

**City of Salem Planning Board  
Approved February 7, 2019**

A public hearing of the Salem Planning Board was held on Thursday, February 7, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall Annex, 98 Washington St., Large Public Hearing Room, First Floor, Salem, Massachusetts.

Chair Ben Anderson calls the meeting to order at 7:01PM.

**I. ROLL CALL**

*Those present were:* Chair Ben Anderson, Bill Griset, Matt Veno, Helen Sides, Carole Hamilton,

*Absent:* Matt Smith, Kirt Rieder, DJ Napolitano, Noah Koretz

*Also in attendance:* Amanda Chiancola, Staff Planner and Stacy Kilb, recorder

**II. REGULAR AGENDA**

**A.** *A motion to continue to the February 21, 2019 meeting is made by Matt Veno, seconded by Bill Griset, and passes 5-0.*

**B. Location:** 81 Highland Ave; 108 Jefferson Ave; Old Rd; 1 Dove Ave; 79 Highland Ave; 55 Highland Ave; and 57 Highland Ave (Map 24, Lots 1, 2, 88, 19, 216, 218, and 220; and Map 14, Lot 129)

**Applicant:** North Shore Medical Center, Inc.

**Description:** A continuation of the public hearing for all persons interested in the application of NORTH SHORE MEDICAL CENTER, INC. for an Amendment to the previously approved Site Plan Review decision and Stormwater Management Permit for the property located at 81 Highland Avenue (Map 24, Lot 1); 108 Jefferson Avenue (Map 24, Lot 88); Old Road (Map 24, Lot 19); 1 Dove Avenue (Map 24, Lots 216 and 218); 79 Highland Avenue (Map 14, Lot 129); 55 Highland Avenue (Map 24, Lot 220); and 57 Highland Avenue (Map 24, Lot 2). The applicant proposes changes to the area in front of the Davenport Building and Surgi-Center, where the old campus utility plant was located. Proposed improvements include changes to grading, additional parking spaces, and landscaping and creation of an accessible, multi-vehicle drop off and pick-up area. New signage is also proposed.

Attorney Joseph Correnti, of 63 Federal St., represents the project, outlining the process thus far. The project has been peer reviewed.

Present are:

Mary Jo Gagnon

Shelley Bisegna

Paul Avery, Civil Engineer, Oak Consulting Group

Vinod Calahari, Traffic Consultant

Dave Gibson, 212 – Signage and wayfinding consultant

Paul Worthington Barry, Architect, Sheppley Bulfinch

Paul Avery presents Civil Engineering:

- The Applicant has received and responded to comments, however some were not recieved until late last week, so while they have met with Bill Ross, there is no response to those yet

- Plan revisions due to Beta Group and Planning Board feedback:
  - New bus shelter on Highland Ave
  - New paved walkway through to Highland Ave
  - Corner and driveway to Axelrod building addressed; not doing any work, existing circular driveway will be removed and green space added
  - Two aisle configuration removed
  - Handicapped parking spaces added to bring to 10% level for a total of 22 spaces
  - Aisle widths and traffic circulation clarified with layout and markings; circulation will be counterclockwise around the lot, one-way around perimeter but aisles are two-way
  - Stop bars and directional arrows have been added; stop signs may also be added per Beta Group feedback
  - Reconfiguration of top aisle is outlined
  - Aisle widths: 2 way are 24' wide, one-way are at least 20', some 22' wide; depth of stalls varies either 17' or 19'
  - Guard rail as shown will allow for bumper overhang
  - Signs for handicapped spaces and sidewalk will be addressed in the future
  - Crosswalks are still an issue; these are not really street crossings, just trying to designate pedestrian crossing areas. One designates where the accessible route is. Concerns about cross walk into stop bar, need to resolve but no quick fix
  - Added walk by existing spaces in upper lot to building entrance
  - Bike racks added under cover by entrance; 12 racks are proposed
  - Grading & accessibility are outlined: Applicant has complied with all accessibility rules for handicapped spaces; cross slopes can be an issue and are described. Max cross slope on non accessible spaces is 4.5% to avoid issues
  - Added curb ramp at end of one walk
  - Landscaping: trees have been added. Limit of Entrance Corridor Overlay District (ECOD) is shown and trees per spaces were calculated. 27 trees have been added where they will be attractive and achieve objectives of ECOD while not impairing sight lines. Have been changed to non fruit bearing trees as per the Board's request, oaks and American elms; plantings have been added along with sumacs as ground cover
  - Stormwater management: Met with Bill Ross but have not yet responded, will do so

Vinod Calahari, Tighe & Bond, Traffic Engineer of Record, prepared the original traffic and parking studies in 2015-16

