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Town of Grantham Planning Board Meeting Minutes April 6, 2017

Chair Carl Hanson called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. The meeting was held in the Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room of the Grantham Town Hall located at 300 Route 10 South in Grantham, NH.

Present: Chair Carl Hanson, Selectmen's Representative Warren Kimball, Thain Allan, Mary Hutchins

Absent: Vice Chair Peter Guillette

Meeting minutes: Nikki Arsenault

Public Attendance: Adam McLain, Paul Holzer, C. Peter James, Andrew Edmunds

Approval of Minutes

Chair Hanson asked the Board members if there were any corrections or changes to the March 2, 2017 minutes. Hutchins noted that in the section under "Conceptual" that 250ft should be changed to 200ft.

A motion was made by Hutchins and seconded by Allan to approve the March 2, 2017 minutes as amended.

Unanimously Approved and Accepted

I. New Business

a) Site Plan Review Application:

1. Application# 04-2017-001: Northwind Security Products – for a Commercial Restaurant at Grace's Grantham Café – Tax Map 226 Lot 020 at 149 Old Route 10

Discussion: Paul Holzer and Adam McLain were in attendance representing Grace's Grantham Café as was owner Andrew Edmunds. Hanson noted for the record that the applicants recently went before the Zoning Board for a variance to serve alcohol at their establishment. Holzer confirmed that this was correct and that it was conditionally approved. Holzer also reported that the State Health Inspector visited the establishment and they passed the health inspection. Hanson noted that he read the minutes from the Zoning Board minutes and was unclear as to where they are (procedurally) given that the Zoning Board did not get into the details regarding a special exception. Hanson noted that the Planning Board can only do a site plan approval under a permitted use by the ordinance. Until the Zoning Board decides on this particular matter, Hanson believes that the Planning Board cannot decide on this site plan until a special exception is granted. Anything that the Planning Board decides upon tonight would need to be conditional upon the Zoning Board granting a special exception.

Holzer noted that they are grateful to the community and to the Board to be able to serve the Grantham Community. On behalf of Grace's Café, they appreciate being part of the community. Based on community feedback, and their landlord's approval, they wanted to expand their services to responsibly provide beer and wine to their customers. Holzer quoted Grantham's Master Plan's "Vision" section and noted that this has guided their decision to pursue serving their customers in

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this capacity. The first proposal within this site plan application is to allow for a safe area for children under the custody of their parents to play but remain safe; this would include a fence railing on the back southwest side of the building that would measure between 3ft and 4ft tall. He would like to put either umbrellas or an awning and, following a question from Hutchins, noted that the fence would be three-sided and not affixed to the building if that can be done while having the fence remain structurally sound. Following a question from Allan, Holzer added that the outside area will not be on a platform. The outside area will be on mulch or a similar “soft” surface.

The existing square footage inside the building is 1200 square feet. Hanson asked how many tables will be outside; Holzer answered that there will be six picnic tables outside. Hanson added that there are some parking requirements in the zoning ordinance which need to be considered, Hanson noted that looking at the spaces that are available they would need 8 spaces plus additional parking for employees. Edmunds noted that on the back side of the building facing the Interstate they are considering plans to add more parking. Allan added that the parking is still an open issue; he then asked about outside lighting. Holzer answered that there are existing flood lights on the side of the building; lighting beyond what is there now he has largely not considered.

