



Planning Board Meeting
Monday, March 22, 2010
Council Chambers, City Hall at 7:00 pm

Meeting Minutes
Approved June 14, 2010

I. Roll Call

Present: Peter Guillette, Adam Burke, Erwin Caplan, Catherine MacKenzie, Richard Wahrlich

Absent: Deborah Cutts, Brian Rapp, Lori Richardson

City Staff: Guy Santagate, City Manager; Mike McCrory, Interim City Planner; Nancy Merrill, Director of Planning and Development; Katrina Spaulding, Business Development Specialist; Kelly LeBlanc, Administrative Assistant

Mr. Santagate, City Manager, addresses the board. He is in support of the two agenda items. Stuctal has purchased here in Claremont when they had the opportunity to purchase in other locations and other options. We as a city are excited to have them here to improve the site, building, economy in Claremont and broadening the tax base. They have been a wonderful partner and have worked through the issues that have been presented. Mr. Santagate stressed the importance of Structal as a long term presence in Claremont in the present and the future.

Innovative homes represents a local growing company that is improving the land which is located in a gateway position leading into the City. They are working with Preferred Building Systems which is another Claremont Company which shows how community business works together.

Mr. Santagate thanked the Planning Board for their time and commitment to the City. This commitment leads to the positive growth. Once we come out of the recession good and smart growth will feed into the City's number one goal of economic development.

II. Review of Meeting Minutes from March 8, 2010

Motion to: Approve the March 8, 2010 meeting minutes as presented.

Made by: Catherine MacKenzie **Second by:** Erwin Caplan **Vote:** Unanimous

III. Old Business

- **(2010-0004) Innovative Homes – 798 Main Street** –Applicant seeks approval for a Site Plan on three contiguous lots to construct an office building, garage, and concrete pads for five temporary display modular residential homes. Innovative Homes of NE LLC shall be purchasing Tax Map 68 Lots 14 & 15 from the City of Claremont. Merger is pending for the two City lots. Properties located: **798 Main Street, Claremont 03743**. Tax Map 68-13, 68-14, and 68-15; Zone I-2.

Project Description

This proposal includes the merger and redevelopment of two industrially zoned parcels at the above referenced address. The majority of site work will take place on the two city-owned parcels: Lots 14 & 15. This proposal includes the merger of the two lots and the purchase of the city-owned parcels by Innovative Homes of New England. The ultimate development proposal, as summarized in the enclosed plan set, is a show-area for model manufactured homes. The site plan includes improvements to the property access, access improvements through the project area to the adjacent parcel (Map 68, Lot 13), construction of an office and accessory structures on the primary site (Map 68, Lots 14 & 15).

Primary Planning Considerations

This site has a somewhat complex composition with regard to lot configuration, access, topography, and adjacency to the Sugar River. The following headings address the major planning considerations for this site:

Adjacent Water Resource: The southerly border of the project area is the Sugar River streambank. The banks of the Sugar River are regulated by both the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) Shoreland Protection Program and the City of Claremont Streambank Overlay Zoning District.

- The Claremont Streambank District extends 75 FT from the edge of the Sugar River ordinary high water. The Claremont Zoning Ordinance prohibits specific uses and activities within this overlay district. The proposed site plan as presented does not conflict with the Streambank District.
- The NHDES Shoreland Protection Buffer extends 250 FT from the edge of the Sugar River ordinary high water. The NHDES reviews and permits projects within the Shoreland Protection Buffer. This project will be subject to this state permitting requirement. The NHDES takes a comprehensive review of the likely impacts of development on the adjacent water body including stormwater runoff and other potential pollution sources.
- The Sugar River 100-year flood zone extends onto the subject parcels, but does not encroach upon the proposed development area.

Easements on the Property: As the plans indicate there are a substantial number of easements crossing the project area. Staff understands that the development proposal abides by the terms of these easements. Additionally, the plan will require relocation of an access easement from Main Street to Map 68, Lot 13. The reconfigured access easement shall follow the gravel drive that passes along the westerly and southerly portions of the project area to the Map 68, Lot 13.

