

Town of Stafford  
Planning & Zoning Commission  
Regular Meeting  
February 26, 2019  
7:00 p.m. – Veterans' Meeting Room  
Warren Memorial Town Hall

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*Wendy Fraker*  
TOWN CLERK

Members Present: Nancy Ravetto, Chair  
Gene Julian  
Kathy Bachiochi  
Ron Houle  
Cindy Rummel

Also Present: David Perkins, Zoning Enforcement Officer  
Leonard Clark, Alternate  
David Palmberg, Alternate  
Justin Packard, Civil Engineer, Hallisey, Pearson & Cassidy  
Mark D'Addabbo, New England Retail Properties  
Public

**Public Hearing:**

Special Use and Site Plan Permit: Regulation 5.2, line 35: Retail uses having a gross floor area of more than 20,000 sq. ft.

**Applicant:** NERP Holdings and Acquisitions, LLC – Owner: Estate of Michael Duda – Zone: HB.

**Location:** 54 West Stafford Road, Map 47, Lot 9

Construction of a 19,097 sq. ft. Tractor Supply Store with 21,056 sq. ft. of outdoor sales area.

Nancy Ravetto, Chair, opened the public hearing at 7:00 p.m., establishing a quorum with Gene Julian, Kathy Bachiochi, Nancy Ravetto, Ron Houle, and Cindy Rummel.

Kathy Bachiochi read the public notice.

Justin Packard, a civil engineer with Hallisey, Pearson and Cassidy, provided a presentation. He attended the meeting with Mark D'Addabbo of New England Retail Properties (NERP) and other members of the team. Justin Packard provided certifications of mailings and noted a sign advertising the public hearing was posted on the property.

Justin Packard described the site, which consists of 16.21 acres with 314 feet of frontage on West Stafford Road. There are four buildings currently on the site—two single family residential homes in the northwest corner of the lot, an antique store, and a former auto repair facility. Development will be mainly in the front portion of the site. There are presently two curb cuts off of West Stafford Road, one in the northwest corner and the other in the northeast corner. A 24" pipe belonging to the State of Connecticut runs onto the front portion of the site. The discharge from this pipe causes a perennial small water course, and flow runs in a southeast direction to the southeast corner of the property.

The proposal is for a 19,097 square foot retail Tractor Supply store, typical of their other stores. Tractor Supply stores cater to the gentleman farmer, which they expect to be attractive not only to Stafford residents but to residents of neighboring communities. They are also proposing a pet wash station inside the store.

Justin Packard said the proposal meets all the zoning regulations with regard to maximum coverage, building heights and setbacks. They are proposing a 15,000 sq. ft. fenced outdoor display area, which will also include a propane dispensing unit. They are also proposing a 3,000 sq. ft. permanent trailer display area and a 3,000 sq. ft. permanent sidewalk display area.

Access to the site will be via a new curb cut. They are proposing 73 parking spaces plus 4 deferred spaces in the front, eastern portion of the site. The 73 spaces will include 4 handicapped spaces. Three of the parking spaces will be oversized (10' x 40') to accommodate larger vehicles with trailers. Traffic will move completely around the perimeter of the building, so customers picking up larger items will be able to pull around the westerly side of the building, enter the fenced outdoor display area, and then exit to the east side of the building.

The loading dock area will be on the westerly side of the building. Justin Packard said Tractor Supply uses just a six cubic yard dumpster, which will be located in the loading area. Much of their trash is recyclable, which is stored inside the building. The loading area will be screened with a strip of arbor vitae trees on the western rear side of the building. Deciduous shade trees will be planted across the western side front area of the building and along the frontage on West Stafford Road. Because of the location of the building on the property, visibility of the loading area will also be blocked in part by the building on the neighboring property to the west. Additionally, three retaining walls on the eastern side of the parking area, which are to be installed to reduce wetlands activity, will also provide some screening. The retaining walls will be about 4' in height. Justin Packard noted that this project has received Inland Wetlands approval.

Justin Packard reviewed the utilities on the site. There will be public sewer and water services, with two water lines, one which will be a 1-1/2" domestic water line, and the other a 6" fire protection line. Electric, phone and cable services will be underground.

Justin Packard reviewed the storm water system. There will be three catch basins in the center of the parking area, one which will include a storm sceptor. The discharge will eventually be carried to the neighboring wetlands. He reviewed the four storm water quality basins and how runoff will be handled from the roof leaders.