Chair Hanson requested more information about the foot path. Holzer believes that they face a percentage of business loss because of the serpentine nature of the route (road/driveway) to the café. Holzer submitted a proposal to the Department of Transportation regarding this matter, asking for their input regarding how this problem can be alleviated. Holzer announced that following some study of their options, a 4ft opening in the fence between the Park and Ride and the parking lot in front of their business would be the easiest and most cost effective way to alleviate this problem. Chair Hanson noted at this time that this particular matter is not within the jurisdiction of the Planning Board; these fall under the Department of Transportation. In addition, Hanson added that it would be important that the Park and Ride parking were not to be used or considered the primary parking for their café. Holzer answered that his intention for proposing a cut in the fence is so that people already using the Park and Ride for its intended purpose could also have access to the café. Following a question from Hanson, Holzer explained that the path around the fence is being used by school children dropped off by the bus. Holzer noted that the Department of Transportation knows about this but Edmunds noted that while he believes the DOT approved this by request of the bus drivers, he has yet to see an official document to this affect. Allan noted that by placing this on the site place application, it would appear that the Planning Board is approving a path from one private property to another, which could ultimately put the Town at risk. Hanson added that if the Park and Ride ends up filled with customers for the businesses it would defeat the purpose of having the Park and Ride in the first place.

Liquor license – Holzer noted that they will likely have the license in hand on Monday of next week (April 10, 2017); it is pending some final paperwork. Hanson added that this will not include the sale of hard liquor.

Hours – Holzer noted that they hope to have a cyclical (seasonal) set of hours. They are currently requesting 8am – 9pm (the original application reads 6am – 6pm).

Banner – Applicant indicated on the map where the current signage exists (permanent roof sign) and that the additional signage that they are applying for is a polyethylene banner that reads

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'Grace's Café please take your next left'. Hanson noted that this would be a second sign for the business which is not allowed under the zoning ordinance. Hanson further noted that the applicant would have to apply to the Zoning Ordinance for a variance. It would be permissible for the applicant to redesign their current sign. Hanson further noted that any sign on Route 10 would need to be approved by the State.

Resident C. Peter James noted his concern about local business potentially using the Park and Ride for parking; he is also not in favor of the Grace's Café signs that were placed along the road and along the Interstate. Holzer asked for an opportunity to respond; he clarified the process by which he contacted the State and that he wished the record to reflect that he wishes to follow procedure and he further noted that if a business isn't convenient, it won't thrive. Hutchins questioned if the applicant made the Zoning Board aware of all of the items being requested on their current application and Holzer replied yes to this question. Hutchins further noted that he needed to return to the Zoning Board to receive approval for a special exception. Mr. James noted for the record that he was in attendance at the Zoning Board meeting; he believes that any approval given should only be granted after the appropriate exception and/or approval from the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Hanson noted that there was already one special exception granted for the café; the question is whether or not the applicant needs another one for the change in the nature of the café (what they are serving, hours, size, etc.) He would feel more comfortable if the Zoning Board weighed in on this first. Following a discussion regarding the items that the Planning Board is able to decide upon, the items under paragraph #1 were formally withdrawn by the applicant. The applicant also asked to formally withdraw the request for the banner listed under paragraph #4.

Chair Hanson asked for a motion for the outdoor seating area, serving beer and wine pursuant to the (pending) state license, and to modify the hours as set forth in paragraph #6 from Memorial Day to Columbus Day (when the café would be open until 9:00pm).

The conditions of this approval would be that the Grantham Zoning Board either confirm that no special exception is needed or to grant a special exception pursuant to the application submitted in March.

Allan made a motion to approve the outdoor seating area, serving beer and wine pursuant to the (pending) state license, and to modify the hours as set forth in paragraph #6 from Memorial Day to Columbus Day (when the café would be open until 9:00pm).

Kimball seconded this motion. All in favor.

Unanimously Approved

Allan noted that the Master Plan Committee has completed their work and the final draft is ready for review by the Planning Board. He asked that this review be added to the June meeting of the Planning Board. He is hoping that a Public Hearing will then be scheduled for early Fall (October 2017).

Adjournment

Chair Hanson announced that he would entertain a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion to adjourn was offered by Hutchins and seconded by Allan to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 p.m.

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Unanimously Approved

The deadline for the next Planning Board meeting is Thursday, April 13, 2017.

The next Planning Board meeting will take place on Thursday, May 1, 2017 in the Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room of the Grantham Town Hall at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Nikki Arsenault, Planning Board Clerk