

**LEICESTER PLANNING BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES 4/6/2021**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jason Grimshaw (Chair), Deb Friedman (Vice-Chair), Sharon Nist, James Reinke (Associate Member)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jaymi-Lyn Souza

**STAFF PRESENT:** Michelle Buck, Town Planner; Brooke Hammond, Department Assistant

**TIME:** 7 PM

**ORDER OF BUSINESS\***

1. 7:00PM **Continued Public Hearing, Special Permit/Site Plan Review**  
Town Meadow Farm/124 Green Street (SP2021-02), Outdoor Marijuana Cultivation (Applicant: Leon Dykas III)
2. 7:15PM **Public Hearing, Special Permit**  
WorcShop/11 Hankey Street (SP2021-03), Makerspace (Applicant: The WorcShop)
3. 7:45PM **Discussion, Amendment of Site Plan Approval**  
Leicester Fire & EMS Headquarters (SPR2015-06), 3 Paxton Street, Stormwater Improvements (Applicant: Town of Leicester)
4. 8:00PM **General Board Discussion, Bylaw Amendments:**
  - A. General Bylaw Amendment: Architectural Conservation District (Historical Commission)
  - B. Zoning Amendment Request: Marijuana Retail (Christopher Fevry)
5. 8:15PM **Approval of Minutes**
  - March 16, 2021
6. 8:30PM **Town Planner Report/General Discussion:**
  - A. Miscellaneous Project Updates
  - B. Board Member Committee Updates
  - C. Upcoming Meeting Dates
7. **Adjourn**

Mr. Grimshaw called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm.

**1. Continued Public Hearing, Special Permit/Site Plan Review: Town Meadow Farm (124 Green St)**

Ms. Friedman and Mr. Grimshaw said the applicant did a great job addressing all of the Boards concerns from the last meeting. The Board is satisfied with the proposed conditions of approval.

**Motion:** Ms. Friedman moves to approve the special permit with the proposed conditions.

**Second:** Ms. Nist

**Discussion:** Mr. Dykas asks if the snow plowing condition is applicable because the property will mainly operate seasonally. Ms. Buck says this condition can be modified so that all driving lanes and parking spots must be accessible during hours of operation. Mr. Dykas says after each CCC inspection in the spring snow will be removed from the driveway and parking areas.

**Motion:** Ms. Friedman moved to approve the special permit site plan with amendments as discussed.

**Second:** Ms. Nist

**Roll-Call Vote:** (4-0-0)

## **2. Public Hearing, Special Permit: WorcShop (11 Hankey St)**

[Mr. Grimshaw reads the Public Hearing Notice.]

Randolph Gardner, owner of the WorcShop, explains how they plan to convert the Worcester Tool & Stamping mill building into a makerspace with office, lab, creative, and manufacturing/fabrication spaces for their members to rent out. Ms. Friedman asks what the proposed hours of operation will be. Mr. Gardner says office hours will be 9-5 for employees and members would have 24/7 access to their respective work/business spaces. Ms. Friedman asks what type of exterior lighting they plan to use to illuminate the parking lot for members entering after dark. Mr. Gardner says there will be waist-high parking lot lights. He explains these lights minimize light pollution to surrounding properties.

Ms. Friedman asks how many people the applicant plans to have in the building at one time. Mr. Gardner says the WorcShop experiences about a 10% utilization of space at any time. He says the 24-hour availability prevents a surge of members entering in the morning and/or evening. Ms. Friedman asks what the maximum number of members will be. Mr. Gardner expects to max out at around 400 members given the size of their new building at 11 Hankey St. They will also hold small classes of about 4-6 people for non-members. There will be both remote and in-person classes. Mr. Gardner expects to offer 2 in-person and one remote class, mainly held weekends and evenings. This may expand to weekday classes as membership grows. Mr. Gardner states there are 3 employees now and hopes to hire 5 more in the near future.

Ms. Friedman asks how they will accommodate 60 members in their parking lot. Mr. Gardner says they expecting to reach 400 members in the next 5 years, but currently only have 50. He says the parking on site is more than enough to accommodate the current members and employees. Mr. Gardner says WorcShop does not want to add to the impermeable area of their property; when their membership increases in the future, they will apply for a new permit with the Planning Board for an expanded parking plan to accommodate members.

Ms. Friedman asks how the Town will monitor member parking both now and in the future without a parking plan for the WorcShop at maximum capacity. Ethan DeSota, the facilities director for WorcShop, says this special permit could be limited to allow for parking for up to 200 members; the WorcShop would have to apply for a new special permit in the future when their membership exceeds 200. Ms. Friedman asks what level of noise is to be expected from a facility like this. Mr. DeSota says there will be less noise than Worcester Tool & Stamping created. Most members working at night are using the office spaces, and most of the people using machinery visit during the day. Ms. Friedman asks if machinery will be available to use 24/7. Mr. DeSota says it could conceivably be used 24 hours a day, but the noise that Worcester Tool & Stamping machinery created was much louder than WorcShop's machines will be. Ms. Buck notes that Worcester Tool & Stamping had normal weekday business hours unlike the WorcShop.

