

**MINUTES**

**PLANNING BOARD  
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**CITY HALL, MUNICIPAL COMPLEX, 1 JUNKINS AVENUE**

**6:00 P.M.**

**JANUARY 12, 2017**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** John Ricci, Chairman; Elizabeth Moreau, Vice Chairman; Rebecca Perkins, City Council Representative; Nancy Colbert-Puff, Deputy City Manager; David Moore, Assistant City Manager; Colby Gamester; Jody Record; and Jane Begala, Alternate

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mr. Taintor, Planning Director;

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jessa Berna, Planner I; Jay Leduc; Dexter Legg; and Jeffrey Kisiel, Alternate

.....

**I. WORK SESSION**

- A. The request of Deer Street Associates, Owner, for property located at 165 Deer Street and 181 Hill Street for design review of proposals to construct three mixed-use buildings fronting on Deer Street and a fourth mixed-use building fronting on a future public street off Bridge Street to be created in association with the City's new parking garage. Said properties are shown on Assessor Map 125 as Lot 17 and Assessor Map 138 as Lot 62 and all lots lie within the CD5 District and the Downtown Overlay District (DOD) and two of the proposed buildings lie within the Historic District.

Chairman Ricci called for a brief presentation of the overview and discussion to follow.

Those present to speak to the request were:

- Kim Rogers, GL Rogers and Company
- Mike Penney, GO Insight
- Tim Phoenix, Hoefle Phoenix Gormley & Roberts, P.A. Attorneys at Law
- Mark Moeller, JSA Inc
- Traci Kozak, JSA Inc
- Bob White, Greenman-Pedersen Inc

Ms. Kozak presented a brief overview of the project, including the following statements:

- The birdseye view of the neighborhoods was presented to illustrate the proposed structures and uses. The collection of buildings are in line with the vision plan, which was a plan in response from the community on how the buildings should be sized and oriented to each other. The gaps between each building allow for access, light, and air. The site layout plan was presented to indicate the community space. Building 3 would utilize the current zoning development

incentive for the additional 6<sup>th</sup> story. Building 5 would include workforce housing and include a variety of rental rates.

- The construction phasing would begin with Building 3 and 6, which may happen concurrently with the parking garage construction. Two existing buildings on lots 4 and 5 are proposed to be removed. The excess parking around 4 and 5 will be used for staging.
- A major goal of the entire project is to promote sustainability. Energy consumption is aimed to be reduced by more than 50% with quality insulation, solar panels, and green roofs.
- The building elevations were shown to explain the various proposed amenities and uses, including a retail space, hotel use, and civic space.

Vice Chairman Moreau expressed concern regarding the traffic flow around Building 4 given the limited options for entrance and exit. Ms. Kozak presented an alternative option that would reverse the direction to counter-clockwise. In this example, the vehicles would enter between Building 4 and 5 and then approach a two-lane split. She provided details as to how the travel patterns would occur in that arrangement. It would still require signage and striping. Vice Chairman Moreau asked whether consideration was had for providing access behind Building 5. Ms. Kozak noted that it can be certainly evaluated.

Chairman Ricci asked whether there was consideration for condensing Buildings 3, 4, and 5 into two larger structures having the community space located in between. He added that there may be potential issues regarding traffic flow around Building 4.

Ms. Begala expressed concerns for the lack of parking proposed versus what is required. Ms. Kozak explained that some lots propose more than required, which helps to compensate for other lots that propose less than required. The net result is 10 additional spaces than what is required.

Vice Chairman Moreau questioned snow storage locations. Ms. Kozak explained that the back lot line could be snowbanks and there is some extra space on the sides of the buildings. She did not foresee a substantial amount of snow that would need to be removed. Vice Chairman Moreau felt the spacing is tight and it would be helpful to simulate the vehicles on the plan.

Vice Chairman Moreau questioned whether the sidewalks would have curbing. Mr. White explained that a portion of the sidewalk near Rock St Park was considered to be flush with the driveway, however, that may have been removed.

