

TOWN OF DEDHAM
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

John R. Bethoney, Chair
Michael A. Podolski, Esq., Vice Chair
James E. O'Brien IV, Member
Jessica L. Porter, Member
James McGrail, Esq., Member
Ralph I. Steeves, Associate Member



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PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
June 24, 2020, 7 p.m., Zoom Video Conference

Present: Michael A. Podolski, Vice Chair
James E. O'Brien IV
Jessica L. Porter
James McGrail, Esq.

Not Present: John R. Bethoney, Chair
Ralph I. Steeves, Associate Member

Staff: Jeremy Rosenberger, Planning Director
Michelle Tinger, Community Planning and Engagement Specialist
Jennifer Doherty, Administrative Assistant

Chairman John Bethoney was not in attendance for this meeting, as he had a professional relationship with the applicant and felt it was a conflict of interest. As such, Attorney Michael Podolski, Vice Chair, would act as Chairman for the entire evening.

Acting Chair Podolski read a statement to open the Planning Board meeting concerning the Governor's order during the Covid pandemic. He explained the procedures of the online meeting, and protocol for people wishing to be recognized. He then took a roll call attendance.

Scoping Session

**Project Address: 322 & 326 Washington Street and 25 & 27 Harris Street –
Needham Bank**

Zoning District: Central Business (CB)

Representative: Peter A. Zahka, Esquire, 12 School Street, Dedham

Scoping Session for proposal to construct a new one-story, +/- 1,900 sq. ft. commercial building for Needham Bank with a drive-through and eleven (11) off-street parking spaces. Representative: Peter A. Zahka, Esq.

Attorney Zahka was on the video call to represent the applicant Petruzziello Properties. Along with him on the call was Giorgio Petruzziello of applicant Petruzziello Properties, Mike McKay, McKay Architects, James White, Senior Vice President Director of Operations with Needham Bank, and Margaret Watson, General Counsel for the applicant. He explained the proposal indicating that Needham Bank wished to construct a new building in this location. The plans he explained were conceptual in nature only and were still in the beginning phases. The proposal consisted of approximately 1,900 square foot building that would be the bank on the first floor. At this time, they were unsure if they would be asking for any waivers from the Planning Board. There was a basement sublevel that would be a little under 1,000 square feet which would serve for mechanical storage. They were also proposing a drive-up teller window and a drive-up ATM machine. This was in the Central Business zone and the use was therefore allowed by special permit. Since drive throughs are not a matter of right, the applicant would need Zoning Board of Appeals approval, which they would be seeking. They would be constructing 11 parking spaces in the parking lot area. Given the location of the proposal, and the drive-throughs, the applicant is conducting a traffic study as part of their application. The applicant is undertaking a study to determine if the overhead power wires that are currently hanging could be moved underground to be more aesthetically pleasing.

Mr. Mike McKay, McKay Architects then explained more of the project in detail. He pointed out the double drive-thru which would serve as a drive-up teller, and a drive-up ATM. He then explained the means of egress and ingress to the proposed property and indicated they would be providing a handicap lift to the property. The aesthetics were to be more updated and contemporary.

Acting Chairman Podolski had a couple of comments. He worried about the entrance and exit onto Washington Street as this was a very congested area already. He asked if the Applicant was expecting them to use McMahan for Peer Review for the project. Attorney Zahka indicated yes, once the proposal was officially filed. Attorney Podolski then asked about a particular area of the parking lot curbing and space. Mr. McKay stated they did intent to make that space a 90 degree angle. Attorney Podolski continued by confirming

that the applicant would not be looking for any waivers for landscaping on the site. Attorney Zahka stated that was their intent at this time. The Acting Chairman asked if they could work with the town to ensure crosswalks and safety for the area. The Applicant agreed. Lastly, Attorney Podolski would greatly appreciate efforts to get the power wires put underground as indicated, if possible.

