and it was clear the Mayor and Planning Director had an opinion that a modification would restart this process. Ms. Chalice added while one extension had been granted, a second extension was requested but that was rescinded and then a modification granted and the opinion was that this, restarted the process and now the Board has another extension request. Ms. Chalice stated staff's recommendation is that as a compromise this extension be considered a second extension but the Board does have some latitude to make their own interpretation. She added the matter could be tabled so staff could have a discussion with the legal department to determine what legal precedence has been set throughout the state.

Ms. Chalice further stated the applicant has advised the Planning Department through the entire project and there has been no misinterpretation.

Mr. Stout stated he does not want to cause the applicant undue harm but stated he wasn't sure by granting this request whether the Board was going to breach protocol that might harm the normal process. Ms. Chalice stated she would defer to Mr. Lamb but does not see that as an issue; the first extension was granted and for a second extension to be granted the applicant has to demonstrate the extension is necessary and their opinion is that they don't have the necessary funding. Mr. Lamb added the interpretation was made a year ago in that a modification to the site plan would mean starting the timeline over again. He added the Board has a lot of latitude when these modifications come back before the Board. Last time the Board said this modification was equal to starting over but for the next round the Board has the right to say it is not going to treat it as a "starting over" as the Board's regulations really don't talk about such an issue. The reason the Board voted on the modification in the manner it did is because the Board was aware this applicant was going to need more time with their fund raising.

Mayor Lane asked whether the Board has to decide at this point whether this is a first extension or a second extension and asked why the Board just can't grant an extension and decide at a later time, should the applicant come back for another extension request. He added the biggest difference according to Board standards is between the second extension and the third extension. Ms. Chalice stated she would not want to grant a nebulous number of extensions. Mr. Lamb added as long as the Board knows which extension they are on, it is "ok". The Board has to latitude to pick a date two years hence. The Mayor stated he would consider what is before the Board as a first extension because the applicant came in with a new proposal that had substantial changes; the prior extension was on a different plan than what is before the Board today.

Chair Spykman asked what the philosophical reasoning for setting dates and making it tough to obtain extensions and the interest of this Board for setting time limits. Mr. Lamb explained when the Board approves a site plan, what the Board is approving is the use of capacity in public systems such as roads, water and sewer. If the applicant is not going to use the capacity provided to them, the City wants to be able to grant it to someone else. The Chairman thanked Mr. Lamb for his explanation because it is not always clear what these time limits are intended to serve.

Mr. Stout felt if patents were handled in this manner we would have much cheaper merchandise; major companies purchase patent rights and then hold them for long period of time.

Ms. Weeks referred to a comment made by Dr. Vander Haegen previously in that the modification the applicant came with a year ago conformed much better to the city's wetland standards. She commended the applicant for that.

The Chair asked for public comment. With no comments from the public, the Chair closed the public hearing.

A motion was made by Mayor Kendall Lane that the Planning Board approve a first extension as requested in the letter dated January 4, 2016 for SPR-01-13, Mod. 1 for the plan entitled "Proposed Indoor Range, Cheshire County Shooting Sports Education Foundation" located at 19 Ferry Brook Road, dated January 18, 2013, revised February 22, 2013 and December 12, 2014 with elevations dated February 21, 2013 and rendering received by the Planning Board on December 18, 2014 at various scales, prepared for the Cheshire County Fish and Game Club.

The motion was seconded by Pamela Russell Slack and was unanimously approved.

VI. Discussion

1. **SPR-505, Mod. 1 – Fairfield's Cadillac Buick GMC – 434 Winchester Street – Site Plan** – Applicant Brickstone Land Use Consultants, LLC on behalf of owner 434-440 Winchester, LLC requests Planning Board authorization to proceed with administrative review for a site plan modification, site plan approval granted on June 22, 2015. The site is 3.01 acres in size and located in the Commerce Limited Zoning District (TMP# 911-24-008).

Mr. Stout stated that the applicant is a member of the NH Automobile Dealers Association, his employer, and asked that he be recused from this application.

Chair Spykman explained the Board approved this plan on June 22, 2015 and in proceeding with the project the applicant found that the site conditions did not permit them to move forward with the plan. As a result they are proposing a change but the question is whether it is substantial enough that the Board is going to require them to start over the application process or could the change be reviewed by the Planning Director. Chair Spykman stated this change was complex enough that in discussion with Mr. Lamb, it was suggested the matter be brought before the Board.

Mr. Lamb stated the matter came to the Planning Department fairly late last month and in many cases he would have approved this administratively but another change came as well and hence staff felt it should be brought before the Board. He added that something similar happened with Konover where the Board decided to have the matter approved administratively.

