



LEXINGTON PLANNING BOARD
1625 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, LEXINGTON, MA

MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING BOARD:
ROBERT CREECH, CHAIR – CHARLES HORNIG, VICE-CHAIR – ROBERT PETERS, CLERK – RICHARD CANALE – GINNA JOHNSON

RECOMMENDATION REPORT OF THE LEXINGTON PLANNING BOARD
ARTICLE 42: 1040/1050 WALTHAM STREET

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Board unanimously recommends that Town Meeting Approve the motion under Article 42. On Tuesday, April 7, 2020, after a series of public hearings, the Planning Board voted to recommend favorable action with a vote of five (5) in favor, zero (0) in opposition, and zero (0) in abstention for Article 42: 1040/1050 Waltham Street.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Greatland Realty Partners has petitioned the Town of Lexington to amend the Lexington Zoning Map to rezone the parcel at 1050 Waltham Street (Assessors Map 5, Parcel 14) as a Planned Development District. The property at 1040-1050 Waltham Street is approximately three (3) acres of land and presently improved with two (2) general office buildings that total sixty-eight thousand (68,000) sf, supported by two-hundred and thirty-six (236) off-street surface parking spaces. Greatland Realty Partners proposes to raze the two (2) existing structures, reduce the impervious lot coverage, and redevelop the site for lab and office uses. The project will include the construction of one (1) new structure that is one-hundred and fifty-seven thousand (157,000) sf, a structured six (6) level parking garage that will accommodate four-hundred and seventy-five (475) parking spaces, in addition to associated site improvements. Although built to a maximum limit of four-hundred and seventy-five (475) off-street parking spaces, the parking garage will initially be limited to four-hundred and sixteen (416) off-street parking spaces with the possibility to seek a special permit to use the additional off-street parking spaces, if needed.

The current Preliminary Site Development and Use Plan (PSDUP) is as submitted on December 19, 2019, revised through March 11, 2020.

The proposal for the 1050 Waltham Street was well received by the Planning Board and members of the public upon closure of the review process. The Greatland Realty Partners team should be commended on their efforts to work with the Town of Lexington, the Planning Board, and other boards and committees throughout the process to ensure that a quality project be developed within the Town of Lexington.

JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Board worked with Greatland Realty Partners during the public hearing process to ensure the project complied with the initiatives of the Town for alternative energy, traffic reduction, job creation, property tax generation, trail connectivity, public transportation connections, etc. Over the course of three (3) public hearings the Planning Board made many requests, which are presented in the Minutes section of this report.

Greatland Realty Partners were able to address and generally resolve the outstanding issues of the Planning Board. A letter received from Greatland Realty Partners, Re: 1050 Waltham Street, Planned Development District PD-5, Preliminary Site Development and Use Plan (PSDUP), dated March 4, 2020 provides a comprehensive overview as to how the project would meet the Planning Board's requests to decrease trips by single occupant vehicles, increase use of alternative energy, allow access to and from abutting properties, increase ridership options for public transportation, construct streetscape improvements, and create bicycle and pedestrian opportunities.

On March 11, 2020, Greatland submitted a revised PSDUP incorporating many of the requested changes. A Memorandum of Agreement between the Select Board and Greatland was incorporated into the PSDUP. A revised Parking and Transportation Demand Management (PTDM) Plan permits revision to the PTDM Plan at the Site Plan Review to resolve outstanding issues.

PUBLIC HEARING PROCESS

On Wednesday, January 22, 2020, after publication of the legal advertisement in the Lexington Minuteman Newspaper on January 2 and January 9, 2020, the Planning Board opened its public hearing for Article 42: 1040/1050 Waltham Street. Continued public hearings were held on Wednesday, February 12, 2020 and Wednesday, March 4, 2020. The Planning Board voted to close the public hearing and made a favorable recommendation to Annual Town Meeting of 2020 on Wednesday, March 4, 2020.

