

CITY OF GARDNER

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE

MINUTES

April 22, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.

VIA ZOOM

Members present: Trevor Beaugard-*DCDP*, Roland Jean-*Building Dept.*, Lyndsy Butler-*Conservation*, Greg LaGoy, *Fire Chief*, Chris Coughlin-*Engineering*, Raymond LaFond-*ZBA*, Robert J. Swartz-*PB Rep.*, Lauren Saunders-*Health Dept.*, and Dane Arnold-*DPW*.

Members absent: *James Trifiro-Police Dept.*, and *R. Braks-Police Chief*.

Others Present: Mayor Michael J. Nicholson, Chris Keenan, Tim Hunt, Stephen Fleshman, Kevin Quinn of Quinn Engineering, John DeMalia, President/*CHC*, Jessica DeRoy and Christine Fucile-*DCDP*,

T. Beaugard opened the meeting at 9:30 a.m.

1. Minutes of March 11, 2021.

Motion to approve minutes as presented.

R. Swartz/D. Arnold.

Vote – All in favor.

2. New Business:

Project: Community Health Connections

Mr. Hunt, Senior Project Manager of Martin Brothers Contracting, started off by thanking the committee for their time, and introduced the President of Community Health Connection, John DeMalia, and Jeff Anders, the Facilities Manager for all CHC projects. In addition, Kevin Quinn, President of Quinn Engineering, and his Senior Project Engineer, Chris Keenan, and Stephen Fleshman, Architect.

Mr. Quinn asked Chris Keenan, Sr. Project Manager to display the site plan. Mr. Keenan explained they are proposing a 20,000 square foot building, along with a 100 parking space parking lot. Mr. Keenan noted they recognize the parking lot is supposed to be behind the building per Gardner zoning ordinance, however, are seeking a variance from the ZBA in order to provide parking in front of the building. In addition, proposing access both from Timpany Boulevard (Route 68), and from the Wal-Mart truck access road (not the main access road), through an easement that was provided for this property at the time Wal-Mart was being constructed. Proposing stormwater in the back of the building so it would not be visible from Route 68, as well as proposing a “through connection” for any truck traffic that may come in from Route 68, so they can also exit through the Wal-Mart utility access. There is water and sewer on site via the Wal-Mart development that Wal-Mart proposed as a utility easement across the back of Community Health Connection’s property which Community Health Connections has the right to connect into. Gas is also out on Timpany Boulevard, therefore gas will be brought into the site. The site will be fully landscaped all along the access road, as well as, along Timpany Boulevard as a means of screening the other parking area and the development. There is another half of the parcel that is currently undeveloped, but nothing is being proposed at the moment, however, have provided access to this site via the access road off of Timpany Boulevard.

Mr. DeMalia added they are trying to meet the needs in Gardner since they are at full capacity at the current Community Health Center in Gardner. Mr. DeMalia noted there are specific needs for additional services in Gardner, therefore, will be offering Medical, Dental, Behavioral Health, and Urgent Care for

Gardner and the surrounding communities. Mr. DeMalia stated they believe they are going to be a benefit to the Community.

Questions/Comments/Concerns:

R. Swartz – Planning Board Member on the Development Review Committee:

Noted he read their intent to coordinate with MassDOT regarding access into their property, and suggested having an “access travel lane” along Route 68 going southbound, since the road gets busy at times, and should provide an opportunity for people to turn off, or to limit interference with quick moving traffic by having a right turn traffic lane to make it safer for turning into the Community Health Center property. In addition, believes the access road joining the inlet truck access road with Wal-Mart will get busier.

It was noted, a traffic study currently underway, determined what the City of Gardner is looking for, and confirmed MassDOT will not be involved in this project, as well as no curb cut needed from MassDOT. In addition, the actual area for the Community Health Center project will be directly addressed with the City regarding the Timpany Boulevard access road, as well as the Wal-Mart access road. As mentioned before, the Wal-Mart access road is owned by Wal-Mart, however, will have complete access to this road. Have reached out to Wal-Mart on many occasions, but have not been receptive, so not sure how to address this situation. Therefore, will be working with the City of Gardner for the main access. Further, hoping there will be no need for a traffic signal.

D. Arnold:

Confirmed Route 68 is owned by the City of Gardner, so there is no Massachusetts highway involvement. Mentioned current proposed building, as well as the vacant lot next to it that at some point consider possible expansion. Believes a traffic light should be considered, should it be now, or if there is additional proposed development, at what point the traffic light should be considered. Further, the plan is so conceptual at this point, when the water/ sewer/utility connection plans become available, will take a better look at this. Also propose a left-hand turn lane off Timpany Boulevard going into the property from Hubbardston. T. Beauregard noted the Planning Board may request a third-party opinion regarding the traffic study, consistent with Mr. Swartz’s comment on the left hand turn lane moving south, and Dane’s comment on the left hand turn into the site moving north, and also the need for a traffic signal.