Ms. Jessica Porter agreed with the crosswalks needing improvement in the area. She asked for clarification regarding the sidewalks in that location. Giorgio Petruzzello answered that yes, they would be working with Granite Curbing Concrete to update the entire sidewalk area there. He indicated that he had already spoken with Joe Flanagan, Director of the DPW regarding the curbing in front of El Centro restaurant.

Ms. Porter went on to state that although this may technically be a minor site plan review, it was of major importance given the location, existing traffic, and safety concerns. She further stated she was not a fan of drive-ins in the downtown area as she preferred to promote walkability. However, she would be open to seeing the plans. She was concerned about the size of the curb cut onto Harris Street, and would encourage the applicant to see if that could be changed. She indicated she would rather give a waiver for parking spaces if reducing them promoted better walkability, landscaping, and greenspace for the site. Attorney Zahka replied that the drive-thru had been designed to be minimalistic, and they were expecting the majority of the drive-thru ATM visits to be at nighttime.

Mr. McGrail then stated that he had similar concerns to those already expressed. He did wish to emphasize that any project that put powerlines underground was a good project in his estimation. He also stated he believed in being selective with peer review, but he agreed in this instance that it was very necessary given the location of the site. He stated signage would be paramount for the motorists. He would be in favor of the traffic study.

Mr. O'Brien reiterated the other board member's sentiments that he too saw difficulties with the Washington Street entrances and exits, and traffic, but he did feel it would be an improvement to the area. He looked forward to seeing the traffic study.

Attorney Podolski stated that they would need to be very careful how many cars could back up in the drive-thru as they could not queue up into the street.

Ms. Porter stated she really liked the façade of the proposal, the different materials, and the bricks. Attorney Podolski also liked the design and look of the project.

The applicant would return to the Planning Board after they were finished with the Zoning Board of Appeals.

ANR

Project Address: **210 Schoolmaster Lane & Lot 5 Schoolmaster Lane – 148 Schoolmaster Lane Realty Trust and J & J River Real Estate, Inc.**

Zoning District:

Representative: **Peter A. Zahka, Esquire, 12 School Street, Dedham**

210 Schoolmaster Lane & Lot 5 Schoolmaster Lane – 148 Schoolmaster Lane Realty Trust and J & J River Real Estate, Inc.

Determination of Approval Not Required (ANR) subdivision plan. Representative: Peter A. Zhaka, Esq.

Chairman John Bethoney was not in attendance for this meeting, as he had a professional relationship with the applicant and felt it was a conflict of interest. As such, Attorney Michael Podolski, Vice Chair, would act as Chairman for the entire evening.

Attorney Peter Zahka and Applicant Gorgio Petruzzello were on the call for this proposal. It was a determination Simple approval not required and subdivision plan. Attorney Zahka explained the details of the proposal. Acting Chairman Podolski stated “In effect you are just changing almost flipping the entrance to the large lot.” Attorney Zahka answered yes. Some re-deeding of the properties would need to take place after the ANR was approved. The old entrance lot was also being moved slightly north.

Planning Director Jeremy Rosenberger gave his report. He stated in his analysis the lots met all requirements and met all the criteria for the Board to approve the ANR.

There were no questions from the Board. The Acting Chairman then took a roll call vote:

Jay O'Brien – yes

Jessica Porter – yes

James McGrail – yes

Michael Podolski – yes

The Board voted in favor 4-0 unanimously.

Old Business/New Business

The Planning Director reviewed some upcoming agenda items for the Board to be held in subsequent meetings.

- Norfolk and Dedham Insurance
- Amazon
- Stergis Way
- 337-339 Washington Street
- Zoning Articles

A motion was made by Jim McGrail for the meeting to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Jessica Porter. A roll call vote was taken:

Jay O'Brien – yes

Jessica Porter – yes

James McGrail – yes

Michael Podolski – yes

The Board voted in favor 4-0 unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