Justin Packard reviewed the lighting plan. There will be two light poles in the landscaping areas in the front of the property and one in the rear. Wall fixtures on the building will be full cut-off.

Justin Packard said the ZEO had requested a traffic study be done, and it was determined that the proposed store will not be a major traffic generator and can be accommodated by the existing roadway network. They will need to eventually apply for an encroachment permit.

Justin Packard reviewed the two proposed signs. One will be a monument pylon sign. It will have a 32 square foot base, dual face, and will be internally illuminated. The sign will be perforated black vinyl

with opaque white solid letters. The wall mounted sign will be of similar design. He provided visuals for how they would look during the day and at night.

Nancy Ravetto asked about the light on the pole in the State Right of Way. Dave Palmberg had noted in their earlier informal discussion on the project that this was likely put up by the owners of the neighboring property. Justin Packard said if it is on their property, they will take it down.

Justin Packard reviewed the building elevations, and materials and colors. Starting from the bottom of the building, the perimeter will be of concrete, split face mason block of a dark tan color. Going up, it will be a lighter color—called urban putty—followed by a gray, galvanized metal awning that will cover the outdoor sidewalk display area. Along the top will be a smooth-faced concrete mason block in safety red, their signature color. These are all earthy colors which will complement the look of the area.

Justin Packard discussed screening of the HVAC units on the roof. He showed pictures of a Tractor Supply store in Middletown, which has a similar layout with similar grades. The parapet wall hides the HVAC units so that they cannot be seen from ground level. The shade trees to be planted also hide the units from the side. Justin Packard noted that they have submitted a Special Permit criteria narrative, which is in the application packet.

David Palmberg had a few questions. He asked if the dog washing area will be self-serve. Justin Packard said it would be, clarifying that there will be no boarding of animals at the site. David also asked about the west side loading dock, and if it was portable. Justin Packard said it is on wheels but will stay primarily in that location. David asked if the easement in favor of the State will be extended for additional piping. Justin Packard said this will be dictated by the State.

Ron Houle asked if they expect to have to add in a pump station. Justin Packard said they feel there is adequate pressure on the site.

Nancy Ravetto said she was impressed by Tractor Supply's recycling process. She also asked about the brightness of the sign at night and if it will be distracting to people driving by. Justin Packard said the reversed black and white signage results in less illumination. Mark D'Addabbo noted also that the lights turn off about an hour after the store closes. This includes the parking lot, signage, and building lights.

Gene Julian asked David Perkins if signatures for waivers for health, wetlands, and water pollution are on a form. David Perkins said he did receive a letter from the Chair of the Wetlands Commission. He said the plans were referred to the various departments and he did not receive any comments back. David Palmberg said he would expect sign-offs would be required before the applicant could get a certificate of occupancy.

David Perkins asked if any more information had been received on test hole drillings. Justin Packard said there was none that he knew of but they felt what they had would suffice. Ron Houle asked where snow would be piled after a storm. Justin Packard showed the cross-hatched areas on the plan where snow would be stockpiled. If there was too much that would interfere with providing adequate parking, he said it would be removed from the site.

Nancy Ravetto confirmed with Justin Packard that they would work with the ZEO on a landscaping bond.

David Palmberg said he did not think deferring four parking spaces would be a problem. He asked how many employees would be on site at any given time. The reply was that four to five is the norm.

The public hearing was opened to public comment. Joe Paradiso of 19 Laurel Drive asked Justin Packard to review once more the building materials for the Tractor Supply. Nancy Ravetto noted afterwards that typically when there is a long expanse of a building, the PZC asks for windows or some other treatment to break up the look, but they felt because the building sits so far back from the road, that the proposed look would be acceptable.

David Perkins asked if any sidewalks would be installed. Justin Packard said there will be a sidewalk across the frontage that would connect with the concrete sidewalk bump-out, and also one around the eastern side of the building. Nancy Ravetto said the Commission has been working toward getting sidewalks in their business corridor, but at this point, most of the sidewalks have been installed on the other side of West Stafford Road. In this case, they had decided it would not be warranted. David Palmberg also noted that if sidewalks were installed at the road, they would be in the State Right of Way.

Ron Houle asked how often the store would expect large truck deliveries. Mark D'Addabbo said they would generally expect about one large delivery a week from the distribution center.

There were no further questions or comments. Gene Julian made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Kathy Bachiochi. All were in favor.