Ms. Friedman asks about the traffic impact of members entering and leaving. Mr. DeSota says over the course of a day there will be less than 15 cars at any time, so the traffic disruption will be minimal.

Ms. Nist says she is concerned about noise after normal business hours disrupting the community. Mr. Gardner says they can enact internal policies limiting the hours that members can operate loud machinery.

Mr. Reinke raises concerns about odor control from certain activities such as car finishing, welding, etc. Mr. Gardner states members will be monitored and follow regulations for manufacturing space. The building will be equipped with point-source capture and HVAC, and the paint booths with particulate matter and water filters. Ms. Nist asks how they plan to dispose of hazardous waste. Mr. Gardner says waste will be minimized, and the building has floor drains and a separation system to separate hazardous liquid. Mr. DeSota says the WorcShop does not plan on doing automotive work, but rather developing battery-based cars and auto innovations.

Mr. Reinke asks what the building's maximum occupancy will be. Mr. DeSota says the total load capacity is 550 occupants, which will include members, employees, and visitors in classes at any given time. On average there are 20 to 30 people inside the building at a time, but this number fluctuates throughout the day. Mr. Gardner says the sprinkler, water, and sewer systems can sustain the building at maximum capacity.

Mr. Grimshaw asks what the speed limit is on Hankey St. Ms. Meraki states there is no speed limit sign on the road, but normal residential roads are 25 miles per hour; she says their team will put up signage urging drivers to slow down when entering and exiting.

Ms. Meraki says the only time the building would reach maximum capacity is when an event is held, and town police will be notified when events are to be held. Mr. Reinke and Ms. Friedman request that the WorcShop submit a preliminary event plan, so the Board knows what to expect on these occasions.

Ms. Friedman asks if Leicester Fire Department had any comments on the WorcShop's application. Ms. Buck says the Fire Department has not yet commented. The Board agrees they would like written comments from the Fire Department before the next meeting.

Ms. Buck says more detail on exterior lighting, parking spaces, hours of operation, and capacity should be addressed by the WorcShop team. She advises the Board to continue the hearing so the WorcShop can provide these plans to the Board, and so appropriate conditions for project approval can be written.

**Motion:** Ms. Friedman moves to continue the hearing.

**Second:** Ms. Nist

**Discussion:** Ms. Buck notes the meeting date and time must be included in the motion. The next meeting is April 20, 2021. The hearing would be continued to 7:30 PM.

**Amended Motion:** Ms. Friedman move to continue the hearing to April 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM.

**Second:** Ms. Nist

**Discussion:** The Board outlines the materials they are requesting for the next meeting. Fire Department approval, a parking plan, exterior lighting plan, and an event plan are needed.

**Roll-Call Vote:** (4-0-0)

### **3. Amendment of Site Plan Approval: Leicester Fire/EMS Headquarters**

Luke Boucher of VHB says the Fire/EMS Headquarters' original design was to have two infiltration basins on site through which all water was supposed to filter through. The original design had no pipes pumping water off-site, and as a result the basins have had stagnant water in them since construction. The Fire/EMS employees have been manually pumping water out of the basins. The Town and Select Board contracted VHB to modify the system to address these issues. The groundwater level is higher than initially believed, and water doesn't infiltrate easily through the basin's soil. The only option is to pipe the water off site, which will involve easements on Warren Ave, Gleason Way, and 14 Harberton Dr.

The bottom of the basins will be raised above groundwater level so they will no longer pool with water during storms, and overflow structures will be installed [effectively converting the infiltration basins into detention basins]. The basins will also be extended horizontally. Existing pipes will move the water offsite and will discharge through the easement on Warren Ave about 450' from Sergeant Pond and 100' from the wetlands on either side. The existing drainage structures at the end of Gleason way will be replaced and tied into these pipes. A catch basin will be placed on Paxton St and tied into the existing system to collect water from the parking lot. [Note: Police detail will be present when installing the catch basin on Paxton St.] All easements were approved by the property owners.

Mr. Genereux and Mr. Griffin say drainage will be done biannually by the Highway Department.

**Motion:** Ms. Friedman

**Second:** Ms. Nist

**Discussion:** None

**Roll-Call Vote:** (4-0-0)

### **4. Bylaw Amendments**

#### Architectural Conservation District

The Historical Commission proposed a new Architectural Conservation Overlay district in the center of town. Joe Lennerton from the Historical Commission says the area would include the Town Common and some of the buildings belonging to Becker College. This amendment would be added to the town's general bylaws and a new commission would be appointed to approve any demolition, construction, and interior renovations done to buildings in the district. The district would preserve the architectural history of the buildings within its boundaries but will not be a designated Local Historic District. The Historical Commission is looking for Planning Board recommendation to move forward with this district. The Board agrees this will be a good way to preserve the architectural integrity of this part of town.