Mr. Bergeron referred to the site plan that was approved by the Board last year and added work has already started for the compensatory storage. He referred to the original configuration which is what is there today and the plan was to extend that building to the back. The showroom at the front was going to be torn off and the rear shop area was going to be replaced. Mr. Bergeron explained this building was built back in the late 70's to early 80's and there has been a lot of change that has happened since that time; snow loads have increased, foundation designs have increased and seismic design codes have been added. Hence what has been realized is that the central portion of the building does not have the foundation capacity or steel capacity to meet today's standards. The entire building will need to be brought up to code which would require the business to be closed for a period of time which is not feasible.

Hence, what the contractors have proposed is to go out five feet on both sides, add ten feet in the back, add in a new foundation and a steel frame have it taller than the existing building and enclose the existing building with a new structural frame. While this is going on, normal operations will continue.

Mayor Lane asked whether the material that is going to be used for this exterior envelope is the same as what was approved previously. Mr. Bergeron answered in the affirmative. The Mayor asked whether there will be any impact to parking. Mr. Bergeron stated the right of way which is about 30 feet wide is still being kept open; the parking will be pushed out slightly toward the setback line. The canopy will come slightly short of the setback line and this will mean the applicant would have to go back before the City Council to request a change to the license that was granted for this canopy.

Ms. Weeks asked about the second story. Mr. Bergeron stated the showroom is a one-story building but right behind that is a 30 foot building which is a two-story building and will be built according to prior approval. Ms. Weeks asked about the showroom. Mr. Bergeron stated the entire showroom will be demolished and rebuilt. Ms. Weeks asked about parking. Mr. Bergeron stated the angled parking that exists right now will be made steeper. There will be eight spaces that would be eliminated but there still be would be sufficient spaces to meet zoning.

Mr. Barrett asked whether the area that is going to be built around the existing building will ultimately increase the height of the building. Mr. Bergeron stated that would be a question for the contractor, but added that the height requirement is 35 feet and they are going to remain below that height. It might be about five to six feet higher than what exists there right now. Mr. Barrett asked whether the increase to the footprint require the compensatory flood storage excavation to be increased. Mr. Bergeron stated that it does and added when the original design was created they designed it to be more than what is required.

The Chairman asked for staff comments. Mr. Lamb stated the Board could make a motion to have this matter approved administratively which is what staff is recommending at this time. Without this last addition to the front of the building, which is what came in recently; staff was going to approve this matter administratively.

A motion was made by Mayor Kendall Lane that the Planning Board authorize SPR-505, Mod. 1 to be reviewed administratively for any site plan modifications. The motion was seconded by Pamela Russell Slack and was unanimously approved.

Mr. Stout rejoined the Board.

VII. Complete Streets Resolution and Design Guidelines Update

Planner Tara Kessler and Public Works Director, Kurt Blomquist were the next two speakers. Mr. Blomquist commended Ms. Kessler for her work with this project. Mr. Blomquist stated within the Master Plan there are a number of sections that deal with complete streets. He indicated the premise behind complete streets is that multiple users can utilize our streets.

Ms. Kessler stated it was important to keep in mind that the city has been committing the concept of complete streets in most of their infrastructure projects. The Resolution institutionalizes the commitment to the complete streets concept and the design guidelines is an opportunity to

outline what complete streets mean for the City of Keene and to consolidate it in one place to help people who would be working on infrastructure projects.

Ms. Kessler went on to say the design guidelines outline the different street types and these were based on consideration for the landuse context for different areas of Keene. Ms. Kessler referred to page 4 – for instance slow streets refer to areas like Main Street in downtown Keene where the city is trying to encourage slow speeds where all types of users are aware of what is going with safety being the key aspect.

Gateway streets are corridor streets which lead in and out of the downtown which are more travelled corridors where all users are considered but traffic is not being slowed down. Example for gateway streets are West Street, Marlboro Street, Main Street leading out of downtown, Winchester Street, Washington Street, Court Street and Gilbo Avenue.

Ms. Kessler stated they also looked at streets where bicycle use could be emphasized such as bicycle lanes. Mr. Blomquist added when they redid Court Street there was an interest to add bike lanes and reconstruct sidewalks but this meant a significant amount of trees needed to be removed. Hence, the decision was made to increase the shoulder width to be able to preserve the trees. He indicated the guidelines were created to allow for this type of flexibility.

Ms. Kessler then talked about neighborhood streets which is a very predominant street type. Medium to high density residential development exist, these type streets exist outside the edges of the downtown. Considerations for these streets might be a sidewalk on one side of the road and if possible on both sides of the road. Pedestrian safety is a key aspect in these areas and not as much in street improvements like a protected bike lane. Mr. Blomquist noted that Keene has a variety of neighborhoods. On Washington Street, houses go right up to the sidewalk while on Maple Acres the streets are wider with houses set back. As a result depending on the neighborhood the treatment of streets need to be different as well.

