

**December 4, 2018  
Planning Board**

**Present were:** Regular Members Lori Langlois, Helene Rayborn, Naomi Levesque, Christina Lefebvre, Ex-Officio Member Lucie Remillard, Ex-Officio Member Bryan Chevarie, and Alternate Member Lane Strahan.

Regular Members Tom McCue, Greg Estrella, Richard Cassidy, and Aline Boucher were excused.

**Others Present:** Pamela Laflamme, Community Development Director; Jay Poulin, HEB Engineers; Burke York, York Land Services; Lucien St. Onge, Androscoggin Valley Hospital; Barbara Tetreault, Berlin Sun; members of the public.

**Public Comments**

None

**Approval of November Minutes**

Ms. Rayborn made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 7, 2018 meeting as written. Ms. Levesque seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion carried.

Acting Chairperson Langlois appointed Ms. Strahan as a voting member for the meeting.

**Site Plan Review – Androscoggin Valley Hospital (AVH) (1752 Hutchins Street, Tax Map 135 Lot 37) – HEB Engineers**

Ms. Remillard made a motion to accept the application as complete. Ms. Rayborn seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion carried.

Mr. Poulin of HEB Engineers distributed plans to members of the Board for their review. Ms. Laflamme explained that potential property line issues have emerged relating to this plan and the City's legal counsel has that the Planning Board review the application but delay voting on the matter until the property line issues are resolved. Mr. Poulin will present the plan and the public hearing will still be conducted at this meeting as advertised.

It was noted that the City of Berlin had accepted a donation of a small piece of this parcel in the summer of 2017, however, the transfer was never finalized. Consequently, this plan has been submitted without reflecting that transfer.

At this time Ms. Lefebvre and Ms. Strahan entered the meeting.

Mr. Poulin described the parcel in further detail, noting that this is the former Morris Building located on approximately half an acre of land. The hospital wants to convert the building from its current use, storage, into office space for their billing and health information management efforts. The new design would utilize the existing footprint of the

building. An access ramp is proposed to be constructed to accommodate handicapped individuals.

The plan is to utilize the existing access points for the property. Hutchins Street will be used as the primary entrance and exit, while there will be a one-way exit behind the building and another exit onto Bridge Street. This would total three exits and one entrance to the parcel.

The facility will operate during normal business hours and will host 24 parking spaces (including one ADA space). Mr. Poulin explained that the existing Planning Board regulations necessitate that site plans include 1.5 parking spaces multiplied by the number of employees that are expected to work at the location. In this situation, Androscoggin Valley Hospital anticipates that 20 employees will regularly use the property – therefore, 30 spots would be needed. For this reason the plan also includes a waiver request for this insufficient off-street parking. The proposed justification for lacking the necessary spaces is that it is not anticipated that many visitors will be accessing the parcel on a day-to-day basis. Patients of AVH that need to access the type of data that will be managed at this location will still go to the hospital and will not need to visit this parcel for these types of reasons.

The group discussed various details of the project including lighting, snow storage, and miscellaneous items. Ms. Remillard voiced her concerns of the proposed plan regarding the traffic flow onto Hutchins Street. Ms. Levesque detailed her concerns of the proposed plan regarding traffic flowing out of the parking lot and onto Bridge Street. Mr. Poulin noted that there are pros and cons with each scenario and the plan presented on this night was the result of lots of planning and analysis of the area. AVH and HEB Engineers are open to suggestions from the Board. Ms. Langlois asked if off-street parking can count towards the required space figure. Ms. Laflamme replied that in some situations it can. The group then considered potential signage that could assist in resolving these issues. Ms. Remillard asked if future owners of the property will be grandfathered by the parking and exit regulations that the Planning Board decides upon regarding this application. Ms. Laflamme stated that if the use is consistent then they would be, however, if there is a change in use a site plan review would be required.

Ms. Langlois appointed alternate member Ms. Strahan as a regular voting member at this time.

Ms. Langlois opened the public hearing at this time. No one spoke. The public hearing was closed.

A motion to table the application until the January 8, 2018 Planning Board meeting and that this will be the official notice of the continuation of the meeting and that public hearing notices will not be sent out again in regards to this site plan was made by Ms. Remillard. Ms. Strahan seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion carried.

**Lot Line Adjustment – Anne Marie Perreault (Jolbert Street, Tax Map 119, Lots 512 and 389) – York Land Services**

*Note: This agenda item was moved up as a matter of convenience for the applicants who were in attendance, approved by the board members present.*

Ms. Levesque made a motion to accept the application as complete. Ms. Lefebvre seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion carried.

