

TOWN DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD

Draft Minutes

May 23, 2017

MEMBERS PRESENT: Don Bourdon, Charles Wilson, Kim French
MEMBERS ABSENT: Frederick Hunt, Ingrid Moulton Nichols
OTHERS PRESENT: Bruce Keely Mara Mehlman, Susan Ford, Jevgenija Saromova,
Michael Brands

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Bourdon called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the April 25, 2017 meeting were approved as submitted.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. Old Business:

1. T-4682-16 Meadow Ridge Farm, LLC

Application is for Conditional Use & Conservation District Overlay Approval to relocate existing driveway with 1100 l.f. driveway within the Wetland Buffer. The property is located at 963 Grassy Lane and is zoned Residential 5 Acres / Conservation District.

The TDRB agreed to review both applications, T-4682-16 and T-4683-16, together as the driveway runs through the two abutting parcels which are owned by the same person. Two applications are required, one for each parcel.

The application has been continued, waiting for issuance of the State wetland permit.

2. T-4683-16 Meadow Ridge Farm, LLC

Application is for Conditional Use & Conservation District Overlay Approval to relocate existing driveway with 1100 l.f. driveway within the Wetland Buffer. The property is located at 857 Grassy Lane and is zoned Residential 5 Acres / Conservation District.

The TDRB agreed to review both applications, T-4682-16 and T-4683-16, together as the driveway runs through the two abutting parcels which are owned by the same person.

The application has been continued, waiting for issuance of the State wetland permit.

3. T-4723-17 Woodstock Union High School

The application is for Conditional Use Review Approval to amend condition #5 on permit T-4588-15 to decrease interval timing on electronic sign from 2-hours to 6 seconds. The property is located at 70 Amsden Way and is zoned Residential Five Acre.

Mr. Keely, representing the school, presented the application.

Prior to the meeting, the three members marked present attended a site visit to the school to view the digital sign. The timer was set to a 6 second interval for changing the message. The current allowance is a 2-hour interval. During the site visit, it was observed that the seasonal vegetation west of the sign shortens the viewing time frame when traveling east on Route 4.

Mr. Keely noted there would be no change in color or light intensity.

The Board read the original permit T-4588-15 decision. A condition of the permit set the hours of operation between 6:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m.

It was noted that the sign has been illuminated after 11:00 pm on numerous occasions.

Mr. Keely explained that computer glitches and power outages cause the internal clock to reset, therefore offsetting the timer. The school recognizes the issue and is working to resolve it.

Testimony from the March 28, 2017 TDRB meeting noted the Bethel school sign has a 3 second interval that plays 5 messages a day and the Hartford sign has a 7 second interval.

The TDRB reviewed Sections 518 Signs and 810 Conditional Use.

Testimony was voted close.

B. New Business:

1. T-4740-17 Elizabeth Deignan, Daniel Bellmore, Susan Becker

Application is for Conditional Use approval to convert residential unit to second office space. The property is located at 738 West Woodstock Road and is zoned Business Service / Light Industrial.

Ms. Ford, attorney, presented the application.

The TDRB reviewed floor plans and a site plan.

The Town Planner noted that the original application was changed from a request to place an additional office to an expansion of the existing office. The end result would be one office occupying the entire building.

The existing office would merge into the apartment space. There would be no additional employees or clients.

The site plan states 7 parking spaces with 2 additional parking spaces on the west end. Originally, the 2 additional spaces were established for the apartment use. The office would have a total of 9 spaces. The lot would be hardpack and not paved.

There would be no change in lighting, signage or landscaping.

The home was originally converted to an office and an apartment in 2007.

The TDRB reviewed Sections 809 Site Plan Review and 810 Conditional Use.

Testimony was voted closed.

2. T-4736-17 Mara Mehlman

Application is for Conditional Use approval to construct a 348 sq. ft. deck on southwest elevation of building for breakfast dining. The property is located at 2709 West Woodstock Road and is zoned Business Service / Light Industrial.

Ms. Mehlman presented the application.

The TDRB reviewed numerous photographs and renderings of the proposed deck.

Ms. Mehlman, owner of the Lincoln Inn would like to construct a 16' x 22' deck for breakfast dining on the south side of the inn. The deck would occupy an existing notch in the building, thus providing privacy to clients. The deck would have 4 tables with seating for 12.

