

TOWN PLAN & ZONING COMMISSION

MINUTES

Thursday, July 26, 2012

The Town of Bloomfield Town Plan & Zoning Commission held a meeting on July 26, 2012 scheduled for 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall, 800 Bloomfield Avenue in Bloomfield, Connecticut with the following members present:

Present:
Barry Berson, Chairman
Abraham Ford, Jr.
Pamela Gray
Byron Lester, Secretary
Elene Needelman
Nick Panke
Barbara Reid

Also Present: Thomas Hooper

Absent: Fannie Gabriel
Charlotte Gregg
Alfred LeFebvre
Maureen Sullivan,
Recording Clerk

1. Call to order

Mr. Berson called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

2. Approval of June 28, 2012 Minutes

Mr. Panke made a motion to approve the June 28, 2012 minutes. Ms. Needelman seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

3. Application of ESDM, LLC for a Site Plan Revision and Special Permit to allow outside storage at 23 Britton Drive, I-2 zone.

Mr. Lester read the Legal Notice that appeared in The Hartford Courant on July 13, 2012 and July 20, 2012. Mr. Berson discussed the procedures for Public Hearings.

Mr. Christian Alford, P.E. and Land Surveyor of Alford Associates, discussed the site. Swift Textile Metalizing has been in the building since the early 1990's. The business has experienced growth and last year a parking area was constructed without any approvals. The application was for a new paved parking lot and to remove the recycled asphalt parking lot along with a storm drainage system. There will be enhancements to the wetlands. The new parking lot will have 64 spaces. In addition, the proposal was to relocate the storage containers and office trailers temporarily. The applicant would like to keep the office trailers at the site until March 2013. The applicant received a permit from the Wetlands Commission for the construction and a waiver from the Economic Development Commission. The Economic Development Commission permitted the office trailers to remain through March 2013 and the outside storage containers to be located at the site for another two years. Mr. Hooper's memorandum of July 18, 2012 was discussed.

Mr. Hooper stated work was done without proper approvals. Mr. Hooper discussed his comments in the July 18, 2012 memorandum. The biggest issue was establishing a date when

the storage and office trailers will be removed from the property. The applicant requested removing the office trailers by March 2013 and two years for the storage trailers. Mr. Hooper did not have a problem with this request, but was not in favor of establishing the trailers as permanent situations on the property.

There were no questions from the public.

Questions from the Commission:

Ms. Gray asked if the purpose of the application was the location of the storage and office trailers for a temporary structure to which Mr. Alford responded that was correct.

Mr. Ford discussed the size of the building and asked why additional storage and office space was needed. Mr. Alford responded the business has grown, more employees have been hired and there is more equipment to store. The applicant is in the process of looking for a new space. Mr. Ford asked if the applicant looked into an addition to the building. Mr. Alford replied the applicant would like to find an additional location. Mr. Ford asked if there was room inside the building for the storage trailers to which Mr. Alford replied there is no space.

Ms. Needelman asked how long the applicant will need the Special Permit. Mr. Alford replied until March 2013. The applicant is hoping to find another location and relocate everyone. The applicant accepted March 31, 2013 as the deadline for finding another site. The applicant will retain this site and find another location in addition to this site.

Mr. Lester asked how many employees are anticipated to be working in the office trailer to which Mr. Steven Smith, CEO for Swift Textile, replied the plan is to move the current employees in the trailers to the new manufacturing space. There are currently 8 employees in the trailers, and probably another 20 to 30 employees that would be moved from the trailers.

Mr. Berson asked the timeframe for the storage trailers to which Mr. Alford replied two years.

There were no comments from the public or the Commission.

Mr. Alford made final comments.

Mr. Panke made a motion to close the public hearing. Ms. Needelman seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Mr. Ford made a motion to approve the application of ESDM, LLC for a Site Plan Revision and Special Permit to allow outside storage at 23 Britton Drive, I-2 zone, based on the recommended amendments of March 2013 for removal of the office trailers and August 1, 2014 for removal of the storage trailers. Ms. Gray seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

**4. Application of Alstom Power Inc.
for a Site Plan and Special Permit
for outside storage and 25%
reduction of required parking
spaces at 1461 Blue Hills Avenue,
I-2 zone.**

Mr. Lester read the Legal Notice that appeared in The Hartford Courant on July 13, 2012 and July 20, 2012. Mr. Berson discussed the procedures for Public Hearings.

