

MERRIMAC PLANNING BOARD

October 19, 2023

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Sandra Venner called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM

ATTENDANCE: Chair Sandra Venner, Vice Chair Karol Flannery, Member Thomas Abisalih, Member David Cressman, Alternate Member Keith Pollman

ABSENT: Member Dennis Brodie

No motion was made to approve minutes of September 19, 2023. Minutes will be revised and presented at the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Stormwater Management for 1 High Street** – Denise McClure explained to the Board that she spoke with the attorney for the project and there has not been any further work performed at the site. They are waiting on plans from the engineer and once those plans are complete, they applicant will submit a project proposal to the Board.

PROJECT UPDATES:

1. **118 East Main Street/Merrimac Crossing** – no new updates
2. **Abbey Road** – A successful meeting was executed with the applicant following the Sept. 19, 2023 meeting decision. The applicant provided that they expect to finish up the project in Spring 2024.
3. **Regency Mixed Use** – no new updates.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **51 East Main Street** – Public Hearing – As an alternative to withdrawing the application without prejudice, the applicant opted to keep the application open due to the uncertain quorum of the board. A motion to continue the public hearing for the application submitted in September, 2022 was made by Thomas Abisalih, 2nd Keith Pollman, all in favor 4-0.
2. **51 E Main Street** – Public Hearing – Applicant resubmitted their application to construct a manufacturing building and associated parking on Sept 27, 2023. A motion was made by Karol Flannery to open the public hearing, 2nd David Cressman, all in favor 4-0. Jason Panos, attorney for the applicant opened the meeting by providing an overview of the changes to the project since the resubmission, such as, a reduced area of 12,000 sq.ft. to the second building, improvements to stormwater management, and expanded removal of the invasive Japanese Knotweed. Following, the lead engineer, Tony Capachietti, took to the podium to update the board on the progress being made with the conservation commission, respond to Horsley Witten comments, and address abutter concerns. Sandra Venner proposed a question on if the applicant had met with the town fire chief. The applicant has not yet met with the fire chief to discuss the new application. Venner also proposed concern as to the brightness of the lights in the parking lot which faces abutters. Capachietti referenced the plans (C15) and describing the lights as conforming. In response to a comment by Horsely Witten regarding the minimal landscaping, Capachietti stated they wanted to keep landscaping focused on beautifying abutting properties and that more detailed landscaping plans will be formed once the plans are approved. Patrick Noone, an abutter at 45 E. Main, asked for clarification on the lighting used in the parking lot. Capachietti expanded that lights can be fitted with outdoor shields if disturbance to abutters is noted. A second abutter, Linda Wright at 37 E. Main, inquired about multiple shifts at the manufacturing building, nighttime shift swaps would be a disturbance to neighbors in regard to headlights and parking lot lighting. Capachietti stated that the abutting properties look at the Mullin property, which has never in their

history held a second shift for workers and has no intent of doing so with the execution of the proposed plans. A third abutter, Kevin Desjardins at 39 E. Main expressed concern with the proposed landscaping and the applicant's ability to access the landscaping to provide proper maintenance. The applicant ensured the abutter that there is plenty of access onsite and that no easement or access to abutting properties would be needed to maintain landscaping. In addition, the applicant is open to allowing the residents to decide which trees are planted on their abutting properties as long as they are native varieties to New England. Sandra Venner opened the floor to comments from the Conservation Commission, no comments. A motion was made by David Cressman to continue the public hearing to November 7, 2023, 2nd by Thomas Abisalih, approved 4-0.

CORRESPONDENCE: No new correspondence

WARRANTS/FINANCIAL:

1. None

COMMUNICATIONS, NOTICES & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Surrounding Towns:

1. City of Haverhill – Hybrid Hearing for proposed Zoning Amendments to Zoning Ordinance.
2. Department of Environmental Protection – new regulation 310 CMR 7.41.

CONFIRM NEXT MEETING: The next meeting of the Planning Board will be on November 7, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Board, and upon a motion by Mr. David Cressman, second by Mr. Abisalih, it was voted to adjourn at 9:13 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Shayla Wells