

MERRIMAC PLANNING BOARD

November 8, 2023

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Sandra Venner called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM

ATTENDANCE: Chair Sandra Venner, Vice Chair Karol Flannery, Member Thomas Abisalih, Member David Cressman, Member Dennis Brodie

ABSENT: Alternate Member Keith Pollman

Motion to approve the previously revised minutes for the Sept. 19, 2023 meeting, 1st David Cressman, 2nd Thomas Abisalih, approved 4-0. 1 abstained.

Motion to approve minutes for the Oct. 17, 2023 meeting, 1st David Cressman 2nd Carol Flannery, all in favor 4-0. 1 abstained.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Stormwater Management for 1 High Street – no new updates.

PROJECT UPDATES:

1. **118 East Main Street/Merrimac Crossing** – no new updates.
2. **Abbey Road** – no new updates.
3. **Regency Mixed Use** – no new updates.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **51 East Main Street** – Public Hearing - Chair Sandra Venner opened the public hearing. Jason Panos, attorney for the applicant, took the podium to withdraw the application, which was submitted in Sept. 2022, without prejudice. A motion to accept the withdrawal without prejudice was voted on 1st Thomas Abisalih, 2nd Carol Flannery, all in favor 4-0. 1 abstain.
2. **51 East Main Street** – Public Hearing – Chair Sandra Venner opened the public hearing. Jason Panos, attorney for the applicant, preceded to update the board on the corrections made to the project since the last meeting on Oct. 19, 2023, to include the comments made by Horsely Witten and more recent comments from the Merrimac Fire Chief, Larry Fisher. Following Jason, Tony Capachietti took the podium to address changes to the plans due to a larger turning radius need submitted by Larry Fisher. Changes to turning radius were made to accommodate a larger fire truck which is used by the Amesbury Fire Department and should now follow NFDA 1 turning requirements. In addition, the water feed to the building has been updated from 10 inches to 12 inches to accommodate a larger water flow into the property. Janet Bernardo, a peer engineer from Horsely Witten, stated that in the most recent peer review of the project dated on October 12, 2023, all the recommended changes are non-contentious to the project and that she has confidence in the applicant's project. Jerome Mathieu, vice chair of the Merrimac Conservation Commission made comment to provide that there is nothing preventing approval of the project at the meeting so long as a list of conditions is provided in the decision. Larry Fisher, the Merrimac Fire Chief took the stand to explain that he only recently received the plans for the project. Mr. Fisher did not make comment on the project itself due to the late receipt of the plans, however, a condition in the decision will include that written comments from the fire chief are to be reviewed and implemented into the project's plans. Although the fire chief was not notified in a timely manner, he was able to discuss the turning radius changes with the applicant before the meeting to ensure those changes were made prior to coming before the board. Chair Sandra Venner opened the meeting to for public comments, no public comments were made. Chair Sandra Venner then lead all present parties through the recent changes to the draft decision, to ensure correctness before approval. Minor changes were made to include the addition of references to the bylaw, the addition of a condition in section 21 to "inspect the subsurface at each infiltration basin", and to correct the name of vice

chair of the conservation commission within the document. A motion was made to close the public hearing, 1st Thomas Abisalih, 2nd David Cressman, all in favor 4-0. A motion was made to address how the planning board would vote on the decision, one vote to address both special permits and a separate vote to address the plan with changes. In a motion to approve both special permits, 1st David Cressman, 2nd Thomas Abisalih, all in favor, 5-0. In a motion to approve the site plan with all changes, 1st Carol Flannery, 2nd David Cressman, all in favor 5-0.

CORRESPONDENCE: No new correspondence

WARRANTS/FINANCIAL:

1. A motion was made to approve the warrant from USPS in the amount of \$195.25, which was incurred by sending certified mailing to the abutters of the 51 E Main project and will be withdrawn from escrow, 1st Carol Flannery, 2nd Thomas Abisalih, all in favor 5-0.

COMMUNICATIONS, NOTICES & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Surrounding Towns:

1. Amesbury – Notification of Public Hearing for proposal to amend the existing Zoning Ordinance and Map of City of Amesbury, Nov. 13, 2023.
2. Haverhill – Hearing for proposed Zoning Amendments to City Ordinance on Nov. 28, 2023.
3. West Newbury – Certificate of Vote, withdrawal without prejudice of special permit for kennel at 26 Church St. on Oct. 17, 2023.

CONFIRM NEXT MEETING: The next meeting of the Planning Board will be on December 12, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Board, and upon a motion by Mr. David Cressman, second by Mr. Brodie, it was voted to adjourn at 8:38 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Shayla Wells