

**FRANKLIN PLANNING BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING MEETING
October 23, 2019
6:00 p.m.**

Minutes

Call to Order:

☐ Pledge of Allegiance

☐ Roll Call: Present – Chairman David Liberatore, Tim Flaherty, Robert Sargent, Donna Tully, Christine Dzujna, Tim Stangroom, & David Testerman. Also present – Planner Richard Lewis. Absent – Mayor Tony Giunta, Jo Brown, & Kathy Rago

☐ Approval of September 25, 2019 Planning Board Minutes Member Stangroom noted two typos. Members Flaherty & Tully motioned for the corrected minutes to be approved. The motion carried by a vote of 6-0-0.

Old Business: None

New Business:

P 19-08: Peabody Home [owner/applicant] is submitting a conceptual plan for the construction of a new 3-story, 62,000 sq. ft. assisted living community to replace the existing facility at 22-24 Peabody Place [Map/Lot 117-138-00] in the B-1 [Low density business & commercial] zoning district. This same project will be heard on Wednesday, November 13, at 6:00 pm for final site plan approval.

Members Dzujna and Stangroom recused themselves.

Meg Miller, Executive Director of the Peabody Home introduced the other members of the team: President of the Board-Attorney Chris Seufert, John Benham-Building Committee, Chris Nadeau-Nobis Engineering, Gerry Menke-EGA Architects, and Christine Dzujna-Corporate Member.

John Benham said he'd been on the Board of Peabody Home for a number of years. In November of 2016, they started to think about replacing the existing building. That structure, built in 1940, was started by four Franklin women who recognized a need in the community. Peabody Home is a non-profit facility with 40 full-time residents and 50 full-time employees. Mr. Benham stated that they had two feasibility studies done which indicated the need to expand the facility, however, the cost of renovating, expanding and bringing the existing building up to code is exorbitant. Building a whole new facility is the best way to go.

Chris Nadeau, Nobis Engineering, described the project. The 62,000 sq. ft building would be built in two phases. Phase One will involve the construction of a new 41,500 sq. ft. building that will include the new core building services and residents' apartments so that when completed the current residents can be moved into this new area. Phase Two will involve the demolition of the existing facility and the construction of an additional 20,500 sq. feet of building that will contain more residential apartments, the main entrance and the commons area. Truck access will be around the back of building through the VFW property and will require a right of way from VFW. Mr. Nadeau indicated the red line on the site plan and said it defined the walking path around the building and a boardwalk along the river. The site already has pubic sewer and water, but they will be making improvements in storm water runoff. The goal is to open up the river views.

Gerry Menke, EGA Architects-Newburyport, MA, described the design details of the new building. Although the building will actually be three stories, the design will make it appear more like 2-1/2 stories. They have pulled design details from other building in the downtown area and will incorporate those into the new facility.

Member Flaherty stated that the existing building is beautiful and asked if it couldn't be preserved. Mr. Menke said that the current entrance faces Peabody Place and there are a number of steps to the front door and more steps to the main level. The current elevator and the exit requirements would not make it under today's life and safety codes. Ms. Miller added that there are eleven rooms upstairs with sinks but no private bathrooms. The facility was built like a hospital and had no common space. In the seventies, they added 16 more people, but no handicap facilities. By 2001, only the big back room was handicap accessible. The largest of the rooms on the second level is 140 sq. feet. In the new version, the rooms will be 325 sq. feet with private facilities. Ms. Miller stated that the 54 current residents will be moved into the Phase 1 building when it is completed and the old building will be demolished.

Member Testerman asked if the all current residents would be willing to move and Ms. Miller said they will wait until the last resident is ready to move before taking down the old building. Once they have an occupancy permit, they will arrange to move everyone in one day. Member Tully asked if they would be hiring more employees and Ms. Miller stated there would be an increase in the housekeeping and activities employees, but the number of license nurses would remain the same. In all about 15 new employees. The facility is staffed seven days a week, 24 hours a day. She added that many of the employees walk to work.

Member Sargent asked about the timeline for obtaining an easement from the VFW. Mr. Nadeau said that they would be submitting a final site plan tonight for the Nov. 13th meeting, and that they will have a draft agreement at that time. He said that the Peabody Home and the VFW are good neighbors and the Commander of the VFW sees no problem in arranging for an easement.

Public Comment:

Leigh Webb asked about the projected timeline for beginning construction, ending construction and razing the old building. Mr. Menke said that everything is contingent on financing, but approximately three years. Member Webb asked about the materials from the razed building. Mr. Nadeau said that bricks and some interior architectural features will be recycled; the rest will be demolished. Dry wall and insulation will be chopped up and burned or sent to the landfill.

