

**TOWN OF EXETER
PLANNING BOARD
November 19, 2020
VIRTUAL MEETING
APPROVED MINUTES
Zoom ID: 881 3382 1337
Phone: 1 646 558 8656**

I. PRELIMINARIES:

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT BY ROLL CALL: Chair Langdon Plumer, Vice-Chair Aaron Brown, Pete Cameron, Clerk, Gwen English, John Grueter, Jennifer Martel, Molly Cowan, Select Board Representative, Robin Tyner, Alternate, Nancy Belanger, Alternate and Pete Steckler, Alternate.

STAFF PRESENT: Town Planner Dave Sharples

II. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Plumer called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and read out loud the meeting preamble which indicated that an emergency exists and the provisions of RSA 91-A:2 III (b) are being invoked. As federal, state and local officials have determined gatherings of ten or more people pose a substantial risk to the community and the meeting imperative to the continued operation of Town and government and services which are vital to public, health, safety and confidence. This meeting will be conducted without a quorum physically present in the same location and welcome members of the public accessing the meeting remotely.

III. OLD BUSINESS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

November 12, 2020 - Tabled

IV. NEW BUSINESS

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. A request by Wakefield Investment, Inc. (2 Hampton Road LLC) for modifications to a previously approved multi-family site plan for the "Windsor Crossing" development. The subject property is located on Acadia Lane, in the CT-Corporate Technology Park zoning district
Tax Map Parcel #69-3
Case #21404

Chair Plumer read the Public Hearing Notice and indicated the applicant has requested to be removed from the agenda until such time as they are ready to proceed.

40 2. The application of People's United Bank for the proposed construction of a drive-thru canopy and
41 reconstruction of the existing parking lot at 1 Center Street. The subject property is situated in the C-1,
42 Central Area Commercial zoning district
43 Tax Map Parcel #72-205 and #72-216
44 Case #20-3

45
46 Chair Plumer read the Public Hearing Notice out loud.

47
48 Mr. Sharples noted the application is ready to be heard.

49
50 **Mr. Cameron motioned to hear Planning Board Case #20-3. Ms. Martel seconded the motion. A roll**
51 **call vote was taken Cameron – aye, Martel – aye, English – aye, Grueter – aye, Brown – aye, Cowan –**
52 **aye and Plumer – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.**

53
54 Mr. Sharples noted the applicant has requested site plan review for the construction of a drive-thru
55 canopy and reconstruction of the existing parking lot. The HDC reviewed and recommended conditions.
56 Staff and UEI reviewed the plans and supporting documents and UEI provided comments dated March 4,
57 2020. There were no concerns with access or emergency services. There are six waiver requests.

58
59 Christopher Berry of Berry Surveying & Engineering presented the proposed plan to add a drive-thru
60 canopy and changes to the parking lots and access. The site currently contains 4,000 SF and an existing
61 bank. There are two curb cuts being reduced to one on Center Street. Access to the parking lot would
62 be through Ladd's Lane. No changes to water, sewer or other utilities. Impervious surface will be
63 reduced from 76% to 64% and stormwater treatment via rain garden. The drive-thru will have a window
64 and teller station, atm, concrete pad with two drive-thru lanes. The dumpster will be on a pad with
65 chain link and barrier/screening. The upper parking lot will be resurfaced, and the off-site
66 encroachment removed. Parking will be reduced from 25 spaces to 21. There are waivers requested.

67
68 Vice-Chair Brown asked about the conditions of the Historic District Commission and the existing ATM
69 whether it will be eliminated, and Mr. Berry noted the existing atm will remain also.

70
71 Ms. Martel asked about the lighting plan and Mr. Berry noted the only addition will be the canned
72 lighting in the canopy. There are two cobra style fixtures which provide light to the area which are not
73 controlled by the bank.

74
75 Ms. Tyner asked about the triangle area shown between the two parking areas and Mr. Berry indicated
76 there was an 18" curb change between the parking arrays.

77
78 Ms. English asked if exiting on Center Street would be both left and right turn and Mr. Berry indicated
79 there would be no restriction. Ms. English recommended signage to direct customers to the new
80 entrance on Ladd's Lane.

81
82 Ms. Martel asked about the rain garden and proposed groundcover which Mr. Berry indicated would be
83 mown grass except where plants are shown.

84

85 Ms. Belanger expressed concerns about three lanes exiting onto Center Street. Mr. Berry indicated they
86 were discussed with DPW and UEI. The third lane is not under the canopy. Chair Plumer recommended
87 painting lines. Vice-Chair Brown noted he is a customer at the 80 Main Street branch which uses the
88 same exit style with their drive-thru canopy and three lanes work well. Mr. Cameron noted he drove
89 around and echoed Mr. Brown's comments about the three lanes converging to two easily. It is a
90 rational approach to what they want to achieve.

