

Lyme Planning Board Minutes
7/23/2020

Board Members and Staff Present: John Stadler, Chair; Tim Cook, Vice Chair; Kevin Sahr, Select Board Representative; Vicki Smith, David Van Wie, Alternate; Rich Brown, Alternate; David Robbins, Planning and Zoning Administrator.

Board Members Absent: Eric Furstenberg, Member;

Members of the Public Present: Phil Harrison, Brad Choyt, Rod Finley, Richard Menge.

Due to the Covid-19 restrictions the Board met online via Zoom with both video and phone access.

John opened the meeting and read the Right to Know law and the Governor's emergency order permitting meetings to be held in electronic remote format.

Item 1: Continuation of Crossroads Academy Site Plan Review for a proposed new middle school building and accessory structures on their property at 95 and 100 Dartmouth College Highway tax map 401 lot 56.

John stated that he wanted to start by reviewing the additional submissions to ensure that the application is complete. He also noted that David Van Wie had previously been appointed to sit as a regular member for this hearing.

John asked about the fire protection plan. Phil stated that the Fire Chief had approved the plan as submitted and would forward the approval via email to the administrator. Phil also noted that the School would follow any additional guidance the Fire Department provided.

Kevin asked that a condition be set that the fire truck turnoff along Rt 10 shall be kept clear and accessible at all times and that the school should include the turnout as part of their normal plowing routine.

Vicki asked about a notation on the lighting plan to relocate a light fixture from the Shoestrap parking area and replace it with a new LED. She wanted to ensure that the actual fixture would be a sharp cutoff downcast and not just a new bulb in a non-compliant fixture.

Phil stated that all the lighting would be "Dark Sky" compliant.

Vicki noted that the proposed sign did not show any light fixtures. Phil responded that he had not finished researching lighting for the sign. He assured the Board that the lighting would be downlit and on a timer that would turn off the light at 10:00 p.m., the same time as the current light.

The Board concluded that as a condition the lighting would need approval of the Zoning Administrator. He would ensure that the light is downcast and controlled by a timer, set to turn off before 10:00pm.

It was noted that the sign was larger than normally allowed under the Zoning Ordinance.

Kevin noted that the speed limit along Rt 10 in that area is 55 MPH and he felt that a larger sign would serve as a notice to alert drivers that there is a school and traffic may be exiting and entering the roadway.

The Board agreed that the larger sign could lead to increased safety. The Planning and Zoning Administrator stated that the Zoning Ordinance allows for the Planning Board to approve a larger sign during Site Plan Review. (Section 6.22 A)

Vicki, referring to the landscaping plan asked if there would be any vegetative screening around the small air conditioning unit and generator located on the north side of the proposed middle school.

Phil stated that none is planned. Vicki asked that some be added because it was an exposed area for people driving into the lower parking area and she felt it would look too industrial.

The Board discussed screening the area and decided to require spaced vegetative screening to soften the visual impact of the air conditioning unit and the generator.

The Board reviewed the storm water drainage system requirements. It was noted that the calculations were provided in the Drainage System Memorandum and that the 2005 system that was built has a larger capacity than would be required for the current proposal.

John asked if there was any additional information the Board believed they would need. There being none he moved to accept the application as complete.

Vicki seconded the motion.

John called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously by roll call.

John asked if there were any questions or comments about the application.

Vicki asked about the access to the air conditioning units on the roof. Phil responded that two had access from inside and one had a ladder access from the outside.

Vicki recommended a condition that the outside access for the roof top air conditioner must be kept secure at all times to prevent unauthorized access. The Board agreed to this condition.

Vicki also noted that one of the paths shown on the plan exceeded the recommended grade to be considered accessible. She recommended that the school review the plans to ensure all paths were accessible. If any of the paths were to change then the School must

notify the Zoning Administrator so that the Planning Board may determine if a new site plan needs to be submitted and approved.