Mr. York of York Land Services distributed plans to the group regarding this lot line adjustment. He explained that the reason for this modification of lot lines stems from the recent discovery that a property owner's garage is partially built on their neighbor's parcel. To rectify the situation, the owners are asking the Planning Board to accept their proposal to move the property boundary four feet so that the entire garage will be on the same lot. This conveyance would also allow for the maintenance of the structure without accessing their neighbor's property.

It was noted that the minimum street frontage and lot sizes are to be discussed in regards to this application. It was agreed that this proposed boundary adjustment would rectify a deficiency. Due to the uniqueness of this situation, a lot line adjustment may be appropriate even though it will create 46' of frontage for one of the parcels instead of the 50' that it currently has. It was stressed by staff that this is a decision that inconsistent with the City's zoning regulations but will make it far easier for the property owner to sell the property as this would be an issue for any lending institution and the City has no desire to ask the property owner to tear down their garage as a solution.

A motion to approve the lot line adjustment as presented noting and understanding the uniqueness of the situation and as to not set any future precedent was made by Ms. Remillard. Ms. Levesque seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion carried.

A motion to authorize Ms. Langlois to sign the plan as Mr. McCue was absent was made by Ms. Strahan. Ms. Lefebvre seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion carried.

**Site Plan Review – David Poulin (412 Glen Avenue, Tax Map 116, Lot 12) – York Land Services**

Ms. Remillard made a motion to accept the application as complete. Ms. Levesque seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion carried.

Mr. York distributed plans to members of the Board for their review. Ms. Laflamme explained that potential property line issues have emerged relating to this plan and the City's legal counsel has requested that the Planning Board review the application but delay voting on the matter. Mr. York will present the plan and the public hearing will still be conducted at this meeting.

Mr. York explained that David Poulin, owner of 412 Glen Avenue, would like the Planning Board's approval to construct a one-bay car wash at the rear of his property. He has already refurbished the gasoline pumps near the front of the parcel and has begun

construction of the frame of the proposed car wash area. Ms. Remillard asked if it will be an automatic, full service car wash or manual. Mr. York said he believes it is automatic and there will not be a need for patrons to exit their vehicles to wash them. Mr. York noted that the proposed plan also includes an area for ATV storage units on the parcel, however, it is projected to be constructed in the future and not immediately as the car wash is. Discussion of the particulars of the plan ensued, including the intertwining of traffic between the gas pumps and car wash activities. Signage and drainage concerns were also discussed, along with snow removal and parking. Ms. Langlois opened the public hearing at this time. No one spoke. The public hearing was closed.

A motion to table the application until the January 8, 2018 meeting and that this will be the official notice of the continuation of the meeting and that public hearing notices will not be sent out again in regards to this site plan was made by Ms. Lefebvre. Ms. Rayborn seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion carried.

### **Capital Improvement Program presentation**

Jim Wheeler, City Manager, was originally planned to present the capital improvement program (CIP) but was absent from the meeting. Instead, Ms. Laflamme distributed the binders to the group and gave an overview of several of the projects. The CIP marks the unofficial start of the budgeting season. She explained that projects that cost \$10,000 or more and are anticipated to start within the next five fiscal years are included in the plan. By state statute, the Planning Board must vote to recommend the CIP to City Council and at that point the individual projects are vetted and ultimately have funds encumbered for them.

It was noted that there are two new sheets that will be added to the CIP in the coming days but were not ready to be included at the time of this meeting. Discussion followed regarding several of the projects and the potential benefits that could be derived from funding them.

A motion to approve the Capital Improvement Program as presented and recommend that it goes to City Council was made by Ms. Levesque. Ms. Lefebvre seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion carried.

### **Project Updates**

Domino's Pizza Paving – The City of Berlin has been awarded \$5,000 from Domino's Pizza to be used for paving and fixing potholes.

Transportation Alternative Program – Ms. Levesque's students urged the City to apply for funding for a sidewalk that would connect Hutchins Street to Columbia Avenue. The project received the highest score at North Country Council. Now the plan will go to the Department of Transportation. It likely won't be known until this upcoming summer whether funding is ultimately awarded for the project.

Ten-Year Plan – The plan to redo Route 16 from the Berlin/Gorham town line north to Exchange Street and south down Pleasant Street finished third at North Country Council. Route 110 being redone so that the City can extend the urban compact scored further down the list.

In the latter part of 2019 the City will be working with the UNH cooperative extension to begin the master planning update.

**Other**

None

**Public Comments**

None

**Member Comments**

Ms. Lefebvre asked if there has been any updates to the welcome sign font. Ms. Laflamme replied that the City is still weighing their options in regards to a fix and that things won't likely be resolved until late spring.

**Planner Comments**

None

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Ms. Levesque made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Remillard. All in favor, the motion carried. The meeting ended at 8:40 pm.

The next Planning Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 8, 2019.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Bryan Chevarie