

PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the Augusta Planning Board meeting held on December 8, 2015.

Board members present: Corey Vose, Alison Nichols, Justin Poirier, Delaine Nye, Steve Dumont, Tom Connors, Bill McKenna, Heather Pouliot

Board members absent: Pete Pare.

City staff present: Matt Nazar, Lionel Cayer, Betsy Poulin, Chief Roger Audette, Deputy Chief Dave Groder

Guests present: Elliot Thayer, Greg Piper, Dan Frigge, Ellen Angel, Dick Duncan, Patrick Paradis, Cecil Munson, Don Belanger

Corey Vose stepped down because Performance Food Group is his employer. Justin Poirier took the position of Chair for this item.

Public Hearing: Major Development and Conditional Use Review. Application of Performance Food Group, Inc. to construct a 201,845 square foot driveway and parking lot. Assessor's Map 54, Lots 1A, 3, 35 and Map 53, Lot 23A and Map 2, Lot 2. Located at 20 Dalton Road in the Contract Planned Development (PD) District, Industrial (IA) District, and the Shoreland Limited Residential (LR) and General Development (GD) Zones.

Matt Nazar gave an overview of this agenda item.

Delaine: What about the railroad activity? Will it interfere?

Matt: There is still railroad use in this area. Pan-Am has a yearly renewal term on their license. The Board could put a restriction that Sherwood Drive would not be used as an access point should the railroad not renew the lease. The railroad is also in negotiations with PFG to sell them land where the stormwater management is located.

Applicant:

Elliot Thayer, Thayer Engineering.

- An agreement with CMP exists where the transmission lines are located.
- The pond was originally a detention pond and it became an infiltration area, with review consensus from MDEP and GAUD.
- NRPA permits are in process with the Maine DEP.
- Lighting would remain level to be fully shielded.
- Fencing proposed around the parking lot.
- Sherwood Drive access has been gated for 40 years. PFG's attorney is working on the rights for this accessway/former proposed street. It will not be gated until any rights are reviewed and settled.

- Asking for a waiver on the interior buffering requirements due to the nature of the lot and the location. It is not for public use.

Tom: How does the raising of the parking 20 feet affect the residential neighborhood?

Elliott: The portion that is being raised is a smaller, more recently mined section of the pit. The parking will still be 40 feet below the closest house to the east. The parking lot is relatively level, sloping toward the water. The wooded buffer to east will remain.

Alison: Will the sides of pit be graded additionally to the level of parking lot? Will some plantings be added to the slope to stabilize it?

Elliott: On the east and south sides, the limit of grading will match the existing forest boundary. The level of the parking lot to the west by the railroad will be similar to level of the railroad. On the north, erosion control mix will be added to stabilize the slope. Erosion control mix is a mixture of bark mulch and gravel.

Public to Speak in Favor of the Application:

Councilor Paradis: There was a unanimous decision at the City Council to rezone this property for parking. PFG has over 400 jobs at this facility and they want to stay in the community. The jobs pay well and have benefits. He endorses this project.

Public to Speak Against the Application:

None

Public to Speak Neither for nor Against the Application:

None.

Public Hearing Closed.

Motion by Alison Nichols: This is concerning the application of Performance Food Group, Inc. for a Major Development as per Section 4.5 and a Conditional Use Review as per Sections 3.6.3.1.2 and 3.6.3.1.4. The applicant is proposing to construct a 201,845 square foot fenced, lighted parking lot within what was formerly a gravel pit. The project is located north of PFG's existing site on Tax Map 54, Lots 1A, 3 and 35, on Tax Map 53, Lot 23A and on Tax Map 2, Lot 2. It is located in a Contract Zoned Planned Development Zone (PD), so zoned for this proposed use, as well as in a Shoreland Zone that is subject to General Development and Limited Residential considerations.

I have considered and agree with the Findings of Fact in the staff review and would like to add the following finding:

1. The applicant requested four waivers from the requirements of the ordinance, two of which were later satisfied by submissions sent. The remaining two waivers requested are those related to landscaping/buffering and planting cells within parking lots. Given the circumstances outlined in both the staff review and in the application itself and since staff has no concerns, these waivers are granted.

I have also considered and agree with the Conclusions of Law as presented.

I believe the project, as presented this evening, is able to meet the standards of our Land Use Ordinance with the following condition(s). These conditions must be met prior to the issuance of a site or building permit. If these conditions are not met within one year of this approval, the applicant must come before the Planning Board for review of these conditions.