Site Plan Submission Requirements: Overall, the application package addresses the submission requirements prescribed in the Site Plan Regulations. The following bullets summarize certain aspects of the project:

- The site access will improve the existing driveway access. The narrowest point along the driveway is 20 FT and is bounded by two stone monument posts on either side of the driveway. This geometric constriction may result in access problems and vehicular conflicts, particularly if there is truck movement to or from the site where the truck is hauling entire house sections. Otherwise, site circulation and parking layout appears to be sufficiently safe for regular access to and from the subject parcel and Map 68, Lot 13.
- The application materials received do not address traffic volumes generated by the proposed development.
- Pedestrian walkways are provided on the site to allow for visitors and staff to circulate on the site without substantial risk due to vehicular traffic. There is no designated pedestrian access to Main Street. The character of the site and

surrounding development does not necessarily require pedestrian access from the parcel to the public right-of-way.

- The appearance and scale of the proposed buildings on the site is not out of character with existing uses on the property and adjacent properties. The size of the proposed buildings and configuration of the model houses to be shown on the site are allowable in this zoning district.
- Landscaping on the site is limited to planted areas near the proposed buildings and is taking precautions to limit the amount of clearing required to develop the site. The Applicant is paying particular attention to maintaining vegetation near the Sugar River.
- The proposed project will utilize existing on-site water supply and wastewater disposal facilities. The application materials received do not address the adequacy of these facilities to serve the proposed development.
- The Claremont Fire Department reviewed the proposed building layout and will be working with the Applicant regarding fire safety measures on-site.
- The plan includes four exterior light fixtures, which are detailed at the back of the plan set. The application materials do not include any site lighting diagrams or specifications for the light fixtures regarding whether the fixtures minimize glare that may affect adjacent property owners or passing vehicle operators. There is no indication whether there will be building-mounted lights on-site.
- The application package does not include a summary of the proposed hours of operation.
- The application package does not include any waiver requests.

Standard Conditions

1. The applicant shall obtain and receive approval for all necessary permits as determined by the City of Claremont Public Works Department.
2. The applicant shall obtain and receive approval for all necessary permits as determined by the State of New Hampshire. Copies of these permits shall be provided to the City Planning and Development Department for the property file.
3. The applicant shall obtain and receive approval for all necessary permits as determined by the City of Claremont Building Inspector.
4. The owner/applicant shall notify the Zoning Administrator and Building Inspector when the project construction is complete. Completion of the project shall be in substantial compliance with the plans submitted for review and all conditions of approval.
5. Prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy all required improvements shall be completed in place unless the applicant provides the city security for the completion of said improvements, in accordance with Article XI of the City of Claremont Site Plan Regulations.
6. The Approved Site Plan is valid for three (3) years from the date of approval. If a building permit has not been issued before the three-year deadline, the site plan is no longer valid and must be recertified through the Planning Board.

Site Specific Conditions:

1. The applicant shall shield all lighting so as to not intrude on adjacent properties.

Technical Review of the Innovative Homes proposal has been conducted by City staff. .

Deb Brewster, Project Engineer with TF Moran, has been working with Jim Baird and Fred Gregoire of Innovative Homes. Both Mr. Baird and Mr. Gregoire are present at the Planning Board Meeting.

INNOVATIVE HOMES

Ms. Brewster distributes the revised existing Conditions plan to the PB consisting of Lots 13 [east], 14 [west] and 15 [west]; Lots 14 and 15 are owned by the City of Claremont.

This revised proposal is looking to merge lots 14 and 15. The merged lot would be a little over 6.2 acres; the second lot has the existing residence and business located in the garage (Lot 13).

Constraints include the Sugar River (South of site), Route 12 corridor (North of site) and multiple power easements (National Grid, PSNH, and Central Vermont Power Station). Innovative Homes is looking to stay outside of the easements with the exception of driveway maintenance

The applicant works with Preferred Building Systems (a division of LaValleys) to architect/plan and erect homes desired by buyers. The office would be located in the central portion of the site and utilize the current driveway.

The proposal is to relocate the driveway from the center to along the south. There will be an office and accessory structures (5) placed on slabs to replicate model homes. Models will be changed out periodically depending on economy and trends. Accent lighting will be located along the walkway and on the driveway. Lantern/residential style lighting will be used.

