

**FITCHBURG PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2020**

**NOTE: This was a Virtual meeting on GoToSeminar due to the pandemic.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Paula Caron, Chair  
Paul Fontaine, Jr., Vice Chair  
Alyne Butland  
Laura O’Kane  
Peter Capodagli  
Amanda Koeck  
Alex Lopez  
Tracy McGrath, Associate member

**STAFF:** Mike O’Hara, Tom Skwierawski

**Call to Order**

Meeting called to order at 6:03 p.m.

**ANR PLANS**

Zwicker, 261 Ashburnham St.

Mr. & Mrs. Zwicker participated remotely.

Existing 1.46 acre parcel has two dwellings on it: a single-family at 261 Ashburnham & a single-family at 295 Sanborn St. While each lot has the required lot frontage & area, the proposed new property lines do not meet side/rear setbacks in the RA-2 district. Relief from these setbacks will be needed through a Variance from the ZBA.

Motion made & seconded to authorize Mike O’Hara to sign the plan on behalf of the Board.

Roll call vote:

Butland: Yes. Capodagli: Yes. Caron: Yes. Fontaine: Yes. Koeck: Yes. Lopez: Yes. O’Kane: Yes.  
Vote 7-0 in favor.

**MINOR SITE PLAN MODIFICATION / REVIEW**

Site Plan Modification - Solar array, 885 Fisher Rd., add proposed battery storage

Peter Bay, EDF Renewables present to discuss a proposed Battery Storage System (BSS) to be place in the array under construction at 85 Fisher Rd. as shown on plan dated: 5/12/2020

The structure, painted white, would be similar in appearance to a shipping container and measures 40’ x 40’ x 8’ wide. It will be fenced in.

Board reviewed comments from Lt. Jordan, Fire Prevention comments.

Peter: They will provide Fire Dept. key for access and training on the BSS and how to shut it off

Mr. Fontaine: Why locate so close the residences on Fisher Rd?

To avoid locating on steep slopes and wetland buffer areas, there are limited areas to locate it.

It was suggested that some of the rows of panels could possibly be removed to make room for it.

Q: Why can’t BSS be located on the other parcel across the street?

The solar arrays are connected in a series, the 885 Fisher Rd. inverters are closer to the Unitil connection in the street.

Board: Make an effort to keep it out of sight and away from neighbors as much as possible.

Agreed to continue the discussion on this at a later meeting.

Site Plan Approval - MART, 3,300 s.f. equipment storage bldg., 1427 Water St.

Present: Rob Benoit, Facilities Manager at MART, and Mike Malynowski, P.E. Allen & Major.

Planning Board had approved this minor site plan in 12/2017. Bidding on the project had been delayed.

The one-year window to start on the project per the SPA had expired.

MART seeks a re-approval of the same plan. The 2017 decision required:

- Install fencing to screen abutter on the Abbot Ave. & Nichols St. sides of the property, the first 75-feet from street to be white vinyl fencing.
- Install Dry Well (or similar) to recharge roof runoff from the storage building.
- Submit revised plan showing fencing & dry well for Planning Board review and approval.

These have been added to the plan revised 12-14-17.

Conservation Commission has also approved the revisions.

Motion made (Mr. Fontaine) & seconded (Mr. Capodagli) to Approve the Minor Site Plan with same conditions as previous one. Vote 7-0 in favor.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

None.

## **MINOR SPECIAL PERMIT MODIFICATIONS / EXTENSIONS**

The Hub Craft, 25 Newport St., Cannabis Cultivation facility – extension

Brian Arandez of The Hub Craft present. THC's progress to date: They purchased the building in May 2019. April 2020 they were informed by the CCC that their application was complete. Anticipate a prelim. decision from the CCC w/in 90 days. HVAC & lighting design is complete. They will be starting exterior work, refacing brick, etc., soon.

Motion made (Mr. Fontaine) & seconded (Mr. Capodagli) to grant an extension of the one-year period on the Site Plan Approval. Vote 7-0 in favor.

NS AJO, 20 Authority Dr., Cannabis Cultivation facility, alter sequence of build-out in Phase I & II

Tim St. Germain, P.E., Fuss & O'Neill present.

Tim reviewed site plan revised 4/16/2020. Since the initial Special Permit approval, NS-AJO (Natural Selections) has proposed changes to their phasing plan:

Phase I: Limited cultivation space < 8,000 s.f.; ltd. manufacturing (no extraction lab, no commercial kitchen, no offices or use of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor space above the dispensary); & full build-out of the dispensary (retail space).

Phase II: An additional 18,000 s.f. of cultivation, as well as the extraction laboratory and associated office spaces.