- Vast improvement to circulation over existing conditions
- Relocation of bus stop to other side of signal at the request of City: MBTA has been contacted and is in support of relocation, will be implemented as feasible
- Parking supply changes: plan has a net increase of +/- 59 spaces: there were questions about how this will impact traffic on Highland Ave. Traffic studies in 2015-16 showed that patients and visitors are oriented toward Highland Ave. driveways then navigate through to find parking. Thus a small change in front will not change traffic on Highland Ave. Campus in total has more than 2,000 parking spaces

Dave Gibson, 212 re signage and wayfinding

- Primary Building Identification: Day
- This is part of a larger program of wayfinding improvements at this location
- Large panel covering façade has been replaced by individual letters and institution's logo, no background. Upper Entrance identified above those doors
- Perspective shown
- Primary Building Identification: Night

- Existing conditions photos

Chair Anderson asks about the driveway at the south end that turns left into the lot. He is concerned about cars stopping. The area will remain as is, as the Applicant claims it has operated successfully. Comments about two lanes were considered, but ultimately it will be a single lane with no drop off; cars will proceed to the drop off area. That entrance services the Wheelock Building, where endoscopy is located.

The Chair is also concerned about the width of the sidewalk at the drop off area, preferring it to possibly be wider. Comments regarding grading were reviewed and the Chair appreciates the increase to the number of handicapped spots, though he believes the code requires 24. Grading around them is appreciated, however that discussion was also related to elderly, not just handicapped, trying to navigate the parking lot and its grades. He would like to hear peer review comments on this.

Regarding landscaping, tree calipers should be reviewed as those proposed may not meet the City's minimum. He wonders why there are no trees in one area, however as previously discussed, tree canopy in parking lots should be consistent. He does appreciate the additional trees added and the relocation of the bus stop.

Helen Sides agrees with Chair Anderson, and Kirt Rieder's previous comments on a cross slope greater than 2%, which he objects to. A waiver will no longer be requested for trees. Lack of trees between upper two rows is a problem; consistency of trees is desirable and they should not block the sign. Chair Anderson comments that if trees must be sacrificed in other areas, they should be moved.

There is a retaining wall in the area in question, which is why there are no trees. Grading challenges are described. The designer is concerned and would prefer 2% but up to 5% is acceptable. Steeper than 10% is not acceptable. He tried to balance all factors, and did not want to make the ramp any steeper, but there would be tradeoffs if they try to flatten the site. Chair Anderson feels there are ways to do it, and that the Applicant is limited by 64 but not 84 at the high point. He comments that this needs to be further examined.

Helen Sides asks if the change to the main sign made it compliant with signage requirement. Paul Avery of Sheppley Bullfinch replies that the size now complies, but height does not.

Peer Review Engineer Bill Ross of New England Civil Engineering

- Outlines progress, no resolution yet
- Different than normal peer review
  - Existing and proposed are impervious
  - Whole site drains to retention pond to the north, as will proposed but will be concentrated and collected by catch basins, so will enter retention pond at different rates
  - Everything accumulated at undersized existing 8" pipes, proposed shows the same thing, but applicant acknowledges and is trying to address this issue, otherwise water will continue over parking lot
  - Flow of water leaving the site is described., trying to shave off Highland and send to Canal St.
- Islands: need calculations on catch basins so water does not puddle due to islands. Want 2x as many inlets as needed
- Grading existing utilities: some off Highland Ave may be exposed upon grading, will be researched
- Utility tunnel shown as being left in place: will be capped at buildings
- Chair asks about overall parking lot grade, statements were made in review

Jason Plourd, Beta Group, conducted original Traffic review and is now presenting traffic peer review

- Revised Plan is much improved
- Outstanding comments, not major concerns:

- Depth of parking stalls, 19' if 17' should still allow for 2' bumper overhang: need to confirm
- There are cross slopes (perpendicular to road way or driving aisle, i.e. parking spaces) and running slopes (what you would drive on). Accessible spaces to building should be no greater than 5%, spaces themselves no greater than 2% so doors do not swing open/closed and wheelchairs do not slide away
- Standard spaces should be no greater than 5%

Chair Anderson opens to public comment.

David Freedberg, 57 Britannia Circle

- Relocation of bus stop: across from exiting retail on opposite side, please indent it and some parking spaces and sidewalk would have to be moved
- Signage: color code wayfinding signs upon entrance and match with buildings
- Drop off areas: should be indented as well, helping handicapped passengers could back things up
- Grading: spread out over area after north entrance, not just on that little driveway
- Long term parking - should have outlets for electric cars

Chair Anderson approves of the project and its changes, and his comments are related to specific items that will bring it to the next level:

- Landscaping/retaining wall/grading: please examine options
- Drop off should be reconsidered
- Wayfinding: would like to see what is planned to help people navigate the left turn corner around Medical Office Building

Attorney Correnti notes that the Applicant will work with peer reviewers and address the issue brought up by the Board tonight.

