

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2022
MUNICIPAL COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 6:30 P.M.

Present: John Beckett, Phil Ruck (Chair), Dave Thompson, Lisa Buck, Christa Schwintzer, Bob Bayer, Michael Costello, Ashley Case

Absent: Jud McIntosh (Vice-Chair)

Town Staff: Kyle Drexler, Jessica Chadbourne

Acceptance of the Agenda

Mr. Ruck asked for a motion to accept the agenda.

Motion: Lisa Buck

Second: John Beckett

Mr. Ruck asked for a roll call vote. The vote to accept the agenda passed with six in favor, none opposed.

Approval of the Minutes of the December 15th Planning Board Meeting

Mr. Ruck asked for a motion to approve the December Planning Board Minutes.

Motion: John Beckett

Second: Michael Costello

After corrections to the December minutes were noted, Mr. Ruck asked for a roll call vote. The vote to approve the December meeting minutes passed four in favor, with three abstaining as John Beckett, Phil Ruck, and Lisa Buck were absent from the December meeting.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

Item A: An amended site plan review application by University of Maine and Radnor Property Group, LLC located on 168 College Ave, Tax Map 11-0 Lot 77, in the University District. The application proposes amendments to a previously approved site plan for the redevelopment of Coburn and Holmes Hall to be used as a hotel.

Mr. Ruck asked the applicant to present their amendment to the Board. Jodi O’Neal provided a summary for the Board of the changes Radnor and UMaine were proposing. Due to ledge and utilities, the footprint of the proposed Holmes Hall addition was reduced in order to avoid inadvertent damage to a number of buried communications lines. The building itself became slightly wider to accommodate the reduction in length, which caused a ripple effect with the adjacent parking area, requiring them to redesign some of the existing parking spaces and adjust the grade. The proposed soil filter at the far end of the parking area was also removed due to the same issues of ledge and buried utilities, and was replaced by a Filterra tree box filter unit to be placed in the corner of the parking area, which will be curbed to promote drainage to the filter. The filter then ties into the existing catch basin system.

Similar changes were outlined for Coburn Hall. The grade was adjusted and the previously proposed soil filter was replaced with a Filterra tree box filter at the edge of the parking lot, which would be curbed to promote drainage to the filter. The three proposed parallel parking spaces across from the hall were removed, and the two additional parking spaces needed will be provided by the steamplant lot, and used by employees who can then travel on foot from their parking area up to Coburn Hall.

Mr. Ruck asked Mr. Drexler if he had any additions to Ms. O'Neal's presentation. Mr. Drexler noted that a small change had also been made to one of the walkways outside Coburn Hall to better align it with the existing walkway across Munson Rd, making the area more walkable. He supported the decision to locate their two missing parking places at the Steam Plant lot on College Ave, citing the University's existing system of crosswalks and walkways and the easy access for staff to reach Coburn Hall from the parking lot. The Holmes Hall parking lot had some rearrangement in the number of parking spaces those sections, but the total number still meets the requirements of the ordinance.

Mr. Ruck asked whether the Town Engineer had had a chance to review the changes. Mr. Drexler confirmed that Town Staff, the Fire Department, the Town Engineer, and Public Works had all reviewed the proposed changes and had no comments or concerns.

Mr. Ruck opened the discussion to the Board for questions or comments. Hearing none, Mr. Ruck opened the the hearing to the public. While waiting for any questions from the public, Mr. Ruck asked Ms. O'Neal to confirm the construction timeline for the project. Ms. O'Neal replied that the intention was to begin construction in the spring of 2022, and complete construction by the fall of 2023. Nick Allen from Radnor Property Group confirmed that timeline, stating that the current plan was to begin construction late first quarter/early second quarter of 2022, with the hopes of completing construction in the summer of 2023.

Hearing no comments or questions from the public, Mr. Ruck closed the public hearing. He asked the Board for final comments. Again hearing none, Mr. Ruck then read the proposed findings of fact into the record, then asked for a motion.

Motion: Michael Costello moved that the Board approve the amended site plan application by University of Maine and Radnor Property Group, LLC located on 168 College Ave, Tax Map 11-0 Lot 77, in the University District for the redevelopment of Coburn and Holmes Hall to be used as a hotel.

Second: Lisa Buck

Mr. Ruck asked for a roll call vote. The vote to approve the amended site plan application passed with seven in favor, none opposed.

Other New Business

There was no other new business.

Discussion

Mr. Ruck asked Mr. Drexler about any forthcoming projects slated for Planning Board review. Mr Drexler replied that at the moment nothing had been submitted for the February meeting, and it was likely that the Board would not be meeting in February. There are a number of potential projects in the coming months that may require Planning Board review, but they are still in the application/development process.

Adjournment

Mr. Ruck asked for a motion to adjourn the January meeting of the Planning Board.

Motion: John Beckett

Second: Dave Thompson

The motion to adjourn the meeting passed five for, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:48 pm January 19th, 2022.