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

JANUARY 26, 2020

Present for the public hearing: Kevin Sheehan and Phil Dorman, Greatland Realty Partners; Edmund Grant, Esq., Nicholson, Sreter & Gilgun; Robert Michaud, P.E., MDM Transportation; Steve Woods, IBI Placemaking; Kristen O'Gorman, SGA; Nicholas Skoly, VHB; Peter Tamm, Esq., Goldston and Storrs

Robert Creech, Chair, opened the public hearing at 7:43 p.m. and requested a presentation from Greatland Realty Partners

Mr. Sheehan presented the project to the Planning Board. The presentation included an overview of Greatland Realty Partners, a review of the existing conditions of the property, amendments to the proposed project since the November 2019 letter of comment from the Town, along with a brief review of the proposed project.

Ms. O'Gorman provided a review of the proposed building, interior layout and amenity space, in addition to amendments to the architecture of the structure. Ms. O'Gorman further reviewed the interior layout of the parking garage which included potential screening options (living façade) and inclusion of solar.

Mr. Woods provided a review of the landscaping, circulation of the site, and accessibility all relative to pedestrian and appearance of the project from the street.

Mr. Skoly provided a review of the project that focused on utilities stating that all utilities will tie into Waltham Street, in addition to stormwater management, and the required filing of a Notice of Intent (NOI) with the Conservation Commission relative to enhancing wetland plantings.

Mr. Michaud reviewed bicycle lanes, visibility, considerations of Brookhaven, review of public transportation, and review of off-street parking

Attorney Tamm provided an overview of the proposed amendments relative to the Annual Town Meeting Article, in addition to Proposed Development Data (Existing Zoning – CLO vs. Proposed Zoning (PD-5). Attorney Tamm further mentioned the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and the status of the document.

Mr. Sheehan provided a review of the draft MOU, project benefits that touched upon transportation, sustainability, design, etc.

Mr. Creech requested comments from the Planning Board. The following comments were provided:

- Robert Peters provided compliments relative to the revisions. Mr. Peters stated his concerns regarding the off-street parking provided, and requested information relative to the employee population. Mr. Peters provided his support for the solar canopy – questioning if the parking garage would shade the residents at Brookhaven.
- Ginna Johnson provided support for the project but did not feel fully comfortable with the project as designed. It was noted that the project remains urban. Ms. Johnson requested clarification regarding pedestrian flow through the project. Ms. Johnson reviewed the accessibility of the project, the amenity space to the north of the property, and site access. Ms. Johnson provided a review of the materials utilized for the façade and requested that the parking garage and the building be unified. Ms. Johnson concluded her comments noting concerns with the penthouse, relative to the height.
- Charles Hornig stated that he was happy with the proposed changes. Mr. Hornig provided comments that were technical in nature about the parking garage, fire access on Waltham Street, and site circulation. Mr. Hornig provided a technical review –of Section 3.1, 3.2, and 6.1 of the Zoning Bylaw.
- Richard Canale agreed that the project has been improved since it was last presented to the Planning Board. Mr. Canale stated confusion about the off-street parking, in addition to concerns regarding extra off-street parking spaces for other uses. Mr. Canale stated that he had similar questions about the technical questions proposed by Mr. Hornig. Mr. Canale requested clarification about the twenty-five (25) percent design. Mr. Canale questioned if the applicant had received comments from the Town that were sent earlier in the day.
- Mr. Creech requested shuttle service for employees and greater energy usage awareness. Mr. Creech requested clarification regarding the phasing of construction. Mr. Creech questioned if it was an option to prewire the garage for the installation of future electric vehicle charging stations. Overall, Mr. Creech stated his support for the project.

Mr. Creech opened the floor for public comment. The following comments were provided:

- A suggestion for public transportation to and from Alewife.
- A statement that commuters will not do three (3) modes of transportation, they will do one (1) and possibly two (2), but not three (3).
- A statement of concern regarding shadows, noise pollution, and light pollution, followed by an urge to the developer to be concerned about the impacts on the abutters.

- A statement regarding the reverse shuttle for the public is more preferable, in addition to providing transportation options.
- A question about heating and cooling – heat by electricity or natural gas.