French doors would be placed to provide access from the inn. The deck faces the river.

The deck would have a Trek floor and would not be covered. A railing and a set of steps would be placed on the south edge of the deck.

There would be no additional employees or clients due to deck placement. There would be no change in parking or landscaping.

The TDRB reviewed Section 810 Conditional Use.

Testimony was voted close.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Zoning Officer's Report

The report was discussed.

V. **DELIBERATIONS:**

A. T-4682-16 Meadow Ridge Farm, LLC Continued

B. T-4683-16 Meadow Ridge Farm, LLC Continued

C. T-4723-17 WUHS

After discussion, the following findings of fact were established:

1. The TDRB reviewed numerous photographs of the sign and the original T-4588-15 zoning permit.
2. In 2015, the school changed a wood sign to a digital internally illuminated sign. After a year and a half of use, the applicant requests a change of message from a two hour interval to a six second interval.
3. Schools in Bethel and Hartford have similar signs. The sign in Bethel has a 3 second interval that plays 5 messages a day. The Hartford sign has a 7 second interval.
4. The school's 2-hour interval limitation does not allow multiple messages. The original intent of placing a digital sign was to allow multiple messages as the original wood sign was felt too small for that purpose.
5. An abutter directly across Route 4 from the sign, noted concern with the sign. He felt regulations require a static sign. Static means no movement. The sign, in violation of a permit condition, remains on after 11:00 pm.
6. Prior to the May 23rd meeting, three TDRB members attended a site visit to the school to view the digital sign. The timer was set to a 6 second interval for changing the message. The current allowance is a 2 hour interval. During the site visit, it was observed that the seasonal vegetation west of the sign shortens the viewing time frame when traveling east on Route 4.
7. There would be no change in color or light intensity.
8. The TDRB reviewed Sections 518 Signs and 810 Conditional Use.
9. The TDRB discussed the term "static" as it relates to the digital sign. The original permit allowed a 2-hour interval. The sign is setup to present static messages. There is no movement within the message and no scrolling of multiple messages. Each individual message is consider static.

After further discussion, Mr. Wilson moved with a second by Ms. French to approve the application with the following conditions:

1. **The sign's message shall not be changed at less than a 15 second interval.**
2. **There shall be no off-premise signage, all content shall relate to activities that take place on site.**

The motion passed with a 3-0 vote.

D. T-4740-17 Elizabeth Deignan, Daniel Bellmore, Susan Becker

After discussion, the following findings of fact were established:

1. The TDRB reviewed floor plans and a site plan.
2. The Town Planner noted that the original application was changed from a request to place an additional office to an expansion of the existing office. The end result would be one office occupying the entire building.
3. The existing office would merge into the apartment space. There would be no additional employees or clients.
4. The site plan states 7 parking spaces with 2 additional parking spaces on the west end. Originally, the 2 additional spaces were established for the apartment use. The office would have a total of 9 spaces. The parking lot would be hardpack and not paved.
5. There would be no change in lighting, signage or landscaping.
6. The home was originally converted to an office and an apartment in 2007.
7. The TDRB reviewed Sections 809 Site Plan Review and 810 Conditional Use.

After further discussion, Ms. French moved with a second by Mr. Wilson to approve the application as presented

The motion passed with a 3-0 vote.

E. T-4736-17 Mara Mehlman

After discussion, the following findings of fact were established:

1. The TDRB reviewed numerous photographs and renderings of the proposed deck.
2. The owner of the Lincoln Inn would like to construct a 16' x 22' deck for breakfast dining on the south side of the inn. The deck would occupy an existing notch in the building, thus providing privacy to clients. The deck would have 4 tables with seating for 12.
3. French doors would be placed to provide access from the inn. The deck faces the river.
4. The deck would have a Trek floor and would not be covered. A railing and a set of steps would be placed on the south edge of the deck.
5. There would be no additional employees or clients due to deck placement. There would be no change in parking or landscaping.
6. The TDRB reviewed Section 810 Conditional Use.

After further discussion, Mr. Wilson moved with a second by Ms. French to approve the application as presented.

The motion was approved with a 3-0 vote.

VI. NEXT MEETING:

The next TDRB meeting is scheduled for June 27, 2017.

VII. ADJOURNMENT:

The TDRB adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael E. Brands, AICP
Town Planner