



**Town of Reading**  
**16 Lowell Street**  
**Reading, MA 01867**

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**January 8, 2018**

## Site Plan Review **DECISION**

Project: 230 (aka 218) Ash Street  
Applicant: Reading Municipal Light Department

*To the Town Clerk:*

*This is to certify that, at a public hearing of the Community Planning and Development Commission opened on November 6, 2017, continued to and closed on January 8, 2018, by a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted:*

“We, the Reading Community Planning and Development Commission, upon request from the Reading Municipal Light Department (RMLD), pursuant to Sections 4.3 and 4.6 of the Zoning Bylaws of the Town of Reading, to consider the contemplated site plan for 230 (aka 218) Ash Street (Assessors Map 17, Lot 11) – as shown on the Parking Improvement Site Plan prepared by Meridian Associates, dated October 2, 2017, revised January 5, 2018 – do hereby vote 3-0-0, to **approve** the said plans, inclusive of the requested waivers, subject to the Findings and Conditions below.”

### Materials Submitted:

The following materials were submitted into the public record:

- a) Certified List of Abutters, dated 9/26/17.
- b) Email from Community Development Director to Applicant deeming submission Substantially Complete, with a list of additional information needed, dated 10/4/17.
- c) Site Plan Review Application & Project Narrative, stamped by Town Clerk 10/5/17.
- d) Public Hearing Legal Notice, stamped by Town Clerk 10/12/17.
- e) Request for Waivers, dated 10/16/17.
- f) Sheet C-1 – Parking Improvement Site Plan: Reading Municipal Light Department, 230 Ash Street, Reading, MA, prepared by Meridian Associates, dated 10/2/17, revised 1/5/18.
- g) Sheet C-2 – Detail Sheet: Reading Municipal Light Department, 230 Ash Street, Reading, MA, prepared by Meridian Associates, dated 10/2/17, revised 1/5/18.
- h) Stormwater Management Report: Reading Municipal Light Department, 230 Ash Street, Reading, MA, prepared by Meridian Associates, dated 10/2/17, revised 12/27/17.
- i) 25-Year Storm Rainfall Calculations, dated 10/17/17.
- j) Specifications for CT4000 Level 2 Commercial EV Charging Stations (240 volt) by ChargePoint.
- k) Email from Town Engineer to Community Development Director, dated 10/31/17.
- l) Revised Cover Letter & Narrative, dated 12/27/17.

- m) Memo from Engineering Division to Community Development Director, dated 1/2/18.
- n) Draft Decision, dated 1/8/18.

### **Findings:**

- 1) **Overview:** The Applicant is proposing to modify the existing 11-space parking lot and to pave a portion of the existing gravel/lawn area at the front of the site along Ash Street, in order to accommodate a total of 17 parking spaces and to add 2 electric vehicle charging stations. One EV charging station will be installed at the onset of the project, with one additional charging station added in the future. The proposed parking spaces will be angled and accessed via the existing one-way drive aisle that loops through the site. The existing paved area will be pulled back from Ash Street, and the area along the front of the site will be planted with native seed mix and red maples. Drainage structures and an infiltration system will be added to the site to capture runoff from the entire paved area. Approximately 11,000 square feet will be disturbed as part of this project.

The RMLD would like to begin the project in spring 2018, and estimates it will take about one month to complete. There is plenty of other parking in the area that can be utilized while the work is underway.