Mary Jo Gagnon notes that they have been working on the grading issue, and feels they have taken it as far as they can; the reason they got it improved was because of economies of scale with rest of the project. At this point, they can't break ground until April, and Mr. Walsh is leaving in June, so the timing of the changes is important. The current grade is 18-20%.

Dave Gibson from 212 notes that it is a simple strategy to get people in and to the right sequence. There are three entrances, three entries to the building, and three parking areas. These will all be addressed and be more seamless, ensuring that people have less to remember about their journey. The Chair would like to see this. Regarding grading, overall, he understands the issues, but is not sure it has been approached; one idea would be to sheet water at a gradual slope, perhaps by forming a couple of tiers at 2%, and a couple that drop off.

The top two tiers are at top grades around perimeter, but this is not clear from the drawings. Mr. Avery outlines, and this will be called out on the next set of plans.

*A motion to continue to the February 21, 2019 meeting is made by Helen Sides, seconded by Matt Veno, and passes 5-0.*

### **III. OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. 45 Traders Way – revisions = insignificant change?**

Chair Anderson is concerned that changes proposed do not constitute an “insignificant change.” Elevations have not been provided, and the perimeter as well as architectural styles have changed. Other Board members agree,

based on the list of changes. The number and locations of buildings has changed, with some combined and others shifted.

Attorney Scott Grover represents Beverly Crossing, the development, and the Dolben Group, its new owners. He feels that changes are not as significant as they appear.

Site Plan Review and Planned Unit Development special permits issued for 7600 square feet of retail and 212 apartments, and now the property has been sold to seasoned apartment developers and managers, who wanted to make improvements to those and to their impact on neighborhood. They met with Tom Daniel and Amanda Chiancola, and the Planning Staff suggested taking this approach as they viewed the changes as positive and not significant. It is not an all or nothing proposition, so if the Board feels some changes exceed the standard, the Applicant can discuss that. If not approved as insignificant, they will build as permitted and the opportunity to make changes will be lost due to timing of amendment seeking process. The Applicant states that the neighbors also feel changes are beneficial.

Chair Anderson disagrees, noting that the Board is being asked to evaluate the submission as given. He feels there is enough change that he is not comfortable with deeming it insignificant. It is not possible to separate the process to determine which changes are significant and which are not.

Carole Hamilton notes that it is difficult to view changes as insignificant when all but 1 building are being changed; though they are minor changes in each instance, overall, the project has changed significantly.

Attorney Grover reiterates that opportunity will be lost if changes not considered, if the Applicant has to restart the public hearing process. He also reiterates that the Planning Department feels this is the appropriate process.

Chris Copeland from Beverly Crossing presents the changes.  
Dolben Company.

- Perspective renderings are provided
- Elevations are provided and reviewed
- Buildings 6/7 combined and garages moved to front to provide vertical relief further back from neighbors=
- Building 5 – permit said 4 and 3 stories, it is 3 to clarify
- Building on First St. -street edge more defined,
- Kinked building near wetland straightened out, relief provided between wetlands, public access enhanced
- Dog park moved as result of Conservation Commission feedback, walkway added to allow people to use
- Not a precluded use, not addressed in original permit, will have some one there 7 days a week at entry off Traders Way
- Cape Cod berm vs. curbing, curbing permitted but changed to berm
- Permitted w/dumpsters scattered, now centralized in one location to avoid trash trucks circulating

Chair Anderson comments:

He agrees with the Engineer that Cape Cod berms are not appropriate given climate

- Feels site was “value calculated,” and revisions were for cost savings
- Changes do not really benefit the neighborhood
- Does not agree with the Applicant’s reasoning

Helen Sides agrees, feeling that these are large significant changes to a project that already went through a lengthy and thorough process. It is not possible to alter that with one quick meeting and no public hearing. Designs have

not even been reviewed by this Board, as they just got them tonight. All Board members agree, and they are not willing to compromise their work, the process and the Board's reputation.