Vince Ribas of the Unitarian Church inquired about drainage and the issues with parking, stating that they currently have a right of way for parking. Mr. Nadeau said that the proposed drainage will include a big retention area behind the building, next to river. In really big storms, runoff will go directly into the river, however by that time most of the contaminants have been caught in the retention area. The landscaped area in the front of the building is also a bioretention area. Mr. Nadeau said there is a shared 25-foot-wide driveway between the church and the Peabody Home. The Home is close to selecting a project manager and it will be his job to schedule things during the building phase and resolve issues with abutters. Mr. Ribas said he thought they had a good neighbor policy with the Home and that the current parking areas are shared when necessary. Ms. Miller said that the carriage house will be taken down and the dirt parking area will be paved.

Annette Andreozzi, 10 Orchard Street, said she understands the need for the new building, however, there are some issues that can be mitigated before the project starts, such as, runoff, drainage, and the amount of paved and impervious surfaces since these things will be tremendously increased. She suggested that they investigate pervious surfaces for the parking lot, adding that the University of New Hampshire has some studies about that. Her last comment regarded the massive look of the new design and the fact that the Home lies within the Historic District. Leigh Webb, 10 Orchard Street, and member of the Heritage Commission asked for clarification regarding the comment by Mr. Nadeau that in a large storm the runoff will go directly into the river. Mr. Nadeau enlarged upon that statement adding that the first runoff from a heavy rain goes into the retention area. This initial runoff carries with it most of the contaminants. The following runoff, which is much cleaner, goes into the river. They will be observing the federal stormwater prevention plan which requires designing a project for a 25-year storm, however they are designing it for a 50-year storm. The property is within the floodplain, but the building is outside the 100-year flood event and they will be raising the building nearly two feet.

Ms. Miller spoke about the Home's licensing requirements for fire and safety. The current building has a double sprinkler system and two-hour fire walls. Franklin's Fire Department would like to see the current stairwell enclosed and the eleven upstairs residents moved to the downstairs. That can't happen in the current building. The current elevator can't accommodate a stretcher. Ms. Miller talked about the creation of a disaster plan that would include such things as doing without power for two hours and the transferring of residents to another facility if needed. One of the features about the new facility is that they could 'defend in place.' Member Testerman asked about the emergency power supply location. Mr. Nadeau

said they are looking for a place outside of the flood plain. The current generator is old and in a poor location.

Chairman Liberatore advised that the upcoming site plan needs to address drainage along with access for the church's needs and parking. It was also mentioned that this project will be coming before the Heritage Commission on Monday, October 28th to discuss the controlled burn of the house and carriage house on Proctor Point, and again in a couple of months for the demolition of the Peabody Home. Annette Andreozzi reiterated that she had some concerns about the design of the new building. Planner Lewis said that there is a degree of overlap with the Planning Board and the Heritage Commission regarding the project. Hopefully a technical review meeting will be scheduled soon. There have already been discussions with Municipal Services Department and Fire.

Other Business: Planner Lewis mentioned that the November 13th meeting will include the site plan review of the Peabody Home, the Edmunds subdivision on Hill Road to create four residential lots (they already received approval from the Zoning Board for one of the lots being short of the required road frontage), and two other subdivision/boundary line adjustments on the lake. He said that the Central Street Market has been demolished and that MSD will be putting in a covering of mulch to stabilize the soil over the winter. Last month a question was raised about the lack of turn lane striping at Central and River Streets. Municipal Services stated that DOT requires a certain amount of room for a dedicated turn lane and there isn't enough space there.

Member Stangroom asked about Accessory Dwelling Units and Planner Lewis said that the owner at 34 Central Street is trying to sell her property and is exploring options for the apartment that was built without permits a number of years ago in a wing of the house. There are a couple life safety/fire codes that need to be addressed and once that happens the ADU can be issued administratively. Planner Lewis then brought up the subject of tiny houses with wheels or without wheels and the pros and cons of allowing those. Those on wheels, without a proper foundation, can be easily moved around thus avoiding paying taxes so it puts a real financial burden on communities. Member Dzujna asked about the huge barn the State has built on Route 127. Planner Lewis said that the State does what it wants and there is nothing the City can do about it.

Planner's Update:

Adjournment: 7:00 pm

- The next Planning Board regular meeting is scheduled for November 13, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. and the application dead line date is October 23, 2019.