- 2) **Zoning / Historic:** The site is within an Industrial Zoning District. The existing abandoned substation building is on the National Register of Historic Places.
- 3) **Parking/Circulation:** The current parking lot contains 11 parking spaces; the proposed lot reconfiguration will result in the addition of 6 more spaces. The whole lot will be available to employees and customers, and the existing one-way entrance/exit loop through the parking lot area will remain unchanged.
- 4) **Curb Cuts:** The existing curb cuts into the site will remain unchanged.
- 5) **Sidewalks:** The project is proposing the addition of a 9' wide concrete sidewalk with handicap ramps between the parking lot and abandoned historic substation, as well as a 6' wide ramped handicap accessible walkway connecting the existing crosswalk (to be repainted) to the handicap parking spaces.
- 6) **Loading Dock / Bollards:** There is an existing unused loading dock area in front of the abandoned historic substation that will be blocked to traffic with three removable bollards. The bollards can be removed if the loading dock becomes operable or if the area is used for something else. There is approximately 20' between the parking lot and historic substation; in addition, there is a 9' sidewalk with curbs, and bollards, that are designed to stop cars from driving into the building.
- 7) **Electric Vehicle Charging Stations:** The proposed EV charging stations will be Level 2 (240 volts), will be open to the public 24 hours a day, and will be connected to the charging station mapping apps (i.e. PlugShare). The charging stations will be located at the eastern edge of the parking lot by the northern end of the building.
- 8) **Noise:** The charging stations are not anticipated to make an unreasonable amount of noise.

- 9) Lighting: There are existing street lights along Ash Street that illuminate the property, and the EV charging stations will have lit screens. No additional lighting is proposed.
- 10) Landscaping: The area along the site frontage is proposed to be landscaped with a native seed mix and red maple trees. The existing underground irrigation system will be extended as a water source for the new plantings.
- 11) Drainage: The Applicant is proposing to add drainage structures and an infiltration system to the site, where none exists today. The proposed system consists of a deep sump catch basin, drain manhole (with an overflow to the Town's drainage system), and a StormTech chamber infiltration bed that is designed to capture and recharge the majority of the parking lot runoff from a 100-year storm.
- 12) Utilities: The electrical service for the charging stations will be pre-conducted and will be prepared to adapt to new technologies.
- 13) Signage: The Applicant is not proposing any additional site signage beyond what is featured on the EV charging stations. A one-way directional sign is proposed at the entrance to the drive aisle.

The Site Plan Decision herein does not include approval for any future uses or site renovations that may – on their own merits and design – trigger the requirements of site plan review and/or require a special permit. All future proposed uses requiring a site plan review or a special permit shall obtain such approval(s).

**Waivers from Site Plan Checklist Requirements:**

The Applicant has requested the following waivers:

**F. Locus Plan** – waiver from providing locus plan at 1" = 400' scale; Applicant does not feel it is necessary due to the limited scope of the project.

**G. Existing Conditions Plan** – waiver from providing an Existing Conditions Plan; the proposal is on a section of the property that is currently gravel and lawn, adjacent to an existing parking lot.

**K. Architectural Plans** – waiver from providing Architectural Plans; no buildings or modifications to buildings are proposed.

**L. Landscape Plan** – waiver from providing Landscape Plan; proposed landscaping can be added along the site frontage as may be required by the Commission.

**M. Photometric Plan** – waiver from providing Photometric Plan; the only proposed lighting will be on the two bollards in the parking lot island, and will not spillover onto adjacent properties.

**Q. Traffic Study** – waiver from providing a Traffic Study; the proposed parking improvements and EV charging stations are not anticipated to generate an increase in traffic, and will not require additional curb cuts or dramatically change the on-site circulation pattern.

*The CPDC voted 3-0-0 to approve the requested waivers.*

**Conditions:**

**General:**

- 1) **Public Health, Safety and Welfare:** If, at any time, the site becomes a nuisance to public health, safety or welfare (i.e., traffic spillover onto Ash Street, excessive noise, unreasonable

site illumination beyond the hours of operation, etc.) – as shall be evidenced by substantiated complaints to the Police Department or Public Services Office – the Applicant/Owner shall agree to work with staff to rectify the problem. Should the situation warrant it, an additional Site Plan Review by the CPDC may be required.