Ms. Record asked the traffic flow of the loading zones behind Building 3. Ms. Kozak noted that there will be a loading space there. Mr. Moeller added that the loading zone may move in front of the two transformers to prevent impediments to the traffic and provide visibility for the drivers.

Ms. Record asked whether there are two or three lanes at the entrance of Building 5. Mr. Moeller replied that two lanes would lead to a 24' wide ramp. There is another proposal considering to use two vehicular elevators private to the building tenants. It may eliminate the traffic concerns to have two designated elevators versus one.

Ms. Begala questioned the parking in Building 5 since it appears to propose ten less spaces than the number of residential units. Mr. Moeller noted that is why the vehicle elevator is being considered because then it will meet the parking requirements.

Ms. Colbert Puff suggested that it may be easier to review the plan from strictly a site plan perspective. She asked for further description of the wall at the sidewalk near Building 5. Mr. White explained that the wall is an opportunity for a sitting edge that can compensate for the roughly 2.5' grade change. She asked to consider that the concept may appear unconventional. Mr. Taintor suggested whether the grade change could be accounted for inside the entrance of the building. Vice Chairman Moreau compared it to the entrance at 143 Daniel St.

Mr. Moore asked whether an additional traffic study will be provided to account for the development. Mr. Taintor explained that the recommendations from the traffic study will change as the development changes.

Mr. Moore asked to summarize the community space. Ms. Kozak explained that the community space incentive is planned to be applied to Building 3 and 6. She noted that the driveways will not be counted as credit. Mr. Moore asked to describe the dimensions of the community space jags. Mr. Rogers noted that it would not be considered. Mr. Moeller noted that each offset is roughly 10' in depth.

Mr. Moore asked where the entrances are located. Mr. Moeller noted that the zoning requires every 50 feet. He provided specific details as to where each door would be located. Mr. Moore encouraged that the entrances present distinguished doorways rather than merely zoning requirements in an effort to activate the streetscape.

Mr. Moore asked to describe the plans for trash disposal locations. Mr. Moeller explained the speculated travel routes for each of the tenants accessing the dumpsters. Mr. Moore encouraged planning where the trash disposal would be located as early as possible.

Mr. White noted that several aspects aimed at creating an attractive and walkable streetscape have been incorporated into the design of the project.

Councilor Perkins complimented the creativity and amenities incorporated into the plan. She suggested that visual demonstrations of the elevations may help to illustrate what the proposed building mass will look like compared to the sidewalks and road.

Mr. Taintor suggested flipping the north and south side roof forms and windows to improve energy efficiency and urban design. He asked for the finished floor level elevation of Building 5 and how it relates to the current and future flood elevations. He asked for further information regarding the required and proposed community space area for each lot. He noted that the emergency generators are not shown on the plan. He questioned whether there would be another kitchen in the hotel, other than at the café, that would require a grease trap.

Mr. Moore questioned whether the upper floors can open up to Deer St. Ms. Kozak replied that they are aware of making the railroad side of the development intriguing, however, it is not meant to be a public way. The view is more distant and is the edge of the downtown. The roofs are north facing and that texture because of the distant view described.

Ms. Kozak replied to Mr. Moore that they aim to propose five stores in Building 5. She added that the community based incentive would be applied to Building 3 and 6 only. It would be difficult to achieve workforce housing if any less units were proposed. Mr. Moore felt that Building 5 is the most ideal

location for the workforce housing units. Ms. Kozak confirmed that all that residential units would be rental.

Mr. Taintor explained to Ms. Kozak that submitting a site plan prior to the public hearing would be unordinary for the typical design review process.

.....

**II. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn at 8:02 pm was made, seconded and passed unanimously.

.....

Respectfully Submitted,

Marissa Day  
Acting Secretary for the Planning Board

These minutes were approved at the Planning Board meeting on February 16, 2017.