

**Town of North Smithfield Planning Board**

**Kendall Dean School, 83 Greene Street**

**Thursday, April 15, 2010, 7:00 PM**

**The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.**

**1. Roll Call**

**Present: Chair Scott Gibbs, Alex Biliouris, Dean Naylor, Gene Simone, Art Bassett. Absent: Joe Cardello and Stephen Vowels. Also present was Town Planner Bob Ericson.**

**2. Approval of Minutes: April 1, 2010**

**Mr. Biliouris made a motion to approve the minutes of April 1, 2010, as amended. Mr. Simone seconded the motion, with all in favor.**

**3. Pre-application meeting: Major Land Development Project**

**Owner/Applicant: Gas Development LLC, Wilmington MA**

**Location: 35 Eddie Dowling Hwy**

**Assessor's Plat 21, Lot 67**

**Zoning: BN (Neighborhood Business)**

**Attorney S. Paul Ryan was present for the applicant. The applicant is seeking to construct and operate a gas station that will be run by Stop & Shop. Engineer Conor Nagle of VHB addressed the Board to**

present an overview of the application. Mr. Ericson reminded the Board that at this pre-application meeting and no vote will be taken.

Mr. Nagle stated that the civil engineer of record is Antonio Morra, who was also present at this meeting. The applicant is seeking to open a gas station at 35 Eddie Dowling Highway, adjacent to Stop and Shop. The property is the site of a former furniture store. Presently it is a vacant 2/3 acre lot with broken pavement. The proposal is to construct a 5-unit fuel facility, with a canopy and kiosk, as well as a vending machine pad (air pump, ice, soda).

The fuel facility will have two fuel tanks. The stormwater system exceeds DEM requirements. All run-off will meet a water quality swale before entering the catch basin, which has an oil/water separator. The site is accessed from Eddie Dowling Highway. There is an existing curb cut to the west of the site and one for the adjacent property. Mr. Nagle stated that they propose one shared curb cut with the adjacent jewelry store and restaurant. There is one pylon sign proposed at the front of the site.

Mr. Nagle addressed the safety features. There is a fire suppression system in the canopy. There is a pump shut-off system at the employee's fingertips. Security cameras and barriers will stop spills that may occur as the customer dispenses their gas are also included in the plans.

**Mr. Ericson outlined his concerns and any special circumstances about the project before the Board started their discussion. They are as follows:**

- 1) The parcel is zoned BN and will require a Special Use Permit for this use.**
- 2) Left exits from the site will be very difficult even before Dowling Village Phase III opens. The Dowling Village traffic studies were sent to VHB.**
- 3) The tanker truck is shown entering from the north and exiting to the north, but south and south would work much better. The site will probably also need delivery hour restrictions.**
- 4) The tight turning template is a concern. WB-50 class assumes a 48' semi-trailer.**
- 5) The Stop & Shop fuel station at Lincoln mall has a similar layout and is often stacked because of incentive discount pricing. Mr. Ericson stated that he would normally advise against cut-through layouts, but in this case a rear entrance/exit would allow controlled access to 146A north. It would also allow cars to go directly to the station from Stop & Shop without any turning movements on 146A. However, that site design would present difficult grading and make stormwater detention much more difficult.**

**Lisa Davis spoke about the operations of the proposed station. She stated that delivery truck restrictions will not be a problem. There is an automatic delivery system and each delivery driver is given printed instructions. These instructions can include restrictions on**

delivery times, as well as direction from which to enter and exit the site.

Mr. Nagle stated that the plans have been revised in order to show trucks entering and exiting from and to the south (the terminals are in East Providence). Mr. Morra stated that they had considered the potential of a connection to the rear of Stop and Shop, in the form of a switch-back type of road, but because of the steep grade and sharp turn, he does not recommend this. It would also wipe out the stormwater management system as planned. Mr. Ericson stated that he agreed with Mr. Morra. Mr. Gibbs added that, in his opinion, a cut-through would be more dangerous.

Mr. Bassett asked about the proposed curb cuts and whether the intention is to share the entrance with the abutters. Mr. Nagle said it will be shared with the abutters, but that they do have another curb cut. The traffic study is in process and will be ready at the Master Plan stage. Mr. Biliouris pointed out that when cars are parked in front of the abutting building, the other curb cut is almost useless, because there is nowhere for cars entering to drive.

