NEEDHAM PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

October 10, 2018

The regular meeting of the Planning Board held in the Highland Room, Needham Town Hall, was called to order by Paul Alpert, Chairman, on Wednesday, October 10, 2018, at 6:47 p.m. with Messrs. Owens and Jacobs and Mmes. Grimes and McKnight, as well as Planning Director, Ms. Newman and Assistant Planner, Ms. Clee.

Correspondence

There is no correspondence.

Discuss Town Meeting Warrant Articles.

Mr. Alpert will be presenting at Town Meeting.

Decision: Major Project Site Plan Review No. 2018-08: PEX Health and Fitness, LLC d/b/a PEX Health and Fitness, 1591 Washington Street, #2, West Newton, MA 02465, Petitioner (Property located at 1451 Highland Avenue, Needham, MA).

Mr. Alpert noted there is a draft decision with red line changes in the packet. He noted a letter from William McQuillan, Manager and Landlord of property located at 1451 Highland Avenue, with information on the trash corral in the adjacent alley. Ms. McKnight commented she does not understand, in Section 3.10 of the draft decision, what it means that the trash receptacles shall be provided if required. Who requires the trash receptacles? Ms. Newman stated the Board of Health makes that determination. Mr. Jacobs suggested language be added to clarify it is the Board of Health that requires trash receptacles. All agreed. Mr. Jacobs suggested "the area shall be kept free of litter from the parking lot operation" be removed as there is no parking area. Ms. Newman agreed that should be removed.

Roy Cramer, representative for the applicant, noted in Section 3.1, it says "minor movement of fixed equipment." He stated there is nothing that is fixed. There is a reception desk and various fitness equipment. He does not want the word "minor." He asked Ms. Newman to add minor movement of non-fixed as well as fixed equipment. Ms. McKnight stated, in the other decision, Section 3.2 uses the phrase "movement of internal fixtures and equipment is of no concern." Ms. Grimes suggested going back to that phrasing. Mr. Alpert suggested taking out "minor." Mr. Cramer agreed.

Mr. Cramer noted Section 3.6 was renumbered to 3.7 in the last draft. Mr. Jacobs noted Section 3.4, now 3.5, last line says, "Planning Board shall be entitled to evaluate the parking demand of the building as a whole." He asked if it should be "shall" or "shall be entitled." Ms. McKnight suggested it should be "may evaluate." It was decided to take out "be entitled to." Mr. Cramer noted in Section 3.6, now 3.7, the prior approval of the Board to transfer the business was unnecessary. Ms. Grimes stated it did not matter to her as long as the permit is complied with. All agreed to change it to Mr. Cramer's language -- "the transferee filing a letter with the Board acknowledging that it has read this Decision and agrees to its terms and conditions."

Mr. Cramer noted in Section 3.8, now 3.9, it states all upper front windows will be clear. He noted the left window will remain clear and the window all the way to the right is already blocked off. He feels this is a privacy issue. The applicant would like frosted glass. He does not feel clients would like people on the streets looking in and watching them exercising. He found 16 places in the center with frosted windows or blinds that obscure the view. He feels it is appropriate here. Ms. McKnight stated she went to a fitness center with windows and never had a concern that people were looking in. The applicant chose to establish a facility here in downtown. She does not see this as a privacy issue. She is opposed to this request.

Ms. Newman noted 2 fitness centers were done recently and both had open windows. Ms. Grimes stated she did ask at the hearing if the façade was going to be changed and was shown frosted windows. Michael Campanelli, applicant, stated he likes open windows because it is advertising but he is concerned with the clients' privacy. Mr. Cramer noted even the dog service has curtained windows. Mr. Jacobs wondered if there is some other way than frosted windows. Mr. Owens commented it seems the look is all over the place. What the Board wants is a consistent look. He noted this part of Highland Avenue does not seem to get a lot of pedestrian traffic. Mr. Campanelli asked if he could do a light tint. Mr. Alpert agreed as long as it does not prevent from seeing inside. Mr. Cramer noted Ms. Newman made the requested change to Section 3.13(a) to replace "registered architect" with "space planner."

Mr. Cramer noted Section 3.18 is not applicable. Ms. Newman changed as requested. Mr. Cramer noted Section 4.2 and commented instead of stating that "there should be no further development of this site" it should say "the area leased by the Petitioner." Also, "(after hearing)" should be removed. Mr. Alpert agreed "after hearing" should be removed.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Grimes, and seconded by Mr. Owens, it was by the five members present unanimously:
VOTED: to approve the decision as amended tonight.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Jacobs, and seconded by Ms. McKnight, it was by the five members present unanimously:
VOTED: to grant (1) the requested Major Project Site Plan Review Special Permit under Section 7.4 of the Needham Zoning By-Law; (2) the requested Special Permit under Section 3.2.2 for a personal fitness service establishment in the Center Business District; (3) the requested Special Permit under Section 3.2.2 for more than one non-residential use on a lot where such uses are not detrimental to each other and are in compliance with all other requirements of the By-Law; (4) the requested Special Permit under Section 3.2.2 to operate accessory uses incidental to the principal use, to wit, retail sales of clothing and training accessories, administrative offices and storage; and (5) the requested Special Permit under Section 5.1.1.5 to waive strict adherence with the off-street parking requirements of Section 5.1.2, Required Parking (11 spaces to 0 on-site parking spaces), and Section 5.1.3, Parking Plan and Design Requirements.

Decision: Major Project Site Plan Review No. 2018-09: Dr. Marcia A. Walker d/b/a Rx2Care Clinic, 660 South Street, Needham, MA, Petitioner (Property located at 1498 Highland Avenue, Needham, MA).

This will be held until the 10/16/18 meeting.

Report from Planning Director.

Ms. Grimes asked the Planning Director to contact Walgreen's. She has had 4 complaints about the planting areas. It is a disaster. Ms. Newman stated the major owners are out of state but she will contact the manager and let her know.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Grimes, and seconded by Mr. Jacobs, it was by the five members present unanimously:
VOTED: to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna J. Kalinowski, Notetaker

Martin Jacobs

Martin Jacobs, Vice-Chairman and Clerk