

LUNENBURG PLANNING BOARD TOWN OF LUNENBURG

Damon McQuaid, Chair
Matthew Allison, Vice Chair
Kenneth Chenis, Clerk
Gregory Bittner, Mbr.
David Prokowiew, Mbr.



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Adam R. Burney
Land Use Director

Minutes
Informational Meeting
December 14, 2015
Unitil – 357 Electric Avenue

Meeting Posted: Yes

Place: Town Hall, 17 Main Street, Lunenburg, MA

Time: 6:35 PM

Present: Damon McQuaid, Matthew Allison, Kenneth Chenis, Gregory Bittner, David Prokowiew, Adam R. Burney

Chair D. McQuaid opened the Information Meeting with the reading of the statutory notice published in the Sentinel and Enterprise on December 7, 2015. The Information Meeting was to hear and discuss a proposed 45,000 S.F. office and maintenance facility to be located at 357 Electric Avenue, Lunenburg, MA.

Applicant is Unitil-Fitchburg Gas and Electric Light Company, 6 Liberty Lane West, Hampton, NH, represented by the following individuals:

Project Engineers, Jamie Rheault and Mark Piermarini, Whitman & Bingham Associates (WBA)

Legal counsel, Pierce Atwood LLP, Mark Beliveau

KITE Architects, Inc., Christine West

Unitil Project Manager, Jacqueline Agel

Nadeau Corp., Construction Development & Engineering, Ernie Nadeau

Unitil is an electric and gas operating utility. The current distribution and operation center located in Fitchburg, MA will relocate to Lunenburg. The facility will consist of offices, and indoor and outdoor storage. There will be no vehicle maintenance on site. This site will employ approximately 65 individuals. Unitil is currently in a Purchase & Sales agreement with the property owner. If all necessary Town approvals are granted, Unitil anticipates beginning construction in spring 2016 and hopes to be occupying the facility in spring 2017.

J. Rheault noted this is the site of the former Whalom Drive-In and the site is still paved, which is important to the project. Lot 2 was created by a Board-endorsed ANR Plan in 1985. In 2011 WBA represented the property owner before the Sewer Commission for the property to be included in the Sewer Service Area; that passed at a Town Meeting vote. Proposed use is an operations and distribution center consisting of administrative offices, indoor and outdoor storage, warehouse use for utility related equipment and supplies, and indoor (utility vehicles) and outdoor parking. In letter dated October 30, 2015, the Building/Zoning Official communicated to the applicant that due to same, this will be a "by-right" use. Site consists of 15± acres; upland area of 8.18± acres. The actual area of development will be 6.3 acres. Zoning is Commercial District and the lot meets/exceeds all dimensional requirements. Flow test conducted. Seventy-five parking spaces are proposed of which four will be handicapped. Dual ingress/egress; one way in, one way out. Proposed ingress/egress wider than normal to accommodate WB109 trucks (truck w/trailer carrying overhanging utility poles). Trucks will enter a gated area on the right-hand side which is not available to the public. The Fitchburg facility has been completely inventoried so every vehicle has a spot shown on the site plan. No roofing is proposed over the outside storage. A photometric lighting plan was submitted to the Board; all dark sky compliant. There will be pedestrian walkways between the proposed parking areas and the proposed building.

M. Piermarini made a presentation on the utilities. There will be a six-inch water line off Electric Avenue; two hydrants are proposed, one towards the front of the site and the other at the rear. There will be a six-inch sewer service into the building and four drains in the indoor vehicle storage area into an oil/gas trap and then into the sewer main. All drainage is LID (low impact development). Drainage on the left side of the site will go into a grass channel; drainage on the right side will go into a vegetated filter strip. The impervious surface will be going from 6.7 acres to 5.2 acres.

A landscaping plan was submitted with the application packet, but before construction begins that plan will likely be improved upon by a landscaping architect and resubmitted.

C. West went over KITE's architectural plan. The warehouse portion at the rear of the building has two loading docks. The vehicle bay allows for thru-traffic. The building has been placed diagonal to Electric Avenue to screen a large portion of the utilitarian rear from passersby while also providing a landscape shield. The building will be of neutral colors with sustainable design features. There will be LED lighting and numerous skylights for day-lighting. There will be a canopy over the entrance.

WBA submitted two letters to the Board; 1) a request for determination under Protective Bylaw of the Town of Lunenburg, Section 6.4.3.5. in regards to the driveway width directly off Electric Avenue, and 2) a letter requesting a waiver from the Protective Bylaw of the Town of Lunenburg, Section 8.4.3.1.(f) submission of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as the applicant is treating this site as redevelopment use.