Customer parking will be located next to the office. An access easement will be constructed for lot 13. Four (4) state permits are required and in process: (1) Shoreland Protection, (2) DOT Driveway permit: received and approved, (3) AoT Permit, (4) Septic Approval (test pits completed)

The accessory structures will not be residential and will be examples of model homes. Utilities: septic and water will not be connected; Gas/heating will be utilized. The office and garage will use Septic, Water (Well) and electricity. Restroom facilities will be located in the garage and office buildings.

Andrew Austin inquires if the applicant will be able to see the landscaping and homes from the road.

Ms. Brewster states that a free-standing monument sign would be proposed including landscaping around the stone pillars and accent lighting. The homes will be visible from the road and the objective is to have these homes as an attraction and promotion of Claremont upon entrance into the city.

Mr. Austin inquires if these homes would be heated in the winter. Ms. Brewster stated the homes will be minimally heated.

Currently, the heat source will be gas / propane, but geo-thermal technology is an alternative option currently under research. Propane tanks will be underground if utilized as the heat source.

Chair Guillette inquires about the stone monuments and how access will be impeded if there is a truck hauling a modular home.

Currently, the driveway necks down to 20'. Innovative Homes is willing to expand to 24' for consistency and accommodation.

Chair Guillette inquires about the type of lighting. Is this lighting going to interfere with traffic or neighbors on Main Street?

Ms. Brewster states that there is only one type of residential fixture that incorporated down cast lighting. The 4 fixtures will "throw" illumination in the correct direction away from traffic. The fixture can accommodate a shield on the light source.

Mr. Austin asks about potential traffic safety issues along Route 12.

Ms. Brewster responds that the DOT has approved the location and passed the DOT site criteria.

Chair Guillette inquired about hours of operation.

6AM – Crew

Office/Public -8AM-8PM (M-Sa), 9AM/10AM-5PM (Sunday)

Chair Guillette inquired if both structures will be utilized.

James Baird, owner of Innovative Homes of New England, stated they will still use the buildings in their current use capacity. The reason for an additional building is for expansion and storage of trucks.

The construction was held off due to pole movement and power meter changes. IHNE will incorporate a silo style structure for the power meter/poles.

Motion to: Accept the application as complete

Made by: Andrew Austin

Second:

Richard Wahrlich

Vote: Unanimous

Open Public Hearing

No Abutters Present

Rusty Fowler, citizen of Claremont, asks how many times a week the homes would be going in and out as it is a 50mph zone.

Ms. Brewster states that the homes, once trucked in, will stay at their location for 2-3 years. There may be an occasional year if the model is not showing well or 5 years if a model is preferred. There will not be a high turn over.

Mr. Austin confirms they are showing homes and *not* selling them from that area.

Rusty Fowler would like to add that he is in full support of the project and believes it will be an attraction to the city.

Close Public Hearing

Motion: To approve the application citing the standard conditions and site specific conditions.

Made By: Andrew Austin

Second: Catherine MacKenzie

Vote: Unanimous

Mike McCrory states that there was discussion on drive way width.

Addition of Site Specific Condition:

Ms. Brewster stated that IHNE will widen their driveway from 20' to 24' to keep a contiguous width and allow for landscaping.

Motion: To approve the amendment to widen the driveway from 20' to 24'.

Made By: Andrew Austin

Second: Catherine MacKenzie

Vote: Unanimous

IV. New Business

- o **(2010-0005) Structural Bridge- 386 River Road** – Applicant seeks to raze 259,500 sq ft of structure; reconstructing 163,500 sq ft structure for a total footprint of a 285,000 sq ft industrial building. Applicant seeks a relocation of the parking lot, expansion of the gantry crane, proposed access to Grissom lane and an expansion of the laydown area. **386 River Road, Claremont, NH 03743.** Tax Map 175 Lot 5; Zone I-2.

Mike McCrory, Interim City Planner, states that the site plan had changed from the packets that were received by the Planning Board. The new proposal was reviewed with the Planning Board. Changes on the revised site plan were reviewed by the board.