- 2) **Signage:** No signage is proposed or approved with this Decision beyond the signage that is affixed to the EV charging stations, and the proposed one-way directional sign at the entrance.
- 3) **Engineering Concerns:** In general throughout the project, the Applicant shall work with the Town Engineer to address the recommendations in the memo to the Community Development Director dated 1/2/18.
  - a. At this time, with this application, in response to the Engineering Division memo of 1/2/18, the CPDC does not feel that a new handicap accessible ramp is necessary on the southerly side of the existing driveway, or that a crosswalk is warranted in this location. In addition, the CPDC does not feel that a sidewalk is needed to connect the aforementioned ramp to the walkway along the building at 230 Ash Street.
  - b. Rather, the CPDC has asked, and the Applicant has agreed, that the lone handicap space at the southwest edge of the abandoned substation building be relocated to the opposite end of the existing row of parking spaces along the southern edge of the building. This will enable a more direct connection between the handicap space and the existing ramps, walkways and building entrances.
- 4) **Landscaping / Trees:** The Applicant shall install a dense row of evergreen shrubs of an adequate height along the site frontage to screen headlights from the residential properties across Ash Street. The Applicant shall also ensure that the proposed red maple trees are the same caliper as the trees planted in front of the Linear Retail property on Main Street.

#### **Prior to the Start of Construction:**

- 1) **Other Permits:** The Owner/Applicant is responsible for obtaining all other requirements and permits including but not limited to, utility connections, and Jackie's Law excavation permits from the Engineering Department (prior to excavation).

#### **During Construction:**

- 1) **Construction Hours:** Construction shall be limited to the hours stated in Section 8.9.8 "Construction Hours" of the Reading General Bylaws and said hours shall be posted in a conspicuous place at the entrance prior to any work on the site.
- 2) **Construction Activities:** Construction activities shall be conducted in a workmanlike manner at all times. Blowing dust or debris shall be controlled by the Applicant through stabilization, wetting down, and proper storage and disposal methods, subject to the approval of the Health Director or designee. The Applicant shall ensure that the abutting local streets are kept clear of dirt and debris, which may accumulate as a result of construction activities for the Project.
- 3) **Site Inspections:** Town staff or their designee shall have reasonable access to inspect the site to determine compliance with this Decision.

**Conditions for Ongoing Maintenance:**

- 1) **As-Built Plans:** Two full size paper copies and electronic AutoCAD final As-Built plans showing the building footprint, drainage systems and utility connections shall be submitted to the Community Development Director and Town Engineer to ensure compliance with this decision and other applicable Town standards.
- 2) **Landscaping:** The landscaping shall be maintained in a healthy condition in perpetuity. In the event that landscaping is damaged, the property owner shall replace such landscaping during the next growing season.

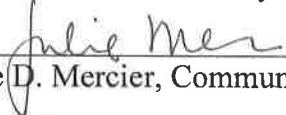
**Modifications/Revisions - Plan Changes after Approval by the Approving Authority:**

Contemplated future changes to the plan approved herein shall be presented to the Community Development Director and the Zoning Enforcement Officer/Building Inspector, or other relevant Town staff, for review prior to implementation of proposed changes.

**1. Minor Modification:** Changes that do not substantially alter the concept of the approved Plan in terms of the specific location, the proposed land use, the design of building form and approved building details and materials, site grading or egress points. These include but are not limited to small changes in site layout, topography, architectural plans, landscaping plan, traffic circulation, parking, lighting, signage, open space or other criteria set forth in Section 4.6.9.1. Requests for approval under a minor modification for future renovations/alterations to the approved site plan or for future tenant changes shall be reviewed by the Community Development Director to determine if the proposed work qualifies for review through the Minor Site Plan Review process of Section 4.6.3 of the Reading Zoning Bylaw. If the work is eligible for review under Minor Site Plan review, the Community Development Director may review and grant approval of the proposed work by administrative approval of the Minor Modification. At the determination of the Community Development Director, the Applicant may be required to present the proposed project at a public meeting of the CPDC.

**2. Major Modification:** Substantial additions, deletions or deviations from the approved plan, including but not limited to changes in site layout, topography, architectural plan, landscaping plans, traffic circulation, parking, lighting plan, signage, open space or other criteria set forth in Section 4.6.9.1 of the Reading Zoning Bylaw. (Note: Approval of the major modification shall be grounds for reconsideration of the Site Plan application. Denial of proposed major modifications shall not invalidate the Site Plan in conformance with the previously approved Plan).

*Signed as to the accuracy of the vote as reflected in the minutes:*

  
Julie D. Mercier, Community Development Director

1/9/18  
Date

*Cc: Applicant, Town Clerk, DRT Staff, planning file*