Revisions were made to the plan as a result of December 10, 2015 Graves Engineering (GEI) review letter and revised plans made available to GEI at this meeting's conclusion.

There was Board concern with chemical runoff from the poles in outside storage close to the wetlands. J. Rheault noted that storage area runoff at the site rear will come into the site and be contained; it will not be flowing into the wetlands. K. Chenis was concerned with snow being plowed through the chain link fence into the buffer zone. J. Rheault noted there are gates within the fence which will be opened and the snow "bucketed" over the fence. It will go into the vegetated strip that will be constructed to contain the snow storage. There was also concern with possible leakage from the stored transformers. J. Rheault noted the transformer storage area will be bermed and in case of leakage the spill gates will be shut and runoff will go into an underground 2,000 gallon concrete tank.

David Rodgers, 82 Highland Street- Supports commercial development in Lunenburg. Seems a viable use for site. Inquired if there are generators on site in the event of a power outage. There are oil-fired generators on site.

Paula Bertram, 312 Townsend Harbor Road- Concerned with contaminated runoff into the wetlands and inquired if the rear fence would be solid or chain-like. Chain.

C. Luck, 50 Sunset Lane- Noted that the Conservation Commission did a site walk and there were no "red flags". He noted DEP's Notice of Intent (NOI) comments; M. Piermarini responded that the DEP issues had been addressed on the revised plan.

John Goguen, 346 Electric Avenue- Concerned with ice melt being used as there is wildlife in the area and inquired as to hours of operation. Unutil noted typical office hours.

Keith Aubin, 24 Hollis Road- Inquired if a roof could be put on the transformer storage area. D. McQuaid and K. Chenis also asked the same; applicant will research.

The Board asked reviewing engineer Jeffrey Walsh to comment on Unutil's request to waiver submittal of an EIS as this is considered a redevelopment site. J. Walsh noted under MA DEP stormwater handbook it would be considered such.

He noted that the materials stored in the bays are located near the wetlands, but any runoff will flow in to the site. K. Chenis asked about runoff from the poles. J. Walsh noted that the bins should be set up high enough that the stormwater does not run onto the base of the pile. Some of the runoff would stay on site and some would run to the vegetated strip.

He noted the entrance being wider than usual due to trucks coming/going on a regular basis.

He noted his review letter of 12/10/15 (on file in the Planning Office). The site has good sight lines. The site generators produce minimal noise. The sewer main along Electric Avenue is backfilled and graded with an earth mound. The sewer pipe will have only approximately 0.9 feet of cover where it passes under the grass channel. Unitil may want to consider relocation of the pipe to minimize the potential for water freezing within the pipe.

D. Prokowiew inquired about the height of the field to the site rear. J. Walsh noted the one residential dwelling he saw was probably 30-40 feet above the site grade and is about 200 feet from the project perimeter. As most of the vegetation is deciduous, he had a good view of the dwelling.

The peak rates of runoff will be lessened due to the change in ground cover. He noted where the snow gets stockpiled will have to be cleaned up every year from sand and grit. K. Chenis opined that if there was a fence, it could show the limit of how far the snow could be pushed.

C. Luck opined that the site is completely overgrown and he did not consider it impervious.

D. Prokowiew inquired if there had been any environmental issues from transformer storage at the Fitchburg site. J. Agel to research. J. Walsh noted another commercial enterprise he had inspected with transformer storage and he did not note any staining on the pavement. He also noted that he questioned how impervious the site was with all the broken asphalt, but during his site visit he noted standing water at the rear of the site which was indicative of an impervious surface.

The Board discussed the two letters submitted:

- As Unitil is asking for a waiver from submission of an EIS, D. McQuaid asked if Board members were comfortable calling this redevelopment of a site. J. Walsh noted to the Board they could ask for all of it, waive some of it, or waive all of it. Board consensus was that they would like to see an EIS. An EIS will be submitted by the applicant.
- Regarding the second letter for a determination of driveway width, K. Chenis made Motion that the design submitted for the site is appropriate (approve a two-way width of 30 feet each way plus a ten foot rumble strip over the maximum of 24 feet), Second, G. Bittner, all aye.

D. Prokowiew, Motion to continue Information Meeting to January 11, 2016, 6:35 PM, Second, K. Chenis, all aye.

Information Meeting recessed 9:02 PM

Documents used at meeting:
Unitil, 357 Electric Avenue Application Packet