



Town of Reading
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To: Zoning Board of Appeals / Board of Selectmen / Community Planning and Development Commission / Development Review Team staff
CC: Matt Zuker & Ken Chase, MKM Reading / Geoff Engler, consultant
From: Julie Mercier, Community Development Director
Date: July 21, 2016
Re: Reading Village 40B – Status Update

This memo is intended as an update to the ZBA from staff on progress made since June 23rd.

New Information from the Applicant

The Applicant has provided the following new information, which has been posted to the website:

- Revised Presentation, dated 6/27, including Ground Floor dimensions, new elevations, and a revised Shadow Study.
- Parking Waiver Summary & Parking Inventory/Regulatory map of project area.
- In-line responses, prepared by Vanasse & Associates Inc., to the 7/13 Traffic Peer Review.
- Supplemental Response, prepared by Vanasse & Associates Inc., to the 7/13 Traffic Peer Review.
- Revised List of Requested Waivers.

Peer Review Reports

The following peer review reports have been received and posted to the website:

- Architectural Peer Review Phase 2, prepared by TBA Architects, Inc., dated 7/15/16, revised 7/20/16 to include comments on materials from Applicant dated 6/27.
- Traffic & Parking Peer Review, prepared by Green International Affiliates Inc, dated 7/13/16.

The Town has not received an Engineering Peer Review for the new design. It is anticipated that the Applicant will be providing revised Site Plans to the Town that incorporate the feedback from the Architecture and Traffic/Parking Peer Review reports. At that time, the revised plans will be sent to Nitsch Engineering for review. The Water/Sewer Capacity review will be provided at a later date as well.

Planning staff were involved in conversations between the development team and the peer review consultants on July 18th and 20th. Town staff also met with the Applicant on July 19th to discuss potential ways to address the need for visitor parking. Though there is still outstanding information needed, these conversations were productive.

Feedback from Staff

The revised plan submission was forwarded to Town staff on June 23rd. Town staff had an internal meeting to discuss the new plans on July 20th. The following comments were made:

Fire Department:

- The building will need to be sprinklered.
- EMS vehicles do not have to access the parking podium; street access is sufficient.
- Building height is no longer an issue.

- Building Permit plans will be reviewed by Fire Plan Reviewer for compliance with Fire Code – 70% design plans should be provided as soon as possible to get this review under way.

DPW / Engineering:

- Developer will be required to pay I&I Fee as well as costs to upgrade utilities as needed.
- Utility information is needed to determine service extensions (i.e. high pressure gas).
- Vertical curbing along Prescott Street as provided is preferred; no parking should be allowed on public sidewalk.

Planning / Town Manager:

- Landscape Plan should show public sidewalks.
- Applicant should consider revising landscaping at edge of building – perhaps pavers with groundcover could be provided instead of sod and bushes.
- Benches, bike racks, and other public amenities should be added to site where possible.
- Entrances/Exits could be challenging for vehicles pulling out if sight lines are blocked.
- Applicant should clarify loading/unloading and trash removal operations.
- How many existing on-street parking spaces will be lost?
- Construction staging should be discussed; will be important to manage properly.

Recommended Process for ZBA Meeting on July 21st

- Call to Order
- Chair – read Legal Ad and Ground Rules for Public Meetings
- Chair – give brief overview of Board process with this Application
- Applicant – provide update of progress since June 23rd
- Peer Review Consultants – present findings
- Applicant – opportunity to respond
- Board – discussion and questions
- Public Comment
- Board – determine next steps, date of continued hearing on this Application
 - August 4th – likely too soon for turn-around on civil peer review
 - August 18th – recommended, though 2 members will not be present
 - September 1st – not recommended, conflicts with important community meeting
 - September 15th – still open
- Adjourn

Outstanding Information

The following information has been requested and should be provided by the Applicant:

- Revised Site Plans that depict grading, utilities, drainage, bike racks, setback dimensions, etc.
- Additional data to justify the parking ratio
- Strategy for visitor parking & how it will be managed
- 3D graphics of the building in its neighborhood context
- Dimensioned elevations
- Landscaping – additional information regarding screening, public amenities & lighting
- Operations & Maintenance Plans that address snow removal, trash pick-up, loading/unloading, management of common areas, landscape maintenance, EMS protocols, etc.

Timeline

- Hearing Opened: February 4th
- Halfway Point (90 Days): May 3rd
- 180 Days: August 1st
- Extension of Time of 91 days: October 31st
- Today: July 21st (102 days left)
- Next Hearing: Draft Decision will be prepared

Ongoing Staff Efforts

- Coordination between and phone calls with the peer reviewers and the Applicant.
- Continued documentation of correspondence from abutters.
- Maintenance of a spreadsheet to track the Applicant's responses to concerns.
- Uploading of documentation to Town website: <http://www.readingma.gov/planning-division/pages/reading-village>