The overall proposal remains the same. The change to the Site Plan is due to negotiations to relocate the electric substation on site. Due to cost the applicant opted to change the site layout versus moving the substation.

This hearing of the PB can be continued to the next meeting if it is in the boards' best interest. If the board is satisfied with the revisions to the application it can be deemed complete tonight.

Project Description

This project proposal includes substantial renovation to the existing heavy industrial site. The Owner, Structural, proposes to redevelop the site to increase on-site production efficiency and allow for future growth as the use of the site increases to its proposed build-out, which will include approximately 200 employees (total) working two shifts per day during the work week. The proposed amendment to the existing site plan includes:

1. The proposed building renovation will include razing approximately 246,725 SF of the existing building and reconstructing approximately 100,530 SF. The resultant building footprint will be approximately 220,090 SF.
2. The overall site improvements will include construction of a gravel laydown area at the north end of the site. Generally, the laydown area is for the storage of raw materials or manufactured product.
3. The work area perimeter will be fenced for safety and security purposes. The paved portion of the site, which includes portions of the concrete slab that had previously constituted the floor of the building in some places, will be utilized as part of the manufacturing process. This process, by necessity, requires circulating large steel members in and out of the building.

Failed negotiations over relocation of the existing power substation at the east side of the existing building made it necessary for the Applicant to revise the site layout from the March 2, 2010 plan set presented as part of the original Site Plan Application. The fundamental scope and intent of the proposed Site Plan has not changed. The changes between the March 2 and March 22, 2010 revised plans are principally related to retaining the existing substation and working around it.

III. **Primary Planning Considerations**

This application is for an Amendment to an Approved Site Plan. The proposed amendment does not, in the opinion of Staff, represent a substantial increase or alteration to the historic use of the site. The proposed amendment is necessary, as stated by the Agent, to promote the full and efficient use of the site by the Applicant.

Site Plan Submission Requirements: Overall, the revised plans complement the existing application package for Site Plan Review, as prescribed in the Site Plan Regulations. The following bullets summarize certain aspects of the proposal:

- The Amended Site Plan will reduce the total curb cuts along River Road from three to two. The design of the access points will be specifically engineered to accommodate larger trucks that haul material and product to and from the site. Primary trucking route to and from the site will be along Grissom Lane.
- The estimated daily traffic demand for the site will be approximately 400 one-way vehicle trips, not including truck traffic. The total traffic demand for this site will likely not cause undue congestion along River Road.
- The arrangement of lighting on the site will provide the minimum necessary lighting on the site, in the opinion of Staff. The type of light fixtures will limit the amount of light pollution onto neighboring properties and the adjacent roadway.
- The stormwater management plan will be generally unchanged from the current conditions. The Agent for the Applicant has stated that, due to on-site soil characteristics and the limited change in impervious surface area on the site, drainage characteristics for the site will be generally equivalent before and after redevelopment.
- The character of the neighboring properties, generally commercial and industrial in nature, and the historic use of the site as a heavy manufacturing property indicates that there will be limited impact on surrounding aesthetics, noise, or other features that may be objectionable. It is important to note that a representative for the Applicant has indicated that it will soon be acquiring 412 River Road, which is the closest existing residence to the subject parcel.
- Parking on-site has sufficient capacity to accommodate a 100-person shift, plus additional spaces in the event that there is shift change-over.

This application, with the March 22, 2010 revision of the Site Plan, carries with it waiver requests by the Agent:

1. **Drainage Analysis:** The Agent requests that the requirement for a full drainage analysis be waived due to the fact that the majority of the site will remain unchanged from the perspective of drainage design. The stormwater management plan will be subject to review by the NH Department of Environmental Services Alteration of Terrain department. The Agent requests that the Site Plan be approved with the condition that the City Staff review and approve the proposed drainage plan and calculations when they are complete.
2. **State Permits:** At the present time, the Applicant is seeking permits from the NH Department of Transportation for reconfiguration of the site driveways, and NH Department of Environmental Services permits for wetlands impacts and stormwater management. The Agent requests that final approval of the Site Plan be granted

upon the condition that the Applicant provide copies of the referenced permits once they have been issued by the respective state agencies.

