



## BELLINGHAM PLANNING BOARD

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10 MECHANIC STREET  
BELLINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS 02019  
(508) 657-2892 [PlanningBoard@bellinghamma.org](mailto:PlanningBoard@bellinghamma.org)

### **Meeting Minutes** **Thursday, September 23, 2021** **7:00 pm**

#### **Present at the Meeting:**

William F. O'Connell Jr. (WFO), Chairman  
Brian T. Salisbury (BTS), Vice Chairman  
Dennis J. Trebino (DJT), Member  
Philip M. Devine (PD), Member  
Elizabeth Berthelette (EB), Member (Participated by Zoom)  
Robert Lussier (RL), Associate Member

#### **Other Officials:**

James S. Kupfer was also present

The meeting was held in person and via zoom for those who wanted to take part remotely.

Chairman O'Connell opened the meeting at 7:00 pm.

It was communicated that the agenda would be taken out of order.

#### **PUBLIC HEARING 148 Depot Street:**

148 Depot Street (South) – Development Plan- §240-16, §240-54, Stormwater Management, §240-60, Flexible Parking Options Special Permit, and §240-119, and Major Business Complex Special Permit, The applicant, 2020 Acquisitions and owner, Depot Street, LLC, propose to construct a 79,500 square foot industrial building and a 50,250 square foot industrial building with associated improvements at 148 Depot Street in Bellingham, approximately 27.5+/- square feet of land, shown on Assessor's Map 38-23, zoned Industrial.

#### **PUBLIC HEARING 152 Depot Street:**

152 Depot Street (North) – Development Plan - §240-16, Development Plan Approval, §240-54, Stormwater Management, §240-60, Flexible Parking Options Special Permit, and §240-119, Major Business Complex Special Permit. The applicant, 2020 Acquisitions and owner, Depot Street, LLC, propose to construct a 211,600 square foot industrial building with associated improvements at 152 Depot Street in Bellingham, approximately 20.7+/- square feet of land, shown on Assessor's Map 38-23, zoned Industrial.

**On a motion made by Brian Salisbury, seconded by Dennis Trebino, the Board voted unanimously to open the hearings for 148 Depot Street and 152 Depot Street.**

The hearing notice was read by Member Salisbury.

**On a motion made by Brian Salisbury, seconded by Elizabeth Berthelette, the Board voted unanimously to suspend the reading of the hearings for 152 Depot Street.**

Jim Kupfer provided an overview of the how the board will look at both of these projects holistically while seeking information and comments from the neighbors and community. The Board has in their packet the application, plan set, traffic analysis, and drainage analysis. All of this information can be viewed by the public online. The applicant will provide an overview of the project. There will be peer review of this project to look at the detailed aspects providing guidance and input. There was a screen share of how the planning Board hearing process will be conducted. The process will run concurrent with the Conservation Commission. The meetings will be topic focused: traffic, stormwater, etc.

The Chairman asked Engineer John Kusich to provide an overview of the projects. Brandon Barry was also present as part of the hearing. Attorney Antonellis along with the project developer and architect were present by zoom. There are two applications presented both the north and south parcel. Those were noted on a share screen. This Board was informed by the applicant that applications will also be in front of the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Conservation Commission. The presentation focused on the south parcel first. This parcel is approximately 25 acres and proposing two buildings on site. The buildings were shown on the screen share. This is all accessed through one driveway on Depot Street. The buildings will not be visible from Depot Street. There is full access around the buildings when you enter the site. This will be a paved travel way with access for the Fire Equipment and trucks. In the northern building area, there are 3 parking stalls located in the front portion of the building, there are an additional 20 (reserve) parking stalls to the north. There are 16 recessed loading docks on the rear of the site. This site is surrounded by woods. The building is respecting the 200 ft no touch buffer zone. This was shown with the yellow line on the plan. This is more than required. The next building (south) this has full access. 74 parking stalls at the front. This building also respects the 200 ft no touch. Both buildings will have stormwater basins. There has been extensive testing done. The material is great and sandy, and the water is going back into the ground. This is all outlined in the reports. Utilities will be public water and will bring to site. There is no sewer, and each building will have on site septic.

