

Town of North Smithfield Planning Board

Kendall Dean School, 83 Green Street

Thursday, March 8, 2012, 7:00 PM

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

1. Roll Call

Present: Chair Dr. Lucien Benoit, Art Bassett, Alex Biliouris, Dean Naylor, Gene Simone, Gene Currie. Absent: Mali Jones. Also present was Town Planner Bob Ericson.

2. Approval of Minutes: February 2, 2012, February 16, 2012

Mr. Bassett made a motion to approve the minutes of February 2, 2012, as corrected. Mr. Simone seconded the motion, with all in favor.

Mr. Biliouris made a motion to approve the minutes of February 16, 2012. Mr. Naylor seconded the motion, with all in favor.

3. Major Subdivision: Pre-Application

Owner/Applicant: James Drake, Facilities Mgr, Navigant Credit Union

Location: 925 Victory Highway, Assessor's Plat 1, Lot 108, Zoning:

BN (Neighborhood Business)

Attorney John Shekarchi was present, along with Facilities Manager James Drake, and Edward Pimental for a pre-application discussion of the Navigant Credit Union proposed for 925 Victory Highway (site of former Mundy's florist). Mr. Pimental displayed renderings of similar Navigant Credit Union buildings. He acknowledged the existing traffic issues in the area, especially with regard to the Dunkin' Donuts drive-thru. He stated that the proposed use will not add to the existing issues. Mr. Shekarchi stated that the project is not heavily into the engineering phase yet, but that the existing sewer and wetlands are being flagged. Mr. Pimental stated that the use is allowed and that in his opinion it fits with the Town's Comprehensive Plan. He said that with regard to the off-street loading required by the Zoning Ordinance, he believes that there will not be any problems since the armored truck fits into existing parking and is accommodated by one parking stall. Mr. Ericson stated that off-street loading requirements refer to a "shop or store" and this is a bank, so he does not believe that the requirements apply. He will contact the Building Official for an opinion.

Mr. Biliouris asked about the anticipated business and how many visits are expected. Mr. Drake said that 1,000 transactions are conducted each day, but went on to say that many customers do more than one transaction and many transactions are conducted online. He stated that about 100 drive-up transactions occur each

day, with a bit of a spike in business on Fridays. With regard to parking, Mr. Drake stated that there is ample parking available and no expansion is planned. He stated he does not anticipate the level of business that occurs at the Woonsocket Park Avenue location.

Mr. Naylor asked about the drive-thru location and asked if it could be redesigned so that it does not wrap around the building and impede traffic. Mr. Currie stated concerns that traffic would be backed up on Route 102 during busy drive-thru hours. Engineer Brian Rosdan stated that they are just starting with the traffic design and considering entrances and exits and what the business should provide. Traffic counts will be taken at different times of the day, which will include turning movement counts at all driveways.

Mr. Biliouris questioned whether locating the ATM at the rear of the building was safe and suggested locating it in the front or side of the building. Mr. Drake stated that there are federal regulations regarding safety and lighting of the ATM area, and they will abide by those regulations. Mr. Pimental stated that he does not think relocating the ATM can be done easily or nicely. It will narrow the parking lot and change the street side view of the building.

The Chair welcomed comment from some neighbors in attendance. Mr. Ericson stated that they can comment, but the Board cannot respond, as this is not a public hearing. He did assure the audience members that there will be plenty of opportunity for public comment

and discussion at future public hearings.

Ray Sylvestre, who lives across from the property, stated that he does not oppose the use, but he has great concerns with the traffic and the safety of the neighborhood and the neighbors. He stated that the road is used by many walkers, including many children. Cars cutting through Homecrest to get to Dunkin' Donuts and the bank make the roads very dangerous for pedestrians. He asked for consideration of the safety of the neighbors in designing entrances and exits to the business. Another neighbor, David Mowry, echoed Mr. Sylvestre's concerns. He stated that there is already too much traffic, with cut-throughs from Buxton Street to Dunkin' Donuts.

The Chair stated that there had been a discussion of traffic a while back when a Stop & Shop was being discussed for the area. He asked if any numbers were available from that traffic study. Mr. Ericson asked that the applicant come back with numbers of cars in and out each day instead of the number of transactions. He also stated that perhaps sidewalks could be considered as an option for Homecrest Avenue, as well as considering traffic management options for that street.

Mr. Bassett asked the applicant to be proactive in going out and talking to the neighbors before coming back before the Board. He stated that many problems could be worked out before coming to the meetings, adding that this forum isn't always the best place for

discussion.

4. Land Development and Subdivision Regulations: Discussion of possible LD&SR revisions: Article V: Design Standards

The Board held a brief discussion on possible revisions to the Land Development and Subdivision Regulations document. They will hold a longer workshop to discuss specific revisions at the March 22, 2012 meeting. Mr. Currie requested MS Word versions of the document instead of PDF so the Board can edit and highlight potential revisions as they review the document. Mr. Ericson said he would provide Word documents to the Board and asked for the members to review Article V and send comments and edits in time for discussion on March 22.

5. Meeting dates: Review with possible vote or other action

Mr. Ericson said that the PB would need meetings on March 22 and April 19, 2012. The Board will not need to meet on April 5, 2012.

6. Planning Update: Review of current events

Mr. Currie asked if a layer could be added to the aquifer map to show superfund sites in town.

The Chair asked for updates on the possible Dowling Village wind turbine. Mr. Ericson said negotiations are currently in limbo, but he

does expect action at some point in the near future. The grant money is still available for more than a year, so there is time to work on this. Mr. Simone made a motion to adjourn at 8:15 pm. Mr. Biliouris seconded the motion, with all in favor.

Submitted by Angela Pugliese, March 20, 2012