IV. Standard Conditions

Conditions Precedent

7. The applicant shall obtain and receive approval for all necessary permits as determined by the City of Claremont Public Works Department.
8. The applicant shall obtain and receive approval for all necessary permits as determined by the State of New Hampshire.

Conditions Subsequent

1. The applicant shall obtain and receive approval for all necessary permits as determined by the City of Claremont Building Inspector.
2. The owner/applicant shall notify the Zoning Administrator and Building Inspector when the project construction is complete. Completion of the project shall be in substantial compliance with the plans submitted for review and all conditions of approval.
3. Prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy all required improvements shall be completed in place unless the Applicant provides the city security for the completion of said improvements, in accordance with Article XI of the City of Claremont Site Plan Regulations.
4. The Structural Site Plan is valid for three (3) years from the date of approval. If a building permit has not been issued before the three-year deadline, the site plan is no longer valid and must be recertified through the Planning Board.

V. Site Specific Conditions:

Conditions Precedent

1. The applicant shall provide final design plans for final review and approval by City Staff. Any alterations to the approved Site Plan, if deemed by Staff to be substantial in nature, shall require review by the full Planning Board as an Amendment to the Site Plan.

Conditions Subsequent

2. The Applicant shall maintain the site according to best management practices for per conditions of approval by this Planning Board and other municipal, state and federal permits, as well as applicable state and federal regulations.

The Planning Board has no objection to hearing the new proposal.

The new proposal redevelops the Structural Site at 386 River Road.

Jeff Kevan, TF Moran Engineer, provides color copies of the site plan to the board.

The applicant obtained a Variance for the expansion of the Gantry Crane from the ZBA. The site layout has been modified to incorporate the Gantry Crane Variance and allow the substation to remain in its current location.

There is a perimeter fence around the building for safety and access points have been restricted from 3 to 2. Proposal of a larger laydown area in the north. The site will be utilized in the same capacity as previously proposed.

There will be a maximum of 200 total employees (2 shifts of 100 employees). Average 400 vehicle trips per day; this does not include truck traffic. Truck trips will primarily follow Grissom Lane.

The amended site plans shows a reduced number of access points. The applicant intends to manage storm water on site. AoT (NH DES Alteration of Terrain) permit needed which will be applied for with the state.

Tony Levesque, Project and Safety Manager from Structal Bridge, provides a brief history of the Company. Structal Bridge purchased Eastern Bridge in 2007. The company purchased the building in November 2009. This renovation had been in the planning stages since the building was purchased. Structal fabricates and produces steel for bridges/highways and is looking to become the market stronghold for US Bridges. Structal will be hosting State DOT and officials.

The technical footprint of the building will get smaller after the renovation and aid in optimizing the efficiency of the plant. Structal has received approval from the CC and ZBA.

Currently there are 83 employees but the goal is to be at 160-200 employees in three years. Structal has teamed-up with River Valley Technical School to educate welders and bridge manufacturers. There are currently two shifts at Structal; a full 1st shift and a skeleton crew on 3rd. The hope is to extend third shift into a full crew.

Mr. Kevan, TF Moran, presents the revised Site Plan to the Planning Board.

The front wing will be removed from the building. Part of the rear of the building will be removed to accommodate the Gantry Crane and Substation. The proposed driveway to Grissom lane has been eliminated so that the new driveway will be more direct. The final stage of the renovation project will be a paint operation booth.

The concrete pad perimeter will remain but the roof and portion of the building will be removed and reconstructed.

162 parking spaces were proposed.

The Conservation Commission is working with Structal regarding a wetlands application.

Utilities – Sewer, Water, and Electric – Will be maintained in their current location

Traffic Summary – Approximately 3 trucks will go in/out on a daily basis as well as employees

The renovation of current site will enhance the aesthetics of the parcel.

Two temporary tents will be utilized for paint operations. These structures will be removed when renovations are complete. Debris steel and metal will be removed from the site.

The current operation pad is up four (4) feet from the proposed site which will require regarding the site for a smooth transition from the old concrete pad to the surrounding area.

The State of NH - Authorized FILTERRA, a Stormwater Bioretention System, that will help filter and discharge the runoff. AoT approved.