Phase I will only require parking for 30 to 34 occupants (customers and workers): 10 customers consistent with the previously submitted traffic statement and 20-24 workers consisting of 8-12 dispensary employees, 2 security guards, and 6-10 grow employees.

Natural Selections is requesting approval from the Planning Board for a Minor Modification to the Site Plan Approval in order to phase as shown on plan:

Phase I:

- Use and stripe the 38 spaces in the front lot including the 2 accessible spaces identified (which will be modified to meet the required slope)
- Install the walkway connecting the 2 additional accessible spaces to the existing sidewalk
- Stripe the front walkway from Authority Dr. to the front parking lot.
- Modify the island/signage at the driveway entrance to delineate entrance from the loading area.

Phase II:

- Use and stripe the rear parking lot as shown on the Site Plan dated 6/21/17
- Re-stripe the front parking lot to add an additional 2 accessible spaces per the Site Plan dated 6/21/17 (for a future total of 4 accessible spaces)
- Install the walkway from the rear parking lot to the front parking lot

Q: Can Mass DOT remove the chain link fence near Princeton Rd that was discussed at the original Special Permit hearing?

It is still there. AJO doesn't have an objection to its removal. Tim will check w/ MDOT.  
Ms. Caron: Employees should park at rear of facility if customer parking needed to accommodate additional patrons.

Motion made (Mr. Fontaine) & seconded (Mr. Capodagli) to Approve as a Minor Modification of the Site Plan Approval the Phases I & II as discussed. Vote 7-0 in favor.

#### Local Roots, 371 Lunenburg St., add curbside pick-up

Present Dean Iandoli, Local Roots.

Dean: They had been open for four days, then the State of Emergency was declared, and they had to shut down. Since the state has already allowed curbside pickup for Medical Marijuana sales, they are reasonably confident that curbside pickup will also be permitted for Recreational Marijuana sales thru a CCC Administrative Order. They are attempting to get their local approvals in order, anticipating such an OK from the state. This would take an amendment for their Special Permit.

Customers will be able to pre-order online. They are working with Can-Pay, an Automated Clearing House (ACH) which will allow customers to use a debit card for payments. There will be no cash payment outside.

Board reviewed their site plan showing parking spaces that customers would be directed to and the circulation thru the site. Also reviewed was Local Roots proposed Curbside Pick-up Protocols.

Q: Why not all pre-orders?

They want to steer customers toward on-line ordering. Employees will have keypads outside to help customers submit orders. The goal is to get the product to customers as quickly as possible.

Mr. Lopez: What about Home Delivery? Dean: Local Roots can't get a license for that; they are only being issued to economically distressed applicants.

Comments/emails have been received from Building Commissioner (Needs Amendment of Special Permit), Police Chief & Bd. of Health have given their OK.

They anticipate opening the first week of June.

They are asking for hours of operation to be 11:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. 7 days a week.

Mr. Caron has several suggested conditions which had been sent in an email.

Motion made (Mr. Fontaine) & seconded (Mr. Capodagli) to Approve as a Minor Modification of the Special Permit the Curbside Pick Up as discussed, subject to conditions, including a condition that Curbside pick-up be allowed only as long as the CCC order allowing it remains in effect, or one year from today, whichever comes first. Vote 7-0 in favor.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

##### Board comments on Main St. / Boulder Drive revised plans

Tom reviewed plans on the shared screen. Survey is completed, now on to 25% plans.

An extra \$600K has been approved by City Council to supplement the MassWorks grant.

Project has been delayed though, expect going out to bid Fall 2020

Water St Bridge plans are at 25%. There will be design meetings over the next several months.

##### Discussion of process for scheduling future public hearings

Board agreed to hold a meeting on May 27<sup>th</sup> for administrative items only (ANR plans, minor amendments / extensions, etc.) They agreed that for the next few months that it would be better to hold an extra meeting each month. June 16<sup>th</sup> they can take up administrative matters and the 0 Richardson Rd. item. July they can schedule the Retail Cannabis hearings that were continued from March. Applicants will be told to submit the additional information requested at the March 10<sup>th</sup> meeting well in advance, not at the last minute. Newer applications would be pushed off until August.

##### Approved project status

Brief review of status of projects that are under construction or recently approved.

Zoning Ordinance update, Phase II

Tom briefly reviewed progress to date.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Noted that Citizen Planner Training Collaborative (CPTC) on-line seminars are now available.

**MINUTES**

Action on the March 10th minutes deferred until next meeting.

Board agreed that next meeting date would be Wednesday, May 27th @ 6:00 p.m.

Board also pushed out the June meeting a week, to Tuesday, June 16th.

Motion made & seconded to adjourn. Vote in favor.

Meeting adjourned: 9:38 p.m.

Next meeting: Weds. May 27, 2020

Minutes approved: August 4, 2020