The Planning Board provided additional comments for the development team to consider.

- Mr. Canale stated his appreciation of the renderings of the site views in the winter, followed by a request for evening sketches.
- Ms. Johnson requested compliance with the Lexington Sign Bylaw.
- Mr. Hornig stated that the Planning Board would want to see input from the Department of Public Works (DPW).

FEBRUARY 12, 2020

Present for the public hearing: Kevin Sheehan and Phil Dorman, Greatland Realty Partners; Edmund Grant, Esq., Nicholson, Sreter & Gilgun; Robert Michaud, P.E., MDM Transportation; Steve Woods, IBI Placemaking; Kristen O’Gorman, SGA; Nicholas Skoly, VHB; Peter Tamm, Esq., Goldston and Storrs

Robert Creech, Chair, opened the continued public hearing at 9:59 p.m. and requested a presentation from the applicant. Mr. Sheehan presented a series of amendments made to the project since the January 22, 2020 public hearing. Followed by a presentation on the revised architecture, inclusion of sign locations, and site circulation by Ms. O’Gorman.

Mr. Creech requested comments from the Planning Board. The following comments were provided:

- There are too many parking spaces - more than 400 is not needed.
- Transportation mitigation needs to require transportation equity for employees who do not drive a single occupancy vehicle.
- The height maximum is from where to where?
- In the text clarify that nothing can happen in the buffer area.
- Need a commitment to net zero and fossil free energy.
- Sidewalk and pavement markings need to be minimized.
- Consider an exit only on the northern curb cut.
- There is way too much signage this is 4 times the size allowed by the bylaw.
- Add transition zones to the dimensional standards.
- Incentivize people to get out of their vehicles, which is important.
- There is too much parking.
- The Solar canopies are excellent.
- Consider geothermal to get as close to net zero as possible.

Mr. Creech opened the floor for public comment. The following comments were provided:

- Was hoping for more information on the transportation. What specific services would be available to employees and town residents? Mr. Sheehan said there would be a shuttle to Alewife and provide contributions to Lexpress.
- A resident from Brookhaven asked about the light spill and ambient noise from the proposed project.
- Look at geothermal to heat the building.

- There is support for this project; they have worked with residents at Brookhaven to make it the best plan.
- The tax revenue will be very important and this is on the right track.

MARCH 4, 2020

Present for the public hearing: Kevin Sheehan, Greatland Realty Partners

Mr. Sheehan provided an overview of the project since the last public hearing, which included a recent meeting with the Select Board, development and review of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), in addition to amendments to the plans. Mr. Sheehan reviewed a letter submitted to the Planning Board, Re: 1050 Waltham Street, Planned Development District PD-5, Preliminary Site Development and Use Plan (PSDUP), dated March 4, 2020. Mr. Sheehan presented recent amendments relative to off-street parking.

Mr. Creech requested comments from members of the Planning Board relative to off-street parking. The Planning Board provided the following comments.

- Richard Canale requested clarification as to what Greatland Realty Partners commitment to lab space is, however, Lexington was previously burned by another project. Mr. Canale stated that the last thing Lexington wants is another office park. Mr. Canale stated that he was delighted with the proposed amendment relative to the off-street parking space demand. Mr. Canale went on to review the TDM, and questioned how employees would be incentivized to not drive to work in single occupancy vehicles.

Mr. Canale stated he was pleased about the commitment to providing at least fifty (50) percent Lab space resulting in a need to garage a minimum (also the maximum per SPR Regulations) of four-hundred and sixteen (416) motor vehicle. He was pleased that the Site Plan Review (SPR) approval will limit the number of parking spaces to four-hundred and sixteen (416) and that the Applicant may subsequently seek an amendment to allow up to an additional fifty-nine (59) spaces if any tenant could justify the need.

- Ginna Johnson questioned if the inclusion of basketball courts would not allow for solar canopies. Mr. Sheehan stated that the focus would be to install solar canopies and provided amenity space. Ms. Johnson questioned if the basketball amenity would be open to the public.