Mr. Dave Ziaks from F.A. Hesketh & Associates, Inc. submitted paperwork to Mr. Hooper. The location of the current facility and the site were discussed.

Mr. Gary Lexa from Alstom Power gave a background on the company. The applicant is getting six permits from the State; two are air permits for the test facility and the other four permits are regarding water.

Mr. Ziaks discussed the site plan. The first floor of the building will be about 30,000 square feet and a second floor over the top portion of the building will be about 10,000 square feet. The applicant requested a permanent parking waiver of 25%. The applicant needs 80 parking spaces and with the 25% parking waiver it would be 60 parking spaces on the site. The applicant will construct 42 paved parking spaces now and defer another 18 parking spaces. Lot coverage was discussed. The entire industrial portion of the site will be fenced in and there will be gates at each driveway. When the site is not occupied the gates will be closed and security clearance will be required. A water quality basin will be constructed that will handle most of the runoff from the parking lot. The cooling pond, outdoor storage, landscaping plan and storm drainage was discussed. The DEP will be involved in the permitting process. A portion of the building height will be 81 feet to accommodate specialized cooling equipment and the exhaust stack from the plant. The applicant discussed the outdoor storage request associated with the operations of the facility. Mr. Hooper's memorandum of July 18, 2012 was discussed. The applicant will work with staff on the parking lot lighting.

Mr. Len Bertaux, Principal of Bertaux & Iwerks Architects in Boston, Massachusetts, discussed the architecture of the building and the material that will be used. The Alstom Company was discussed.

Mr. Hooper asked the applicant to discuss a normal season. Mr. Lexa, Project Manager for building the new facility, stated the company spends an enormous amount of time preparing to test, then a short period of time testing. The process was discussed. On average the company burns about 450 tons of coal over the year; that is equivalent to running a coal fired power plant for one hour. The pollution control equipment on the facility is the same as any other plant in the country. The company is developing processes to reduce the pollution even more.

Mr. Hooper complimented the applicant and the team on putting together the proposal, particularly the architecture of the building. The parking spaces were discussed. The Fire Marshall is all set with the plans. Mr. Hooper will finalize the details on the lighting with the applicant. The equipment will be moved from the Windsor location to the Bloomfield location.

Questions from the public:

Mr. Stan Misunas, family owns houses on Woodland Avenue, was concerned with the environmental issues. Mr. Misunas asked how much water will be pumped out of the ground to go into the cooling pond. Flooding in the area was discussed. Mr. Ziaks discussed how the recycling system works. There is no net increase in water discharge from the site.

Mr. Misunas asked how much water is pumped out when in operation. Mr. Ziaks replied the wells are several hundred gallons a minute during the operation time period. There is no new water being added to the groundwater in the area.

Ms. Lisa Misunas, of Woodland Avenue, asked how many weeks the operation takes place. Ms. Masunus also asked about the long term environmental effects and commented about environmental cleanup going on at the current facility. Mr. Lexa stated the number of weeks this will run is not fixed for any one year, but records indicate about five to six weeks of operation during the year. When it runs, it runs 24 hours a day for that period. The environmental concerns on the site were asbestos on the buildings. The equipment being brought to the site is metal, structural steel and pipe.

Ms. Misunas asked how much coal the applicant requested to burn and if the applicant was looking to grow the company. Mr. Lexa stated the applicant will bring the larger facilities with them, so they will use them in the future but the applicant's intent is to use them as little as possible. The best indication for use of the facility is how many tons per year they are burning of fuel, average of 450 tons. The permits to the DEP limit the pollutants that can be put into the atmosphere and are under review with the DEP.

Questions from the Commission:

Ms. Reid asked about the types of testing at the site. Mr. Lexa explained what the company produces. This facility will service the company's business for fossil fuel plants. Since its

inception, the company has tried to come up with clean technology for these fuels that reduce the emissions and make them as efficient as possible.

Mr. Ford asked about the 25% reduction in parking. Mr. Ziaks replied originally the parking was from 56 to 42 spaces, but with the additional square footage in the building it actually goes from 80 to 60 spaces. The applicant will build 42 spaces, and request to differ the construction of the other 18 spaces. Mr. Ziaks believed the deferral would be forever, but if the applicant needed the parking it could be added.

Mr. Lester asked Mr. Hooper if this application is approved as far as the reduction in parking and the outside storage, is what happens with the outstanding permits between the applicant and the state. Mr. Hooper stated the air quality permits and the water quality permits have nothing to do with parking requirements.