Regular Meeting Agenda:

1. Call to order and establish a quorum.
2. Review minutes of January 22, 2019 Regular meeting.
3. Discussion – possible action – public meeting item: Tractor Supply Store – 54 West Stafford Road
4. Floating Zones
5. New and Other Business
6. Adjournment

**1. Call to order and establish a quorum.**

Nancy Ravetto, Chair, called the regular meeting to order at 7:50 p.m., establishing a quorum with Nancy Ravetto, Chair; Gene Julian, Kathy Bachiochi, Ron Houle and Cindy Rummel.

**2. Review minutes of January 22, 2019 Regular Meeting**

Gene Julian made a motion to approve the January 22, 2019 Regular meeting minutes, seconded by Cindy Rummel. Gene Julian, Cindy Rummel, Nancy Ravetto, and Kathy Bachiochi voted in favor. Ron Houle abstained. Motion carried.

**3. Discussion – possible action – public meeting item: Tractor Supply Store – 54 West Stafford Road.**

Nancy Ravetto said she felt the presentation was good and that having the pre-meeting was beneficial. Gene Julian added that he felt Tractor Supply would be a great addition to Stafford.

Gene Julian made a motion, seconded by Ron Houle, to approve the application submitted by NERP Holdings and Acquisitions, LLC for construction of a 19,097 sq. ft. tractor supply store with indoor pet washing area and 21,056 sq. ft. outdoor display areas at 54 West Stafford Road.

Information submitted includes:

Application dated 1/17/2019;

Site plan entitled Wetlands and Site Plan/Special Use Permit Application last Revised 1/29/2019 by Hallisey, Pearson and Cassidy.

Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Report

**8.10 Criteria for decision:**

The commission finds that the standards set forth in Section 8.10a of the Zoning Regulations have been met. The site plans show the construction of a store that is in harmony with the neighborhood and that complies with the regulations. The wetlands commission has rendered a favorable report to the commission. The plan is in accordance with the Plan of Conservation and Development.

The plan is compatible with the character of the neighborhood and does not cause excessive traffic or safety concerns.

**Conditions:**

- A. Landscaping Bond \$ amount to be submitted by applicant and reviewed and approved by ZEO.
- B. Sidewalks will be installed as presented in the public hearing.
- C. The Commission waives the immediate installation of four parking spaces in accordance with regulation 6.2D.

A vote was taken on the motion, and all were in favor.

**4. Floating Zones**

Nancy Ravetto read a memo from alternate member Chris Joseph, who could not attend the meeting this evening, regarding floating zones. She said they will not take up discussion on it until Chris Joseph can be there for the meeting.

Nancy Ravetto distributed town maps to each Commission member and asked if they might each take an area of town and drive around and visually consider what areas, if any, might be a good fit for a floating zone. Members were asked to jot down open, undeveloped areas, noting any abandoned buildings or houses. Ron Houle suggested crossing out non-viable pieces. David Palmberg said it would be good to note resource areas, such as flood areas. David Perkins said he could provide each with a zoning map with an overlay showing watercourses, etc. He could put all the parcels on the map and also indicate properties that are in farm tax status.

Members agreed to look at the areas as follows: David Palmberg said he would take the area west of Route 32, and Route 319 up to the Somers line, including the Hampden Road area; Gene Julian said he would take the Borough area, including Tolland Avenue and Tolland Avenue West; Nancy Ravetto said she would take the east side of Route 32 up to the Massachusetts line; Ron Houle said he would take Route 190 to Route 19 up to Union; Cindy Rummel said she would take the Staffordville area, including Route 19 and up to Wales Road, including New City Road; Kathy Bachiochi said she would take Route 140 to Route 30, including Crystal Lake Road and Cooper Lane, from the West Stafford church and over.

**5. New and Other Business**

Dave Perkins reminded the Commission that the next meeting will include a public hearing for the zoning updates on parking, buffers, and landscaping. This will be on March 12, 2019.

Gene Julian asked if there was any word on when the Cumberland Farms construction will begin at the former Backus Motors. David Perkins said there may be a possible change to the plans. He heard from the applicant's attorney and they may wish to go with a slightly smaller building. He told them to bring him a plan. If it is not a major change, he will just run it by the Chair. If the changes proposed are larger, he will bring it to the Commission. There was also inquiry about if the existing Cumberland Farms is going to be redoing their in-ground tanks. David Perkins said he has not heard anything concrete yet.

**6. Adjournment.**

Ron Houle made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Cindy Rummel. All were in favor. The February 26, 2019 Stafford Planning and Zoning Commission meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Annie Gentile  
Recording Secretary