Chair Anderson takes a roll call asking if individual Board members feel these changes are insignificant:

Chair Ben Anderson - No

Bill Grisct - No

Matt Veno - No

Helen Sides - No

Carole Hamilton - No

#### **57 Marlborough Rd. Osborne Hills Realty Trust to release Phase 4 lots**

Paul DiBiase, Trustee of Osborne Hills Realty Trust, outlines his request. Previously approved was a 131 single family home cluster. So far 52 homes have been built, and the first three phases paved in November; infrastructure is complete. He obtained an extension for the project and completed the binder course and infrastructure for phase 4, and is here to request release of lots for that phase. 18 lots are included in Phase 4, indicated on the triparty agreement by number. This is the same process as in the previous three phases – the City, Planning Board, and Enterprise Bank are the three parties, the bank secures the money, and a schedule of values is approved by the Clerk of the Works and Engineering Dept.

Conditions for the subdivision are that it will be constructed under the observation of a Clerk of the Works appointed by the City. The firm hired to do that is Stantec. \$222,156 is being requested as a bond; this includes 10% above the cost of value.

Chair Anderson notes that in the previous approval to extend a punch list was created, and wonders about progress towards completing it and addressing the concerns of the neighbors. Mr. DiBiase notes that when the reduction in the bond amount for first three phases was requested, he reported to the Board at that time that all punch list items were completed and verified by Stantec. Street lights were one outstanding issue but four lights that were out have been repaired last week, subject to verification.

Chair Anderson is concerned that the Board does not have the list from the Clerk of the Works. Amanda Chiancola notes that a report from the Clerk of the Works came in November, and she can bring it to a future meeting. The Planning Department can confirm that the Clerk of the Works confirmed that all items were addressed.

Carole Hamilton asks about the extension on the project; it was a 5 year extension.

*A motion to approve the agreement and request to release lots for phase 4, contingent upon items previously submitted by neighborhood being addressed, is made by Matt Veno, seconded by Carole Hamilton and passes 5-0.*

*A motion to approve the bond in the amount of \$222,156 is made by Carole Hamilton, seconded by Helen Sides, and passes 5-0.*

Mr. DiBiase notes that the triparty agreement is done in triplicate, so the Chair can hold off and someone will notarize the Planning Board signature. Chair Anderson notes that the Board will wait until it gets approval. Amanda Chiancola suggests that staff brings this back to next meeting for the notary to sign. The Applicant does not need to attend the next meeting.

Carole Hamilton asks if the developer and Enterprise have signed, but neither has. The Developer signs it tonight, will follow up, and then Enterprise will sign it after the Board.

- B. Discussion of the Footprint Powerplant, including: status of landscaping, the gabion wall and pedestrian access. The Planning Board will also review and discuss changes the powerplant is proposing to submit to the Energy Facilities Siting Board.**

Scott Silverstein, COO presents his letter. The Planning Board discusses the proposed revisions to the: gabion wall, drain line, stack lighting and the missing polycarbonate on the steam turbine building and inform Mr. Silverstein they want the project built as it was approved. The Board comments that the proposes changes are significant.

**Other New Business:**

Appointment to the Tree Commission will be made at the next meeting.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. Special Joint Planning Board and City Council Meeting held on December 13, 2018.**

A motion to approve the December 13, 2018 minutes of the Special Joint Planning Board and City Council Meeting is made by Helen Sides, seconded by Matt Veno, and the matter carries.

- B. Regular Planning Board Meeting held on December 20, 2018.**

A motion to approve the December 20, 2018 minutes is made by Carole Hamilton, seconded by Bill Grisct, and the matter carries.

- C. Regular Planning Board Meeting held on January 3, 2019.**

A motion to amend the January 3, 2019 minutes to correct the spelling of Kirt Reider's last name is made by Bill Grisct, seconded by Helen Sides, and the matter carries.

A motion to approve the amended January 3, 2019 minutes is made by Helen Sides, seconded by Matt Veno, and the matter carries.

- D. Special Joint Planning Board and City Council Meeting held on January 9, 2019.**

A motion to amend the January 9, 2019 minutes to show Matt Veno as present for the meeting and to approve the minutes is made by Matt Veno, seconded by Carole Hamilton, and the matter carries.

- E. Regular Planning Board Meeting held on January 17, 2019.**

Chair Anderson requests consistency in use of names.

A motion to approve the January 17, 2019 minutes is made by Matt Veno, seconded by Carole Hamilton, and the matter carries.

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn is made by Helen Sides, seconded by Bill Grisct, and the matter carries.

The meeting ends at 9:52PM.

For actions where the decisions have not been fully written into these minutes, copies of the decisions have been posted separately by address or project at: <https://www.salem.com/planning-board/webforms/planning-board-2018-decisions>

Respectfully submitted,  
Stacy Kilb, Recording Clerk

Approved by the Planning Board on 02/21/2019

Know your rights under the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. c. 30A § 18-25 and City Ordinance § 2-2028 through § 2-2033.