The Chairman next had the applicant explain the application for 152 Depot Street. This is a 21-acre parcel. This building will have one driveway to access site with full access to separate employee traffic and truck traffic. There are 156 parking stalls and 53 at the other end for 209 parking stalls. There are 36 docks with trailer storage. The material on site is consistent with having great sand for drainage. The utilities are the same as the other site. There were meetings with staff and a concern was the triangular piece which was excess. The DPW has an interest in this parcel for the MS4 requirements and asked if the applicant could provide this. The applicant has no problem with providing conveyance for this parcel. The applicant was informed that there was a full traffic study completed. This type of project is a low traffic generator. The highlights of traffic were noted in the peak hour generation combining the north and the south parcels is 66 peak hour morning generation comprised of 59 cars and 7 trucks. In the evening peak hours 69 trips and 59 cars and 10 trucks. The applicant discussed the Hartford Avenue Depot Street intersection has issues and difficult traffic patterns and has committed to work on signaling

the intersection. The applicant will have \$250,000 allocated for the signalization. This would bring the traffic levels from an F to a B. This was outlined in the traffic analysis. The renderings were provided.

The hearing was then opened to the Board for questions:

Some of the items which will be reviewed include the following:

- Need for Special Permit
- Waivers requested
- Traffic
- Hours of operation
- Type of tenant
- Stormwater management
- Parking for vehicles (type of vehicles, truck surveillance)
- Site lines for project
- Impact on neighbors
- Impact on wildlife
- Impact of aquifer
- Impacts on wildlife
- Construction time frame, management
- Storage for snow

The hearing was opened to the public for comments.

Attorney Wozniak explained that he does not represent all the residents in the room but a few. There was an initial statement made that this would have low traffic impact but the tenancy of this site has not been determined so this is an assumption of the applicant. Attorney Woziack wanted to know if there will be one single tenant or multiple tenants so an assumption cannot be made about the traffic going from an F to a B since the tenants are not known. Another question was asked if the current streets are going to be able to handle the additional capacity. Another question was about the snow, there does not appear to be an outside area beyond the pavement for snow storage. This is a residential area, and the present uses at this point are showing back up on this street with tracker trailers. There buildings are also seeking three variances, which is a self-created hardship.

The applicant noted that at this point the tenants are not known. There could be more than one tenant. The type of use is warehouse distribution. This will be low impact. The plans can be revised to show the snow storage area. The peer review of this project will look at the traffic in the most conservative manner. The following was noted as concerns.

**The Concerns of the abutters include the following:**

- Traffic
- Snow removal
- Wildlife
- Character of neighborhood
- Quality of street, life and neighborhood.
- Litter in this area from trucks

- Concern about Box Pond
- Will the vehicles pay excise tax to the town
- Lights from trucks
- Noise from trucks
- Wildlife is present (ducks)
- Water depletion
- Air Quality
- Buffer on other side of building
- Speed limits on street not being followed

The hearing was opened to residents:

**Resident Jeff Muldoon, 230 Depot:** Mr. Muldoon communicated that this area is a nightmare. A light on Hartford Ave. won't make the traffic better. There is litter coming out of trucks. He does not see any jobs coming from this project.

**Resident Linda Munro, 27 Hartford Ave:** Ms. Munro communicated that her house is like a truck stop. There are bottles, litter and feces on street.

**Resident Eric Vandervwal, 60 Fox Run Road:** Mr. Vandervwal communicated that he has had a business here for 46 years and the trucks and cars play the game of "chicken" The speed limit at Depot Street is not followed. There should be speed humps to slow the traffic in this area. He wanted to know if the in this site will pay the Town of Bellingham excise tax.

**Zoom: Casey Petiipas- Haggerty – 226 Depot Street:** Her concerns include traffic, lighting from headlights and a buffer.

**Resident, Bill Hebert 56 Box Pond Road:** Mr. Hebert is concerned that he bought home and told there would not be anything here due to conservation land. He can now see best buy. He is concerned about the wildlife, traffic, noise, and trash in area.

**Resident, Amy Hurley 36 Box Pond Road:** – Ms. Hurley is concerned about the wildlife.

**Resident, Kerry Stone 50 Box Pond Road:** The concern is the bad shape of the road and that the area looks like a war zone.

**(zoom) Resident, Shelby Clark 234 Depot Street:** The concerns include amount of traffic concern, trash, debris, feces, and employees. This is like a drag race street. She is afraid to have her kids being outside. This is a horrible idea and should not happen for families and town.