91

92 Chair Plumer opened the hearing to the public for comments and questions at 8:34 PM.

93

94 Mr. Grueter questioned the cars backing onto Ladd Lane. If someone came around the corner while
95 someone was backing out there could be an issue. Ms. English noted she was not comfortable with cars
96 backing onto Ladd Lane and questioned whether those five spots were necessary and raised the issue of
97 snow plowing and the expense to the bank of removal as well as pedestrian use on Ladd Lane. Mr.
98 Grueter agreed with Ms. English and recommended two or three parallel spots. Mr. Berry noted the five
99 spots are important to the bank. The bank already takes care of snow removal as it has no snow storage
100 now. Ms. Martel agreed the angled parking backing onto Ladd Lane is a concern especially during busy
101 events and questioned where a passenger would get out – could the space be wider or have a landing
102 area. Ms. Martel liked Mr. Grueter's idea of parallel spaces or eliminating. Ms. English asked if parallel
103 spaces could be added to the upper lot and Mr. Berry noted it would not meet the requirement of the
104 12' lane. The landing platform or widening are feasible. Chair Plumer noted a paved walkway could
105 allow pedestrians to come down the sidewalk to Center Street sidewalk. Mr. Berry noted he could
106 reduce the radius and carry the sidewalk to the pole.

107

108 Ms. Tyner asked how often the back-parking lot is used and Mr. Berry noted there are 3-5 employees
109 who use it regularly, sometimes more and the bank expects as business grows the need for employees
110 will also. Ms. Tyner noted she was not as bothered by the backing out as there is not much traffic on
111 Center Street. Without a walkway or direct path, people would cut across the lot. Vice-Chair Brown
112 questioned whether there could be a walking area between the arrays or a stair. Extending the sidewalk
113 around the corner makes a lot of sense.

114

115 Ms. Martel expressed concerns with the trash enclosure and the plant material. The proximity of the
116 dumpster to Ladd House and the historic bank building would like to see something more attractive
117 there than black chain link, perhaps faux wood. The three Pagoda Dogwood would not likely survive in
118 the urban environment with the snow area and she recommended choosing something else.

119

120 Ms. English questioned the outlet structure size and the tree on the same spot, also the landscape
121 boulders in the upper lot and if the area could be landscaped. Mr. Berry noted snow plowing would
122 quickly destroy any landscaping. The boulders are to prevent cars from getting into trouble if they go
123 too far down the slope.

124

125 Mr. Steckler noted he appreciated the rain garden/stormwater treatment and asked about the use of
126 pervious pavers in the upper lot. Mr. Berry noted it was discussed with the applicant and decided
127 against since it would require different maintenance, different plowing contractors and the area to be

128 dug down to reset the materials below. Ms. Martel asked if the half-spot in the upper lot could be
129 landscaped and Mr. Berry agreed it could be. Chair Plumer asked about the direction of the water flow
130 in the upper lot and Mr. Berry noted toward the back, zero grade changes, it would be milled and
131 repaved with a small reduction in the amount of pavement at the boundary line which will be saw cut.

132
133 Chair Plumer closed the hearing to the public at 8:00 PM for deliberations and requested Mr. Berry go
134 over the six waiver requests. Mr. Sharples noted he had no conditions of approval for the waivers.

135
136 Mr. Berry noted the first waiver requested was width behind parking which is being reduced from 20' to
137 16.' The standard aisle which is adequate is 16' and would be a hardship to the bank if denied because
138 the project could not move forward.

139
140 ***Ms. Martel motioned after reviewing the criteria for granting waivers that the request of People's***
141 ***United Bank (PB Case #20-3) for a waiver from Section 9.13.6 of the Site Plan Review & Subdivision***
142 ***Regulations to reduce the minimum aisle width within the parking area be approved. Mr. Cameron***
143 ***seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Grueter – aye, Martel – aye, English – aye, Cowan –***
144 ***aye, Cameron – aye, Brown – aye and Plumer – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.***

145
146 Mr. Berry indicated the next waiver request was for the curb-cut radius of 10' as the sidewalk would be
147 essentially gobbled up and create curb-cuts larger than needed. The applicant would also like to add
148 shortening the radius to allow the sidewalk to be continued around the corner to the pole. This
149 requirement would impede walkability of downtown and create confusion at the entrance/exit lanes by
150 having it appear there are more lanes than there are.

151
152 ***Vice-Chair Brown motioned after reviewing the criteria for granting waivers that the request of***
153 ***People's United Bank (PB Case #20-3) for a waiver from Section 9.14.9 of the Site Plan Review &***
154 ***Subdivision Regulations to permit a proposed curb-cut radii of 10' for a private driveway and the***
155 ***changes as discussed during the meeting in that area be approved. Ms. English seconded the motion.***
156 ***A roll call vote was taken Brown – aye, Cameron – aye, Cowan – aye, English – aye, Martel – aye,***
157 ***Grueter – aye and Plumer – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.***

158
159 Mr. Berry noted the next waiver request was for not backing into a public street for the five spaces
160 abutting Ladd Lane which has a low volume of traffic. There are situations in downtown with busier
161 areas where cars back out of spaces. The loss of these spaces may push the applicant to not move
162 forward with the project or be able to increase business.