Chair Guillette inquired about how often are filtration systems will need to be changed.

Mr. Kevan stated the bark mulch would be changed out annually but the rest of the system does not need to be changed.

Lighting System will be a 30ft high shoeboxed system. Perimeter lighting and building lighting to be included (when finalized).

There is almost no landscaping to contend with as this is an industrial site and remains operational. Snow storage areas identified.

A monument style sign will be located next to the driveway

There are two proposed Wavers required by the applicant:

1. Drainage Analysis: The Agent requests that the requirement for a full drainage analysis be waived due to the fact that the majority of the site will remain unchanged from the perspective of drainage design. The stormwater management plan will be subject to review by the NH Department of Environmental Services Alteration of Terrain department. The Agent requests that the Site Plan be approved with the condition that the City Staff review and approve the proposed drainage plan and calculations when they are complete.
2. State Permits: At the present time, the Applicant is seeking permits from the NH Department of Transportation for reconfiguration of the site driveways, and NH Department of Environmental Services permits for wetlands impacts and stormwater management. The Agent requests that final approval of the Site Plan be granted upon the condition that the Applicant provide copies of the referenced permits once they have been issued by the respective state agencies.

Other Representatives Present on behalf of Structal Bridge:

Robert Richard, GM Structal Bridge

Mike Donahue, Aries Engineering

Connie Lane, Orr & Reno

Open Public Hearing

Rusty Fowler would like to stress the message of Mr. Santagate and agrees that he would like to see this project succeed. Mr. Fowler is a member of the Conservation Commission and has toured the site and notes that the wetlands are manmade and any improvements made will be an improvement to the site. There is an appreciation for taking this old building and renovating. Mr. Fowler urges the board to give approval for the application.

Close Public Hearing

Mr. Levesque states that shipments over 100ft are accompanied by police transport.

Mr. Kevan states that one of the intents of the project is to start moving projects by rail.

Motion to: Consider the application as complete

Made by: Richard Warhlich **Second:** Andrew Austin **Vote:** Unanimous

Motion to: Approval of Wavers: (1) Drainage Analysis (2) State Permits

Made by: Andrew Austin **Second:** Erwin Caplan **Vote:** Unanimous

Motion to: Site Plan Approval as presented with standard conditions and site specific conditions as listed in the City Staff Report

Made by: Andrew Austin **Second:** Erwin Caplan **Vote:** Unanimous

V. Reports from Boards and Commissions

VI. Other

VII. Master Plan Sub-Committee Appointments

Motion to: Approve Applications submitted for Master Plan Appointments

Made by: Andrew Austin **Second:** Catherine MacKenzie **Vote:** Unanimous

Mr. McCrory confirmed that the Conservation Committee will be working with the City on the Natural Resources Chapter of the Master Plan

Comments on the Draft MP Transportation Chapter:

Mr. Austin states that he believed that the traffic count will need to be updated.

Mr. McCrory states they should be able to get data through 2009 but post processing is conducted by the DOT. The raw data might appear skewed when compared to the DOT report.

Nancy Merrill, Director of Planning and Development, informs the Planning Board that a Citizen's committee wrote the draft MP Transportation Chapter. The Chapter has also been presented to the MP Advisory committee and the City welcomes citizen input. In the Fall of 2010 there will be public hearings that will also provide for citizen's input.

Hard copies are available at the Visitor's Center and Fiske Free Library and the draft chapter will also be posted on the city web site for review and comment.

Chair Guillette briefly reviews the 8 objectives and roads and intersections in need of critical upgrades for the benefit of the viewing audience.

Mr. McCrory reports on a recent change of notification concerning abutters of upstream dams or rivers. The classification of the dam is a minimum of 6' but there is no differentiation. This has run under the radar but was enacted in July 2009.

There will be a public forum on Wednesday night, March 26th, regarding workforce housing located at the Grantham Town Building in the lower meeting room.

VIII. Correspondence

IX. Adjournment

Motion to: Adjourn

Made by: Erwin Caplan **Second:** Richard Wahrlich **Vote:** Unanimous

Meeting Adjourned at 8:48PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly LeBlanc
Administrative Assistant