**Resident, John Foster, 3 Wethersfield Rd:** There is a concern that the hours will be 24/7.

The applicant said 8-5 seven days a week. The public noted that other businesses in the area have expanded the hours they work. Jim Kupfer noted hours of operation can be controlled within any decision which is rendered. This is warehouse which does have different hours and the realistic hours need to be determined.

**Resident Emily Burgess, 20 Boxpond Road:** This resident lives directly across from Best Buy. There is constant noise. The wall does not help. Her front yard is lite up from the lights. There is blinking of lights through the night.

**Ken Hamwey, 39 Wetherfield Road:** Mr. Hamwey communicated that the role of the planning board is to control growth and insure the serenity of neighborhood. The warehouses would insure four things, noise, traffic, depletion of water resources and increase in air pollution. He hopes the board does the right thing and defeats this.

**Fred Robinson – 14 Kathy Drive:** Mr. Robinson is concerned with the increase traffic. He can hear at night the convoy of trucks from 2:30 am – 4:00 am in morning.

**Resident Louis Nizzari, 6 Heritage Way:** Mr. Nizzari communicated that he is not pleased with the direction that the Planning Board is taking.

The hearing was next opened to the Board. A question was asked on if they know the tenant. It was communicated that this project is built to spec and do not have a tenant they are building for. A question was asked about the easement. There was an easement for the power plant but is no longer needed. There is a gas easement which runs parallel. The Board is in agreement that traffic is a concern and this needs to be looked at closely. The Board communicated that it is important for the applicant to reach out to the neighbors and have a meeting to listen to their concerns. The abutters were encouraged to remain in the process.

The application will be in front of Zoning Board of Appeals on October 7, 2021. The application has also been supplied to the Conservation Commission. The Board has tasked the applicant to schedule an outreach meeting with the neighborhood. There will be a site walk scheduled for October 23, 2021 at 9:00 am.

**On a motion made by Brian Salisbury, seconded by Dennis Trebino, the Board voted unanimously to continue the hearings for 148 and 152 Depot Street to October 28, 2021 at 7:00 pm.**

**CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING 455 HARTFORD AVENUE:**

The Chairman opened the continued public hearing for 455 Hartford Avenue.

The applicant and owner, Darn Properties, LLC propose to construct a 15,200 square foot, nine bay, automotive repair facility with associated improvements at 455 Hartford Avenue in Bellingham, approximately 4.39+/- acres of land, shown on Assessor's Map 4-72, zoned Business 1 and Suburban.

The Board is in receipt of an email seeking a request for withdraw without prejudice for 455 Hartford Avenue.

**On a motion made by Brian Salisbury, seconded by Dennis Trebino, the Board voted unanimously to accept the request of a withdraw without prejudice from the applicant for 455 Hartford Avenue.**

**CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING 30 Locust Street:**

The Chairman opened the continued public hearing for 30 Locust Street.

30 Locust Street - Special Residential Use – Townhouse Dwellings, §240-16, Development Plan Approval, § 240-54 and Stormwater Management, and §240-60. The applicant, Elite Home Builders LLC, and owner, TRG Family LTD Partnership, propose to construct 110 townhouse dwellings with associated improvements approximately 57+/- acres of land, shown on Assessor's Map 93-22, zoned Agriculture and Suburban.

The Board is in receipt of an email from the applicant seeking a continuation of the hearing to the next meeting to be held on October 14, 2021.

**On a motion made by Brian Salisbury, seconded by Dennis Trebino, the Board voted unanimously to continue the hearing for 30 Locust Street to October 28, 2021 at 7:00 pm.**

### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

#### **Bellingham Covenant:**

The Board was informed by Fafard that the property has been sold to Eastland Development.

**On a motion made by Brian Salisbury, seconded by Elizabeth Berthlette, the Board voted unanimously to accept the transfer of title as presented.**

#### **Meeting Schedule:**

The Board will be holding their next meeting on November 18, 2021.

#### **Town Meeting:**

The town meeting is scheduled for November 17, 2021.

#### **Town Meeting Warrant Articles:**

The public hearing for the warrant articles will be held at the meeting on October 28, 2021.

### **Adjourn:**

**On a motion made by Brian Salisbury, seconded by Dennis Trebino, the Board voted by roll call to adjourn the meeting.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

*Amy Sutherland approved 10.14.21*

Amy Sutherland  
Recording Secretary