Rural Street – Hurricane Road neighborhood, where houses are less densely developed, speeds are not much of an issue. However, there are things that could be considered for users of this street and take into consideration the landuse context as well.

Ms. Kessler then went over some elements for these different street types (starting on page 8). For instance for slow streets – Angled off street parking, landscape pedestrian refuge island, ADA complaint sidewalks, pedestrian scale lighting, green buffer with street trees. There is also a cross-section map of what the street would look like and the list of considerations. There is such a list for each street type. She noted this is the list city staff or others would use to figure out what would be appropriate for the street they are working on.

Ms. Kessler then referred page 26, transit overlay. Ms. Kessler stated this was added in because transit is an important element for consideration. However, the transit route may cover different types of routes as well and this overlay map not only shows the transit routes today but also routes that could be used for transit in the future. The considerations that could accommodate transit overlay would include things like covered shelters, covered bike racks, benches, lighting and other items listed on page 28. She also called the Board's attention to the additional resources listed on page 29.

Ms. Kessler stated it is exciting for the city to develop its own set of guidelines which is first for the State of New Hampshire. The challenge is how this is going to get implemented. Mr.

Blomquist noted coming up for construction is the Winchester Street reconstruction to the Island Street Bridge which is going to be the first street for complete street construction. He stated what he would encourage the Planning Board to start doing is when site plans come before the Board to start asking question like how the applicant is connecting the site to complete streets.

Ms. Kessler stated she would also like to give credit to Southwest Regional Planning Commission and Healthy Monadnock 20/20 who helped with the development of these documents and help fund the development of these documents.

Mayor Lane noted the city is developing a series of multi-use transportation corridors throughout the city. He stated he also wants the city to keep in mind the Marlboro Street project and as portions of the city gets developed Marlboro Street will become an important component in that redevelopment.

Mr. Stout stated that he has not heard the mention the comprehensive master plan. Mr. Blomquist stated page 80 of the comprehensive master plan talks about complete streets. Ms. Kessler stated page 2 of the design guidelines talk about the importance of complete streets from the master plan perspective. Mr. Blomquist stated if the Board looks at its standards which refer to parking, walkability etc. the concepts in this document is throughout the master plan. The goal for complete streets is that all type of different users can get to where they want to go.

Ms. Weeks asked whether bicycles can use sidewalks outside downtown. Mr. Blomquist answered in the affirmative. Ms. Weeks stated as a walker she has noticed that the sidewalks are very icy. Mr. Blomquist explained that sidewalks are the most difficult things to maintain during the winter months. On a street the movement of heavy vehicles help keep the streets clear but the equipment used for sidewalks help clear the snow but it is difficult to scrape down to the pavement. However, with porous pavement, like what you see in the Fuller School neighborhood, the water dissolves and there is no standing water which is what ends up causing ice on sidewalks. Mr. Blomquist stated this is an issue Public works deals with every year. He added Public Works always ask people not to leave snow on sidewalks which make the problem even worse. Ms. Weeks suggested use of salt and sand. Mr. Blomquist stated then there is the issue of residences complaining about killing of grass. Mayor Lane stated there are some residences who are asking that the sidewalk in front of their homes be removed because the snow is killing their lawns.

Chair Spykman asked how the complete street concept is introduced when just a resurfacing of a street is done. Mr. Blomquist stated the simplest thing that can be done are ten foot wide travel lanes which would then provide a lane for other users. Ms. Weeks commended all the work that went into this document.

VIII. Planning Director Reports

Approve 2016 Planning Board meeting schedule

A motion was made by Pamela Russell Slack to adopt the 2016 Planning Board meeting schedule. The motion was seconded by Andrew Bohannon.

Ms. Weeks recalled that the May 2016 meeting was going to be on a Tuesday instead of Monday. Mr. Lamb stated it is usually the Joint meeting that has the conflict with the City Council's budget meetings. Mr. Stout noted that December 27th was close to Christmas. Mr. Lamb stated if there was a need, an adjustment can be made. Mr. Stout referred to the same issue

with the November meeting being very close to the Thanksgiving as well. He asked how easy it is to make changes to the schedule. Mr. Lamb stated it depends on the nature of the schedule for a particular month. The Board noticed a few errors with the meeting schedule for 2016. It was agreed the Board schedule will be approved next. The motion made by Ms. Slack was withdrawn and the second made by Mr. Bohannon was withdrawn.

IX. Upcoming dates of interest – February 2016

Planning Board Meeting – Monday, February 22, 6:30 PM

Planning Board Steering Committee – Tuesday, February 9, 5:00 PM

Joint PB/PLD – Monday, February 8, 6:30 PM

Planning Board Site Visits – Wednesday, February 17, 8:00 AM – to be confirmed

On a unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 8:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Krishni Pahl
Minute Taker

Reviewed by: Rhett Lamb, Planning Director
Edits, L. Langella