Mr. Sheehan continued with his review of the Greatland Realty Partners' letter with a focus on the shuttle service. The Planning Board provided the following comments.

- Robert Peters requested clarification as to the duration of operation of the pilot shuttle service. Mr. Sheehan stated that the pilot program would be for six (6) months.

Mr. Sheehan continued his presentation relative to height.

Mr. Creech requested comments from members of the Planning Board relative to height. No comments were provided.

Mr. Sheehan continued his presentation relative to Landscape Screening.

Mr. Creech requested comments from members of the Planning Board relative to Landscape Screening. The Planning Board provided the following comments.

- Ms. Johnson questioned if there would be any above ground utilities. The project team stated that there would not be any above ground utilities.

Mr. Sheehan continued his presentation relative to sustainability.

Mr. Creech requested comments from members of the Planning Board relative to sustainability. The Planning Board provided the following comments.

- Ms. Johnson requested clarification as to whether the project will be certified. Mr. Sheehan stated that the intent is that the project will be certified unless the program goes away.

Mr. Sheehan continued his presentation relative to Wetland Enhancements.

Mr. Creech requested comments from members of the Planning Board relative to Wetland Enhancements. No comments were provided.

Mr. Sheehan continued his presentation relative to transportation improvements associated with Brookhaven.

Mr. Creech requested comments from members of the Planning Board relative to transportation improvements. No comments were provided.

Mr. Sheehan continued his presentation relative to vehicular circulation.

Mr. Creech requested comments from members of the Planning Board relative to vehicular circulation. No comments were provided.

Mr. Sheehan continued his presentation relative to signage.

Mr. Creech requested comments from members of the Planning Board relative to signage. No comments were provided.

Mr. Creech questioned if the Planning Board had any additional comments.

- Mr. Canale questioned where the gross floor area (GFA) of the parking garage is located in the plan; if it is there, it needs to be easier to find.
- Greatland has stated its intention to follow the Transportation Management Overlay District 1 (TMOD1) for this project. One of these principles is a goal to reach fifteen (15) percent employees reporting to work in other than a Single Occupant Vehicle (SOV). The MOU and TDM Plan should be revised to reflect this goal relative to sixty-four (64) people not arriving to the site in a SOV. It was understood that there will be inclusion into the TDM Plan documentation as to how the Applicant intends to meet the obligations for equity regarding a "Cash Out Program". Mr. Canale stated that the project should only be required to fix the issues associated with the project.
- Mr. Peters complemented Greatland Realty Partners on the creative options incorporated into the project.
- Ms. Johnson complemented Greatland Realty Partners in their efforts to partner with the Town on this project. Ms. Johnson stated that the project is about there and offered a few amendments that could be worked on. The Applicants project team addressed Ms. Johnson's concern regarding signage and provided an agreement with an option to return.
- Mr. Hornig and Mr. Creech stated did not have any comments at this time.

Mr. Creech opened the floor for public comment. The following comments were provided.

- A request for clarification on the shuttle service, in addition to a statement of support for the payment of the T-shuttle pass and also the opportunity for citizens to ride the shuttle.

- A request for clarification regarding TDM relative to five-hundred thousand (500,000) dollar pedestrian and bicycle connections amenity improvements.
- A question regarding traffic and congestion being greater than anticipated by the project, has Greatland Realty Partners considered alternative methods of traffic management (police staffing and signage).
- A request for clarification regarding increased frequency of LexPress. Ms. Sheehan provided a review as to how the project will improve efforts to increase ridership.
- A request for clarification as to how the project will mitigate interior light spillover. Mr. Sheehan provided a review of efforts that Greatland Realty Partners is considering that will be part of the site plan review process with the Planning Board.

Attorney Grant thanked the Planning Board for review of the project and requested that the Planning Board take action on this project at this time.

RECORD OF VOTES

Signatures of a majority of the Planning Board,

Robert Creech, Chair

Charles Hornig, Vice-Chair

Robert Peters, Clerk

Richard Canale

Ginna Johnson