

East Greenwich Planning Board
Wednesday, January 15, 2020
Town Council Chambers
125 Main Street
7:00 PM

Present: Nate Ginsburg, Vice Chair; Eric Jautaikis; Ben Lupovitz; Kevin Murphy; Chris Pels

Absent: Jason Gomez, Katie Keeffe

Staff: Lisa Bourbonnais, Town Planner; Aaron Lindo, Planning Technician; Andy Teitz,
Town Solicitor; Mark Conboy, Town Engineer; Joe Duarte, DPW Director

Mr. Ginsburg called the meeting to order at 7:05 and introduced those present.

1. **Comprehensive Permit / Final Plan review** of the project known as **The Imperial on Greenwich**, being Assessor's Map 64, Plat 5, Lots 158, and 219 proposed for development by Imperial Investments Inc. on property owned by Joseph Zenga. Project is for 38 units of residential development with ten deed restricted affordable units and all related parking, access, lighting, landscaping and other amenities.

It was noted that all of the engineering has been completed and all of the permits have been obtained. Attorney John Garrahy represented the application. Mr. Garrahy explained that the project has gone through extensive review. There are a couple of minor issues that need to be addressed but most have already been resolved. The American Legion had a concern but it has been rectified and they are satisfied with the project at this time. The applicant has reviewed the staff report. Staff had no additional comments to add.

Mr. Ginsburg asked about the height of the hot box and the landscaping around it. Joe Casali, the project's engineer, commented that the hot box is 70 inches above grade and is shown on the current plan on page 13. The landscape plan shows street trees and it will have a canopy overhead. It will not obstruct the view of the street but the applicant can put shrubs around it at the Board's direction.

Mr. Garrahy commented that the plan has not changed from the Preliminary plan. The Legion was initially concerned about the grade change of the access to their parking lot but that has been corrected and it is not a flat surface. There will be a retaining wall to meet the grade from Imperial Way. All of the grade change is in the property of the American Legion. Mr. Casali added that the grade at the property line is about elevation 36 and drops 4 feet to 32. The applicant has agreed to do the site work on the entrance for the Legion.

Mr. Teitz added that a construction easement matching this detail is between the two parties. Mr. Casali was confident that the details would be worked out.

The applicant asked John Holms, the Post Commander for the American Legion, to speak. Mr. Ginsburg asked if he had seen the proposed change and Mr. Holms replied that the Legion has a copy and it is an acceptable change. Ms. Bourbonnais commented that she was fairly certain that the change can be dealt with at permitting. The sketch will be included as an exhibit.

Mr. Ginsburg made a motion to accept the draft motion. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion which was passed unanimously.

2. **Preliminary Plan** review of a 12-unit residential Major Land Development proposed by Grenier Properties, LLC. Location is **32 Exchange Street**, being Assessor's Map 085, Plat 001, Lots 087 and 382. Property is owned by Grenier Properties, LLC and is roughly 0.47 acres in size. Zoning is R-6, high density residential. Greater than 25% of proposed units will be "affordable" so the project can proceed as a **Comprehensive Permit** with expedited review.

Attorney John Kupa represented the application. Don Powers, the principle at Union Studios gave background information of the project via PowerPoint. The site has an existing old house on the property. The first part of the application was to go before the HDC to remove the building. Without removing the house, the project would not work. The house is at a point of decay that it is uninhabitable. The HDC granted the right to demolish the building and the plan has proceeded with that approval. The historic building was built in 2 phases and both are unsalvageable. The proposal is that building A would replicate the details of the original house as best as can be determined. In the replicated building there would be 2 new units. The second building on the site would provide 10 1-bedroom units. 4 of the units will be type B ADA accessible. 4 of the units will be deed-restricted affordable.

It is the applicant's opinion that the project is a good use of the site and is naturally affordable. The complexion of the units have changed, going from 2-bedroom units to 1-bedroom. 620 sq.ft. is naturally affordable. There is an attempt to create a little neighborhood in the courtyard. Mr. Powers went on to explain the relief granted from the Master Plan approval and the aspects that were agreed upon from that approval.

Ashely Iannuccilli, a registered landscape architect, was sworn in and accepted as an expert by the Board. She commented that the goal is to focus on materials that are durable but aesthetically pleasing and fit in with the neighborhood. There will be concrete pavers in the patio and brick in the walkways. The courtyard helps the project maintains a feeling of community. The gravel will have a cellular system underneath to hold it in place and minimize displacement. It is a plastic system that encloses the gravel, offers stability, and compartmentalizes. The cobblestone apron at the throat of the driveway will make the project feel more residential. There will be a small, well placed granite sign post to identify the residence. Before plantings are done, an in depth analysis of existing species will be performed.

There were questions about the snow removal on the property and if there was enough space for snow. Evaluation were performed and the applicant found that the site can accommodate up to six inches of snow. The applicant has spoken to snow removal companies and have received quotes for snow removal above 6 inches.

Mr. Ginsburg commented that the applicant has done a great job with the landscape architecture and asked the DPW about the snow removal. Mr. Duarte commented that he is not sure how all of the snow removal will happen. Snow is a concern in the neighborhood and he does not want to see snow being shoveled into the street. If the site can handle a six inch storm, that is a significant snow event.

Mr. Jautaikis asked about the sidewalks being implemented. Ms. Iannucelli commented that sidewalks were a request from the town. Ms. Bourbonnais commented that it is a goal to enhance the walkability of the area. Sidewalks are already there in front of 32 Exchange Street.

Mr. Murphy asked if the applicant has considered an 8 or 10 inch snow event. In the event of such a snow event, there would be stipulation in the Condo Association documents that anything over 6 inches would be removed using condo association fees. There are 2 bollards that are removable.