1. Provide evidence that any rights of the owners in the Sherwood Drive subdivision will not be infringed upon prior to installation of gating or fencing on the paper street east of the parking lot, evidence to be submitted prior to its installation.
2. Emergency access only is to be permitted from Sherwood Drive.
3. Submit a letter from the Public Works Director which indicates that there is sufficient capacity at Hatch Hill for the solid waste.
4. The lights shall be installed and maintained in the full cutoff position with no lateral light escape.

The Conditional Approval shall expire in 18 months from the date of this approval if a permit from the Bureau of Code Enforcement for site/building work has not been issued by that date.

I move to approve the application as stipulated above.

Second: Delaine

All in favor. Motion passed. 6:0

Public Hearing: Major Development. Application of the City of Augusta to construct Augusta Fire Department North Station #3, a 9,800 SF fire station. Assessor's Map 5, Lot 109. Located on Leighton Road across from Anthony Avenue in a Contract Industrial District (IA) for the proposed use.

Matt Nazar gave an overview of this agenda item.

Alison: Will the light on Leighton Road only flash when an emergency vehicle approaches?

Matt: Yes.

Delaine: If excavation is occurring for other utilities, why is electricity not going underground?

Matt: The cost to put electricity underground is higher than overhead. The project is more expensive due to soil conditions, and it is a cost factor to not put electricity underground. The original preference was to go underground.

Chief Audette: It would have cost an additional \$50-75,000 to go underground.

Ellen Angel, Architect with Ames Associates: Separate conduit is required for the electricity and more excavation. There will be less site disturbance with overhead and it is more cost effective.

Chief Audette: The last fire station was built in 1965. North Augusta was determined to be an area with need. This will improve response times, especially with EMS which is the bulk of calls.

Justin: Will the new station give the Fire Department everything they need, or were things removed due to budgetary constraints?

Chief Audette: This is a sub-station. It will satisfy needs now and for future growth. Hartford will still be the main station with administrative services.

Public to Speak in Favor of the Application:

Council Paradis: He is very enthusiastic and happy about a fire station coming into this part of town. He represents Ward 3, and this is an area where much of the recent growth has occurred. The 2008 matrix study concluded that the northwest corner of Augusta had a need for a fire station. This station will improve response times greatly. The new ladder truck will be located at this station. The project will be funded with TIF dollars. Homeowners insurance costs will be reduced in this area.

Public to Speak Against the Application:

None.

Public to Speak Neither For nor Against the Application:

Don Belanger: Don is an administrator of an estate that owns property directly north of this property on the Leighton Road. This land is being offered for \$4,000 less than it is valued. If this land was purchased by the City, there would be less environmental impact.

Corey: This is not part of the discussion tonight; the application is being evaluated on what is being presented tonight.

Matt: The current access road to the Quimby lot is not the proposed access. The proposed road is lined up with Anthony Avenue for ease of emergency vehicle access. The fire station is about 300 feet off Leighton Road. No buffering is required if a building is set back that far from the road. There is existing wooded buffer along Leighton Road which will remain.

Public Hearing Closed.

Delaine: Likes the look of the station. It looks modern and historical, like a traditional fire station.

Alison: Is it possible to maintain landscaping or supplement buffering along the south/back of the building.

Motion by Alison Nichols: This is concerning the application of the City of Augusta for a Major Development Review as per Section 4.5. The applicant is proposing to construct a 9,800 square foot Augusta Fire Station #3 on vacant land. The project is located on Leighton Road across from the intersection with Anthony Avenue. It is located in a Contract Zoned Industrial District (IA), so zoned for this proposed use and is on Tax Map 5, Lot 109.

I have considered and agree with the Findings of Fact in the staff review and would like to add the following finding:

1. The applicant has requested a waiver from the Traffic Report requirement of the ordinance. Since the amount of traffic generated by the project is small, with the largest shift likely having only five employees, since actuated flashers on Leighton Road will

warn approaching motorists of the movement of emergency vehicles and since staff has no concerns with this request, this waiver is granted.

I have also considered and agree with the Conclusions of Law as presented.

I believe the project, as presented this evening, is able to meet the standards of our Land Use Ordinance with the following condition:

1. The applicant shall leave as much of the natural buffering that currently exists on the site as possible, to provide screening for the abutting properties.

I move to approve the application as stipulated above.

Second: Justin

All in favor. Motion passed. 7:0

Minutes

Heather Pouliot abstained since she was not present at the meetings.

October 27, 2015 Minutes:

Motion for approval: Alison

Second: Delaine

Motion Passed. 6:0

Adjourn

Motion by Justin to adjourn at 8:00 pm.

Second: Heather

Further Discussion. None.

All in Favor. Motion Passed. 7:0