Mr. Panke commented on a great presentation. Mr. Panke asked if some of the employees will use public transportation to get to the facility to which Mr. Ziaks responded it is unknown, there is a bus line so the employees would have the opportunity. If the numbers were there, the applicant could talk to the DOT for a stop but more than likely the employees would have to walk a bit down the road. Mr. Panke discussed the bike racks and asked if there will be sidewalks for the bikers. Mr. Ziaks responded the master plan for bikers is to use the shoulder of Blue Hills Avenue.

Mr. Berson asked why it was necessary to use well when the MDC has water at the site. Mr. Ziaks responded it is greener and the applicant will extract the ground water and return it. Mr. Berson asked the temperature of the cooling water when it hits the pond. Mr. Mark Avakian, special consultant to Alstom, replied about 120 to 130 degrees when it leaves the process and it travels about ½ mile and probably cools down to about 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Mr. Berson asked if that will deter vegetated growth to which Mr. Avakian responded he did not think so. The MDC does not encourage the applicant to use MDC water, the MDC prefers the applicant to use well. Mr. Ziaks discussed the vegetation in the pond will acclimate to the type of vegetation that will not be concerned with 90 degree water. Mr. Berson asked if there will ever be other fossil fuels used. Mr. Lexa explained the applicant burns coal, occasionally heavy fuel oils and is looking for a contract to burn biomass, woodchips or grasses or vines. The applicant burns a variety of fuels, but is all under the same permit with the DEP. The applicant uses the environmental control equipment and air pollution control equipment. Mr. Berson asked the process if there is any spillage of coal on-site and Mr. Lexa discussed the delivery of coal and discussed the process if anything is spilled. There is no air pollutant component.

Comments from the public:

Mr. Stan Misunas commented about the overflow of the water. Right now when the pond gets overloaded with water it floods Mr. Misunas' area. Mr. Ziaks commented it needs to be kept into perspective as to the water volume and the fact that the applicant is removing water in the ground. These are not drilled wells, so essentially the applicant is returning the water to the same portion of the earth that it came from. This is sporadic use of the system and the system is going to be shut down. The Connecticut DEP will be looking at this in great detail.

Comments from the Commission:

Mr. Panke thanked Mr. Ziaks for a great presentation, thanked Alstom for coming to Bloomfield and praised the architects for bringing the proposal before the Commission.

Mr. Hooper stated the required paperwork has been submitted.

Mr. Lester made a motion to close the public hearing. Ms. Needelman seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Mr. Lester made a motion to approve the application of Alstom Power Inc. for a Special Permit for outside storage and grant the 25% reduction in the required parking spaces at 1461 Blue Hills Avenue, I-2 zone, with all staff comments. Mr. Panke seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

5. **Application of Frank C. Borawski for a Site Plan Revision to construct a connector from 105 Highland Park Road to 125 Highland Park Road.**
6. **Application of Frank C. Borawski for a Site Plan Revision to construct a connector from 125 Highland Park Road to 105 Highland Park Road.**

Items 5 and 6 were heard together.

Mr. Jack Krudwig of PDS Engineering and Construction stated the application is for a simple connector between two buildings. The building is in existence for the client who purchased the adjacent building. The building needs to be where the client is putting product and a 1,000 square foot connector building was needed.

Mr. Hooper stated the two properties, while under the same ownership, are in different names which caused a problem that could not eliminate the property line in between them. The waivers received were discussed. The connector is 42 feet long by 24 feet wide for the movement of goods and materials and services between the two buildings.

There were no questions from the Commission.

Comments from the Commission:

Mr. Berson asked why the applicant didn't form one corporation and blend the two into one. Mr. Hooper replied because of the mortgages.

Ms. Needelman made a motion to approve the application of Frank C. Borawski for a Site Plan Revision to construct a connector from 105 Highland Park Road and 125 Highland Park Road and also to approve the application of Frank C. Borawski for a Site Plan Revision to construct a connector from 125 Highland Park Road and 105 Highland Park Road. Mr. Lester seconded the motions and both were approved unanimously.

7. Article re: Public Hearing Curfews

There was discussion about public hearings running late. Mr. Hooper will review what other towns are doing regarding public hearing curfews.

Mr. Berson stated if the meeting is nearing 11:00 p.m., it can be brought up about the lateness of the meeting.

8. Adjournment

Ms. Gray made a motion for the meeting to adjourn. Mr. Lester seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Byron Lester, Secretary

Maureen Sullivan, Recording Secretary