**Motion:** Ms. Friedman moves to recommend the Architectural Conservation District.

**Second:** Ms. Nist

**Discussion:** None

**Roll-Call Vote:** (4-0-0)

## Zoning Amendment Request for Marijuana Retail

Mr. Genereux and the Select Board discussed the possibility of amending the zoning to allow a second marijuana retail facility in town after receiving a request from Christopher Fevry. The Select Board voted 4-1 in favor of supporting a second retail facility at a recent meeting.

Mr. Fevry explains his business caters specifically to veterans and those with special needs. He wants to work with Leicester to launch his small business in Leicester at 488 Stafford St. He is looking for the Planning Board's support to amend the Zoning Bylaw to allow a second marijuana retail facility.

Ms. Friedman explains the Board is voting on amending the Zoning Bylaw, not on a specific person or site. If the amendment passes, it is not a guarantee that Mr. Fevry's business would be the second retail facility in town. John Shocik from the Select Board offers support for Mr. Fevry and the zoning amendment request.

Ms. Buck says a new hearing notice would need to be advertised. The hearing could take place on May 4, 2021 if the Board votes to reopen it.

**Motion:** Ms. Friedman moves to reopen the Zoning Bylaw amendment hearing as discussed.

**Second:** Ms. Nist

**Discussion:** Ms. Friedman asks if the zoning amendment will appear on the Town Meeting warrant. Mr. Genereux says the public hearing will be reopened, the Planning Board hearing will take place on May 4, and the Board will make the decision whether to approve or deny the proposed amendment. If the Planning Board chooses not to reopen the public hearing, someone can make a substitute motion at Town Meeting and the Town Moderator can allow or not allow it on Town Meeting floor. Ms. Friedman says its best to reopen the hearing in order to listen to arguments for and against the amendment. The hearing will be held May 4, 2021 at 7 PM.

**Roll-Call Vote:** (2-1-0) [Ms. Nist opposed.]

## **5. Approval of Minutes: March 16, 2021**

March 16, 2021 minutes will be reviewed at the next meeting.

## **6. Town Planner Report/General Discussion**

Patrick Carroll asked about allowed uses at 760 Pleasant St. Ms. Buck says the allowed uses for each district are listed in the Zoning Bylaw.

No further discussion or updates.

## **7. Adjourn**

**Motion:** Ms. Nist

**Second:** Ms. Friedman

**Discussion:** None

**Roll-Call Vote:** (4-0-0)

The meeting was adjourned at 9:42 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Brooke Hammond, Department Assistant

Documents included in the meeting packet:

- Agenda
- Town Planner Memo
- Supplemental Special Permit Information Memo for Town Meadow Farm dated 3/29/2021
- Site Plans for Town Meadow Farm dated 2/1/2021
- Griffin Greenhouse Supply letter dated 3/26/2021
- Onliant Horticulture Order Confirmation dated 3/19/2021
- Aerial photos of Town Meadow Farm
- Lighting Specs for Town Meadow Farm
- Quinn Engineering Memo dated 4/1/2021
- Town Planner Memo to Mr. Dykas dated 3/22/2021
- Supplemental Special Permit Information Memo for Town Meadow Farm dated 3/15/2021
- Support Letter dated 3/12/2021 from Sen. Michael Moore and State Rep. David LeBeouf
- Supplemental Special Permit Information Memo for Town Meadow Farm dated 3/16/2021
- Supplemental Special Permit Information Memo for Town Meadow Farm dated 3/11/2021
- Example photos of outdoor marijuana cultivation
- Greenhouse specs
- Security Plan for Town Meadow Farm
- Draft Decision – Town Meadow Farm dated 3/31/2021
- Public Hearing Notice – WorcShop (11 Hankey St)
- Special Permit Application – WorcShop
- WorcShop project narrative
- WorcShop site and building plans
- Fire Protection/Life Safety Report for WorcShop
- Town Planner Memo dated 3/22/2021 regarding the WorcShop
- Quinn Engineering letter dated 3/17/2021
- Polce Dept. comments for WorcShop dated 2/23/2021
- Draft decision for WorcShop dated 4/1/2021
- Ethan DeSota email to Town Planner and Building Inspector dated 3/31/2021
- Site Plan revisions for WorcShop dated 3/24/2021
- Site Plan Review Application – Leicester Fire/EMS Station
- Project Narrative – Fire/EMS Station dated 3/25/2021
- Draft decision – Fire/EMS Station dated 4/1/2021
- Site plans for Fire/EMS Station dated 3/25/2021
- Christopher Fevry email dated 3/30/2021
- Dris Presentation