Vicki also noted that an as built plan would need to be submitted and asked that it be set as a condition. In addition, a final inspection should be conducted to ensure that the project is completed as presented. She stated that the Board members should be included in the final inspection. The Board agreed to setting a condition requiring an as built.

John asked if there were any additional questions.

Rich Menge asked about the Board increasing the sign size. He was concerned that it may set a precedent for others in the commercial district to ask for larger signs. He asked the Board to not approve the larger sign.

Brad Choyt noted that the speed limit was 55 in that area and a larger sign would be easier to read for drivers traveling at speed.

The Board members responded that the increase was allowed because they believed that it would provide better notice to drivers that there was a school entrance in the area and increase the safety of people entering and exiting the school. It was specific to these conditions and not generally applicable to other signage in the district.

Rich Menge then asked about the driveway permit from the state allowing the new entrance, wondering if it requires the closing of the existing driveway or if it allowed it to be used for fire access as proposed.

Phil believed that it allowed for it to be used for emergency access.

John moved to approve the site plan with the following findings and conditions:

Findings:

Larger sign would serve as a notice to drivers that there is a school in the area making it safer for people entering and exiting the school.

The storm water treatment system built in 2005 has a greater capacity than will be required for the middle school addition.

Conditions:

The fire truck turnoff along Rt 10 shall be kept clear and accessible at all times. This includes plowing during winter storms.

The agreement between Crossroads and the Lyme Select Board to redefine the conserved area on the school's lot shall be recorded before a permit is issued.

The lighting for the roadside sign shall be approved by the Zoning Administrator prior to installation. It shall be downlit and on a timer that turns the light off no later than 10:00 pm.

Spaced vegetative screening to soften the impact of the air conditioning unit and the generator.

Outside access for the roof top air conditioner must be kept secure at all times to prevent unauthorized access.

If any of the paths were to change then the School must notify the Zoning Administrator so that The Planning Board may determine if a new site plan needs to be submitted and approved.

An as built plan shall be submitted to ensure that the project was built as approved.

Kevin seconded the motion.

John called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously by roll call.

Item 2: Acceptance of minutes from July 01, 2020 and July 09,2020

John moved to approve the minutes of July 1st, 2020 with edits from Rich Brown.

Vicki seconded the motion.

John called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously with Kevin and Tim abstaining as they were unable to attend the meeting.

John moved to approve the minutes of July 9th, 2020 with edits from Tim.

Tim seconded the motion.

John called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously

Item 3: Appointment of an alternate member of the Planning Board.

Richard Menge has volunteered to be an alternate on the Planning Board.

John asked Richard to introduce himself and asked why he wanted to sit on the Planning Board. Richard responded that he was now retired from the Town of Hartland as the director of the Dept. of Public Works and wanted to give back to the Town. He had been a member of the Planning Board in Plainfield in the 1980s, he was a P.E. and he felt his experiences would be a benefit to the Board.

John asked if the Board members had any questions. There were none. He then appointed Rich Brown to sit as a regular member for the vote.

John moved to appoint Richard Menge as an alternate member to the Lyme Planning Board for a term of three years.

Kevin seconded the motion.

John called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously by roll call.

Item 4: Commercial District Build Out

The Planning and Zoning Administrator updated the Board on his progress with the Commercial District Buildout. He noted that the methodology used for the Lyme Common Zoning District did not translate well to the Commercial District as the Zoning requirements were vastly different. He had worked on a new methodology but was taking more time to confirm results.

The Board asked that he expand the study area to include entire lots and not just the portions that were within the district. They also asked to include the new area in the south west corner of the district.

Item 5: Senior Housing Amendment.

As it was getting late, John chose to table the agenda item to the next meeting.

Item 6: New Business.

During the Crossroads Site Plan Review, the Board noted two items in the Site Plan regulations that may need review, Sections 6.3 and 14.5. John asked that they be added to the next agenda.

The Meeting adjourned at 8:46pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
David A. Robbins
Lyme Planning and Zoning Administrator.