John Ford, the project civil engineer, was sworn in and accepted as an expert by the Board. He explained

that there is more detail of engineering that has progressed. The storm water report has been submitted with updated sight design to clarify the changes. Since Master Plan, the changes that have been made include the parking layout to provide for 18 spaces, eliminating a bioretention system to allow for improvement of a sidewalk connection toward the back of the site, and changing the accessible parking space in the front.

There were concerns raised by an abutter of the trash receptacle and the hot box. Both have been moved to different locations. The hotbox is not located in the basement of building A and the trash receptacle has been moved to the back of the site.

Regarding site grading and drainage, the storm water analysis meets the Town and DEM guidelines. The proposed site grading is very close to the existing grading. The storm water drainage is able to handle a 100-year storm which is suitable to DEM and to the Town. The stormwater runoff would be conveyed via underground pipes.

There were questions raised about the setbacks from utilities by the DPW. There is not a lot of room to get utilities to the back of the site. The applicant discussed options with DPW and there could be conditions included in the Final Approval.

Mr. Jautaikis asked town staff about the number of ADA parking spots and if it is consistent with regulations. Mr. Conboy affirmed that it was. Mr. Duarte commented that the requirement is 1 ADA space per ordinance. Mr. Ford added that the number of parking spaces has been a push-pull throughout the process. The plan as proposed has met the requirements. Mr. Lupovitz asked Mr. Teitz to weigh in on the matter. Mr. Teitz commented that it is up to the Board to decide. The applicant has cut down on the unit count so that they meet the parking requirements. It is something the Board has to weigh. There may well be people living in the units that don't need a handicap spot. There is no potential liability to the Town.

Mr. Powers commented that the requirement is two. Any of the 4 units at the ground level can be retrofitted as ADA compliant.

Mr. Ginsburg had a question regarding the storm water management system and if it collects snow melt. Mr. Ford commented that it will collect some of the snow melt and some of it would sink naturally. There are drainage structures near the snow storage area in the back of the site. The grades will direct the water to the drywell areas.

Mr. Conboy raised a concern about the driveway aisle. 18 feet is too narrow for 2 vehicles to pass through. Mr. Ford commented that the applicant feel that they could provide for the 20 feet but it would impact the entrance visually. The applicant does not feel that there will be a lot of back and forth in the entrance and feels that there is a safe conveyance with vehicles with 18 feet.

Mr. Conboy raised a concern about the landscaping, citing that some trees are going to be too close to the utilities. 4 feet is not going to be enough due to the root system and the canopy of the trees. Mr. Ford agreed and commented that Ms. Iannucilli spoke about it. There are some flexibilities and intend to change the distance to address the comment. Utilities will be shown on the landscape plan.

Gary Kaufman, the principle at Redwood Environmental group, was sworn in, qualified as an expert by Mr. Kupa, and accepted as one by the Board. Mr. Kaufman provides reports to the Office of Waste Management and other entities as a part of environmental due diligence. Mr. Kaufman explained that he did a phase 1 environmental assessment in May 2018 and again in May 2019, digging down between 12 and 18 inches, and testing for several things. The soil samples were collected and sent to a certified lab to be analyzed. He explained that many things were tested for including TPHC, VOC, PCBs, semi volatile organic compounds, and lead, among many other things. In 2 of the soil sample locations, lead was found above the residential standard. This triggered a notification to DEM. There were no other compounds above the standard acceptable levels. DEM asked the developer to put in 3 monitoring wells. In the sampling of the soil and ground water samples, there was nothing found. The history of the site is known with the storage of automobiles, boats, etc. but there was nothing else other than lead above the regulatory standards for residential occupation.

Per regulations promulgated by RIDEM, there are several options that can be pursued. The first option is to take the first 2 feet of soil and remove it from the site and bring in an additional 2 feet to bring it back to grade. Another option is to take out 1 foot, put down geo-fabric and then bring it back to grade. Mr. Kaufman commented on the Environmental Land Use Restriction (ELUR). The ELUR restricts the site to the use that it is being used for. It also mandates a soil management plan be included on deeds. Any substantial disturbance of the site needs to be approved by DEM.

Mr. Jautaikis asked about the remediation option the applicant would choose. Mr. Grenier commented that he would remove the first 2 feet of soil. Mr. Kaufman agreed that removing the first 2 feet would be the best option for the site.

Mr. Ginsburg asked if lead was common. Mr. Kaufman replied that lead is very common, especially in historic districts like East Greenwich. It comes from house paint and gasoline of old gas.

Mr. Kaufman explained that the soil management plan must get approved by DEM. To contain the lead, workers will use protect equipment. During the process, there will be water to control the dust from excavation.

Mr. Jautaikis asked about the deed restricted units. Mr. Powers commented that the deed restricted units have not been designated at this stage but would be at Final approval. The units would be dispersed throughout the building.

Public Comment – 102:00 time stamp.

For a complete record of the public comment, a recording is available from the Planning Department.

Aimee Heru, 24 Exchange Street.

Michael Heu, 24 Exchange Street.

James Gorham, 118 Duke Street.

Jerry Zarrella, Jr., local developer.

Public Comment closed at 193:00 time stamp.

The Board decided that it they were not ready to vote on the matter at meeting. The next available date would be February 5th. The applicant's civil engineer was specifically asked to come back to participate in the meeting. The meeting will be continued to a date certain and there is no need to re-advertise.

Mr. Jautakis made a motion to continue which was seconded by Mr. Murphy. The motion was unanimously passed.

3. Minutes: The Board is asked to review and approve minutes of the 10/16/19 meeting.

Mr. Jautakis made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Pels seconded the motion which was passed unanimously.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Jautakis.

Meeting adjourned at 10:20 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Aaron Lindo, Planning Technician.

For further information, please refer to the recording available in the Planning Department.