Mr. Biliouris stated that he shares Mr. Ericson's concerns about the potential back-up of cars at the pumps. Ms. Davis stated that there will be more pumps at this station, so more cars can use the pumps at one time. Mr. Biliouris asked about the status of the former Mobil station. Ms. Davis stated that they looked into acquiring that site, but

it is not available for purchase. Mr. Biliouris also shares concerns with ingress and egress to the site and potential traffic problems, especially with regard to fuel deliveries. Ms. Davis stated that it is not a 24-hour operation, so they could schedule all deliveries after business hours.

Mr. Naylor asked about the tanks and what would happen in the event of a leakage and how a leak would be detected. He stated that he is concerned with the proximity to the Woonsocket reservoir. Mr. Nagle explained the design of the tanks, which are double-walled. There are 24-hour monitors that send an alarm if a leak is detected. The Rhode Island DEM has never recorded a leak with this type of system. Ms. Davis stated that all details will be available at the Master Plan stage, and added that in Coventry, this type of system was approved just outside the Kent County wellhead protection area.

Mr. Naylor stated that he is concerned with the turning radius for trucks within the site. Mr. Nagle said that the plans were designed using auto-turn in AutoCAD and there is plenty of room available for turns. He pointed this out on the plans. He added that even if the truck was present for a delivery during business hours, there will still be sufficient room for cars to pass the parked tanker truck. Mr. Simone agreed with other Board members that deliveries should not occur during business hours.

The Chair asked about proposed lighting and stated his preference is

**for LED lighting. Mr. Nagle stated that the plan is for LED under-canopy lighting, with site lighting relatively standard, as in the Stop and Shop parking lot.**

**The Chair also stated that he is also concerned with traffic, both within the site and on Eddie Dowling Highway. He stated that the expansion and redevelopment is good, but the town needs to control curb cuts and shared parking in order to ensure efficient land-use patterns for the long term and to develop the corridor in an attractive way.**

**The Board also discussed the grading of the property and effects the steep slope may have on the traffic patterns of cars entering the site. Mr. Nagle reviewed the circulation, which includes signage and a concrete rumble strip to signal the approaching drive aisle.**

**The Board agreed to see the plans through the Preliminary Plan phase before sending the applicant to the Zoning Board for the special use permit application.**

#### **4. Delegate to Ordinance Review Committee: Selection of a delegate**

**Mr. Biliouris made a motion to designate Art Bassett as the Planning Board's representative on the Ordinance Review Committee. Mr. Simone seconded the motion, with all in favor.**

## **5. Planning Update: Review of current events**

**Mr. Ericson gave the Board a brief update on projects affecting the Planning Department:**

**1) He is working on finishing the notes from the previous workshop session on plan review.**

**2) He is working a on a memorandum regarding what the Town has learned from the recent flooding and how this may affect future planning projects.**

**3) Mr. Bassett completed Grow Smart RI's three-part course on Making Good Land Use Decisions. Mr. Ericson attended the Writing Good Land Use Decisions course. Both courses focus on the RI case law. Mr. Ericson will provide PDF copies of the information obtained from these workshops available to the other Board members.**

**4) Finance Director Brian Silvia is inundated with items related to losses from the flooding. The Town will most likely hire an administrative firm for services related to FEMA reimbursement for recent flood damage. The use of the firm will probably result in 20-30% more aid from FEMA.**

**5) The Town Administrator, Sewer Administrator and Mr. Ericson will be meeting with Steve Cabral, PE of Crossman Engineering for a**

**concept overview of an alternative Branch Village sewer plan that uses the sewer main running through the Brickle manufacturing complex.**

**6) The Old Sayles Hill Road culvert bridge over Crookfall Brook on the Town boundary with Lincoln collapsed on Thursday, was immediately closed to traffic, and rebuilt “as was.” It re-opened for traffic on Monday.**

**7) The town planners of Lincoln, Smithfield, Glocester, Burrillville and North Smithfield had their first meeting with Shary Berg, FASLA and Gretchen Schuler regarding Heritage Landscape research.**

**Mr. Naylor made a motion to adjourn at 8:21 pm. Mr. Bassett seconded the motion, with all in favor.**