163
164 ***Mr. Cameron motioned after reviewing the criteria for granting waivers that the request of People's***
165 ***United Bank (PB Case #20-3) for a waiver from Section 9.13.5 of the Site Plan Review and Subdivision***
166 ***Regulations to allow proposed parking to back onto a public street be approved. Vice-Chair Brown***
167 ***seconded the motion.***

168
169 Discussion followed. Ms. Martel noted introducing a wide curb cut where there is no curb cut today in a
170 pedestrian area will make pedestrians feel like they are walking through a parking lot and damage the

171 character of the neighborhood. It is not an appropriate place to park. Ms. English expressed concerns
172 with winter conditions and the grading which may cause drivers to be more careless backing out.

173

174 ***A roll call vote was taken Grueter – nay, Martel – nay, Cowan – nay, Cameron – aye, English – nay,***
175 ***Brown – aye, and Plumer – aye. With 3 in favor and 4 opposed, the motion failed.***

176

177 Mr. Sharples recommended with the plan needing to be redesigned that the applicant meet with the
178 engineer and come back. Mr. Berry noted the parallel parking recommendations could be balanced with
179 green space as a compromise. Mr. Grueter noted this may allow the aisle to be wider, from 16' to 20.'
180 A waiver may be required for the parallel spots.

181

182 Ms. Martel noted she felt more comfortable tabling and having the plan redrawn because it affects the
183 planting plan, sidewalk and curb extension. Chair Plumer agreed. Mr. Cameron recommended allowing
184 Mr. Berry to present the remaining waiver requests so he would have an idea of whether the other
185 three waivers will be addressed. Vice-Chair Brown agreed.

186

187 Mr. Berry noted the next waiver is for 24' wide commercial drive requirement which will be 30.' Two
188 curb-cuts are being reduced to one 30.' This was reduced from 35.'

189

190 ***Mr. Grueter motioned after reviewing the criteria for granting waivers that the request of People's***
191 ***United Bank (PB Case #20-3) for a waiver from Section 9.14.9 of the Site Plan Review & Subdivision***
192 ***Regulations to permit a proposed curb-cut of 30 feet for a commercial exit be approved. Ms. English***
193 ***seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Brown – aye, Cameron – aye, Cowan – aye, English –***
194 ***aye, Martel – aye, Grueter – aye and Plumer – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.***

195

196 Mr. Berry noted the next waiver was for percentage of slope. The maximum grade in a parking lot is
197 typically 7% the regulations require 5% and 6% is proposed. Most of the existing grade on the property
198 is between 6.5% and 7%. If the request is denied the bank will have no opportunity for redevelopment
199 at this site as there are only so many ways to make up the difference with the existing slope conditions.

200

201 ***Ms. English motioned after reviewing the criteria for granting waivers that the request of People's***
202 ***United Bank (PB Case #20-3) for a waiver from Section 5.6.3 of the Zoning Ordinance to a reduction in***
203 ***the size of parking spaces be approved. Mr. Grueter seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken***
204 ***Grueter – aye, English – aye, Cameron – aye, Brown – aye, Cowan – aye, Martel – aye and Plumer –***
205 ***aye. With all in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.***

206

207 Mr. Berry reviewed his notes of items to address at the next meeting which included the dumpster,
208 green space in the upper lot half parking space, sidewalk, tree/outlet structure, modify tree style,
209 pedestrian platform. Ms. English added landscaping plans for the parallel parking green space.

210

211 ***Mr. Cameron motioned to table the application of People's United Bank (PB Case #20-3) to the***
212 ***Planning Board's meeting scheduled for December 3, 2020 at 7:00 PM. Vice-Chair Brown seconded the***
213 ***motion. A roll call vote was taken Grueter – aye, Martel – aye, English – aye, Cowan – aye, Cameron –***
214 ***aye, Brown – aye and Plumer – aye. With all in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.***

215 **V. OTHER BUSINESS**

216

217 **VI. TOWN PLANNER'S ITEMS**

218 Mr. Sharples noted the Solar Array information is due today and the Transportation Alternatives bid for
219 the spring sidewalk project had a few responses.

220 **VII. CHAIRPERSON'S ITEMS**

221 Chair Plumer indicated the next meetings will be on December 3, 2020 and December 17, 2020.

222

223 **VIII. PB REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT ON "OTHER COMMITTEE ACTIVITY"**

224 **IX. ADJOURN**

225 *Vice-Chair Brown motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Grueter seconded the motion. A roll call vote*
226 *was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.*

227

228 The meeting adjourned at 8:49 PM.

229

230 Respectfully submitted,

231 Daniel Hoijer,

232 Recording Secretary