C. Coughlin:

Noted D. Arnold’s point once the water/sewer/utility connection plans become available, will need to have a deeper conversation. Further, stated he has some drawings that show sewer stubs and ties from Wal-Mart’s original sewer layouts that might be helpful when planning, and can email if needed. Same thing with stormwater, once the design becomes available to please send a preliminary copy to him, as well as the traffic study.

R. LaFond:

Said he sees no major issues at this point because everything is very preliminary at this time, however, agrees with Mr. Swartz regarding the approach lane heading south on Route 68 because there will be emergency vehicles, ambulances, MART buses, etc., so the road should not be too narrow, and with buses slowing down, traffic will be backed-up, or potentially cause an accident. Further, noted the parking in the front, as opposed to the rear, therefore, the ZBA will question why. Also, shrubbery and landscaping will be looked at when presented to the ZBA. Mr. Hunt explained they submitted a variance application to the Building Commissioner a few days ago for the parking lot location, and explained the need for the parking lot in the front is for the staff & clients to continue to be similar as they go to the different facilities, and to stay consistent with the model of their projects. Mr. Keenan added drainage is better in the back which allows a longer run for the drainage to get back there. Also, if the parking lot

was up against the stormwater basin, would end up with much more amount of fill for the parking lot. In addition, thoughts were to be similar with Wal-Mart's front parking lot.

J. DeRoy:

Has nothing at this time.

R. Jean:

Noted he has been in talks with the proponents for quite some time now, and have discussed the parking, as well as submitted their variance application. Also, will have more once the plans for the building become available.

L. Saunders:

Has nothing at this time.

L. Butler:

Stated they will be filing with Conservation, and commented she is in favor of the parking lot in the front, to keep it further away from the resource areas, and to keep more of a pervious surface for the stormwater.

G. LaGoy:

Recommended installing a radio box on the property for quicker notification on fire alarms activations.

Mayor Nicholson:

Stated great project for the City.

T. Beauregard:

Commented he assumes they have already reviewed the Zoning Code requirements for Site Plan Approval, and would recommend reviewing again while developing the definitive plans to make sure all requirements are incorporated, including the lighting plan, the photometric plan, a detailed landscape plan, open space requirements/calculations, parking requirements/calculations, dumpster location with pad/enclosed and type of fencing to be used, snow storage on site, water/sewer drainage on utility plan displaying where they are being tie in, and how they are being brought onto the site, signage on building, as well as stand-alone sign location near roadway. In addition, wondering how close the proposed entrance off of Route 68 is from the Wal-Mart entrance, and how far it is from Mill Street. The reply is 400 feet from Wal-Mart entrance, and 385 feet from Mill Street. Asked if there is any other zoning relief needed at this time. The reply was none they are aware of. Asked if they will be designing any underground detention, or infiltration under the parking. The plan is to design everything to flow to a stormwater basin/an open basin, which will be loamed and seeded. If there is difficulty out at Route 68 getting some of that water back there, may end up with a small swale, or small underground chamber system just to collect that water, but the majority of the water will be going into an open basin.

T. Beauregard noted he agrees with the suggestion of a turning lane into the sites which will be addressed, as well as a third party traffic study.

Mr. Fleshman displayed building exterior, and pointed out the main elevation that will face the parking lot on Route 68, as well as the north and south elevations, and the rear of the building that will be facing towards the stormwater pond. In addition, explained there will be a double entrance center, with piers in a natural stone product, a canopy will be projecting out to protect the entrance, signage, a rear loading dock, two exit doors in the rear, and internal roof drains. T. Beauregard asked what the material will be for the main wall. The reply was thinking about using EIFS type of system, which the manufacturer name is Drive-It, and is insulation on the exterior, with color built into the finish. T. Beauregard questioned what type of material. The reply was it is a foam insulation with a coating over the top of it.

Additional Comments:

R. Swartz:

Inquired about any thoughts to building a second floor to the building for expansion. The answer was there are no plans as of right now. Further, asked if solar power is being considered. The reply was it has been considered, and have been doing detailed research, thinking on top of the roof, or possibly covered parking, however, there is plenty of land for solar. Have contacted several different companies. It was noted the Fitchburg facility has solar panels on the roof, and would like to explore for the Gardner facility as well.

R. LaFond:

Commented the ZBA will require lighting, landscaping, and signage plans. Should have a full signage plan as to location, whether illuminated or not, as well as size to help determine where the signs are, entrance/ egress, if the name can be seen on the building, plus the distance from the road. The lighting plans should include location, type, intensity, are they going to face down or outward.

It was noted Shepherd Engineering will be working with National Grid regarding photometric plan.

T. Beauregard added the three plans should be part of the Definitive Plan for the Planning Board as well.

Mr. DeMalia commented on the parking in front of the building, and stated the reason they do this is patient access since many of their patients have low mobility, and have difficulty getting around. In addition, it is easier for patients coming in by bus to be dropped off in front of the building as a shorter distance.

T. Beauregard commented this is a very nice project and fits well on the site.

2. **Other Business.**

None at this time.

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 a.m.