

LUPC Notes – December 7, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

Online – Zoom

Commissioners Present: Trip Barnes, Christina Brown, Rob Doyle, Fred Hancock, Joan Malkin, Ben Robinson, Doug Sederholm, Christine Todd, Richard Toole, James Joyce

Staff Present: Alex Elvin, Mike Mauro, Lucy Morrison, Adam Turner, Bill Veno, Sheri Caseau, Dan Doyle

Richard Toole opened the meeting at 5:30 p.m. and Lucy Morrison took attendance.

1. STOP AND SHOP EXPANSION (DRI 429-M2) REVIEW OF WEST ENTRANCE PLANS

Present for the applicant: Randy Hart, Thomas Scott, Renee Codega, Erik Bednarik, Geoghan Coogan

The LUPC reviewed plans for the Stop and Shop west entrance in Edgartown, in preparation for final review by the Commission, as required under the 2018 MVC conditions for the project.

Randy Hart of VHB, which designed the entrance, explained that he has been working to coordinate the entrance plans with MassDOT and the VTA. He said changes from the original plan in 2018 include benches and a shelter for the bus stop, a relocated crosswalk, and the proposed removal of three locust trees near the existing bank building that were to be saved under the 2018 conditions.

Commissioners discussed the proposed bus shelter, with Joan Malkin saying she thought the glass walls could be a problem. Thomas Scott replied that they would be tempered glass, but other materials could be considered as well. He said the glass was to allow people to see both in and out of the shelter. The shelter will be owned by VTA and maintained by Stop and Shop. Randy Hart said he did not anticipate any advertisements being displayed in the shelter, and Doug Sederholm asked that the applicant add that its proposal to the full commission.

Renee Codega of VHB said the three locust trees would likely be unable to survive, given the proposed change in grade and retaining wall in that area. Joan Malkin suggested a site visit to see where the three trees are located. Adam Turner recalled significant discussion surrounding the trees in 2018, and said more information would be available for the full commission.

Bill Veno asked why a proposed crosswalk was not more perpendicular to the right of way, and Renee replied that it needed to comply with ADA requirements for slopes. Ben Robinson asked to see the grading plan, and argued that the crosswalk could in fact be more perpendicular to the right of way. Renee added that a more direct route for the crosswalk had been desired.

Edgartown planning board assistant Doug Finn said the final entrance plans would likely come before the planning board for informational purposes following MVC review.

Doug Sederholm said the landscaping plans should be clarified prior to full commission review, along with exactly what Stop and Shop is proposing for the west entrance, and how that differs from the 2018 conditions. He also asked the applicant to clarify the location of the locust trees.

The LUPC declined to make any recommendation to the full commission.

2. STONE BANK CONDOS (DRI 674-M) PRELIMINARY REVIEW

Present for the applicant: Sam Dunn

Sam Dunn presented preliminary plans to develop mixed-use condos at the site of the Old Stone Bank in Tisbury. He described the current conditions, and said the property has been on the market for several years. He said he aimed to utilize the existing buildings on the site to create a residential environment that would appeal to empty nesters. He argued that while residential uses are not allowed on the first floors of existing commercial structures in the B1 district, they could potentially be allowed on the first floors of new structures. The Tisbury planning board is also reviewing the project.

Sam said the bank building on Main Street would remain in commercial use, with the hope that it would become a restaurant or other frequently used space. He argued that an annex to the rear of the building, which exists at ground level due to a change in grade, would not be subject to the first-floor restriction, since it was technically an extension of the bank basement. He discussed the proposed public access plan, which includes walkways and a pocket park between Main and Union streets, and said an existing maple tree would be preserved. He noted the location of each of the proposed condo units, and explained that in cases where structures will be demolished, the intent is to replicate the existing architecture on the site. He said the exterior of the bank building would not be altered, except in the back. He said the area is heavily landscaped with honey locust trees, which provide screening. He said the existing asphalt will be removed, decreasing the amount of impervious surface at the site.

MVC transportation planner Mike Mauro said he did not think a traffic study was necessary, since the project would entail a decrease in the intensity of use.

Commissioners discussed other aspects of the project, including changes to the proposed drive-through building, which is proposed to have mixed uses, although the commercial uses were still undefined. Adam Turner asked how the commission could review or condition a project when so much is unknown. Sam argued that it was no different than some other projects he has worked on. He said the commission should assume the commercial uses at the site would be retail, and if that changes, then the commission could review the changes as well.

Ben Robinson gave his perspective as a member of the Tisbury planning board. He noted that the board had not yet resolved the question of first-floor uses in the B1 district, or discussed the proposal to add a second floor to the drive-through building, which is a historic structure. The board had also not addressed the fact that units 8 and 9 would be in a floodplain and a parking area, with the building raised above the parking spots and access to a neighboring property. He argued that it would be premature for the MVC to review the project in its current form.

Sam said he had obtained approval for enough wastewater flow to serve the entire property, as long as the commercial uses are retail. But the allocated flow does not include a new building on Union Street that was proposed as part of a future phase. On the topic of flooding, he said the existing and proposed buildings would be above the floodplain level.

Alex Elvin gave a presentation on initial planning concerns, including wastewater, zoning, vulnerability to storms and flooding, traffic and parking, and affordable housing.

Conversion continued, with commissioners noting the possibility of including the Union Street building as part of the affordable housing offer in phase 1. Adam Turner said the plans as presented were not adequate for MVC review. Joan Malkin said she thought it was an interesting project, but agreed it was still preliminary. Other agreed it had potential and was worth pursuing.

Elaine Miller of the Tisbury planning board noted that the plans have changed several times as result of the applicant being responsive to planning board concerns. She said she believed the applicant was dedicated to finding the best use of the property.

Richard Toole adjourned the hearing at 6:57PM.