



**Town of Hamilton Planning Board  
PO Box 429, 577 Bay Road  
Hamilton, MA 01936  
978-468-5584**

**MINUTES**

**July 2, 2013**

Welcome – Chairman Ed Howard opened the meeting at 7:30 PM. Planning Board members Rob McKean, Claudia Woods, Peter Clark, Brian Stein and Alternate Jeffrey Melick were present. Planning Coordinator Kristine Cheetham was also present.

Site Plan Review Continued: Winthrop School – New Parking Spaces

Dave Hanlon, Hamilton DPW Director, made a presentation regarding the proposed new parking spaces at the Winthrop School. A revised site plan prepared by CBI engineering was provided to the Board. He demonstrated where the site lighting, existing trees, catch basins and topography were featured on the plan. Dave spoke to the location and features of the new catch basin to be installed under the new parking lot.

C. Woods asked about the size of the parking spaces. The applicant noted that they were designed as the standard 9 x 18 feet. She asked why the visitor parking space in the loop was only planned for 14' in depth. B. Derry from the HW Regional School District noted that the visitor space was designed to remove the cars from the loop but also to protect the root system for the ornamental trees. He agreed that roughly 4' of vehicle may end up in the loop but that it was less than what currently exists. The Board discussed the tradeoff of having the entire space located outside the travel lane versus the exact location of the trees and root systems. The advisory letter to the ZBA will note this issue.

Mr. Hanlon stated that the public works departments from Hamilton and Wenham will both participate in the site preparation before paving. The actual paving will be completed by the paver under contract with the town. He also explained the plan for drainage from each of the

new parking areas. He confirmed that the town would repaint all of the newly paved areas including a crosswalk from the handicap parking area to the curb cut.

The Board expressed concern about the circulation plan for arrival and dismissal. A note requesting more information will be included in the advisory letter.

**ACTION:** P. Clark made a motion to forward a favorable opinion of the site plan with specific comments raised during the review to the Zoning Board of Appeals. R. McKean seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Comments to the ZBA:

#### Parking Spaces

- Requirements – The zoning bylaw requirements for parking spaces at a school are for one space per classroom and one space per two employees. There are 24 classrooms and 66 employees: a total of 90 required. The applicant states that there are 58 spaces however the existing site plan only denotes 37 in the parking lot. The ZBA may wish to confirm the location of the actual current parking spaces. The new plan will have a total of 66 (this number may go up depending on confirmation of total spaces in existing lot) spaces.

Although the applicant states that the school meets current zoning, the number of spaces is not adequate for current use. Note: the bylaw only requires one space for two employees. This would work if the school was a business with shifts but it is not. All employees work at the same time. The new parking spaces will relieve some pressure from use of the public safety and COA lot but is not likely to address all parking needs. Special classroom events and other school-wide and community events at the school will still impact the surrounding area.

- Three New Parking Areas
  - A. New Employee Lot – 14 parking spaces are proposed. Spaces should be standard 9' x 18'. The ZBA may wish to consider having one section designated for compact cars only because turning radius to diagonal spaces closest to the loop is slightly restricted by width of drive aisle.
  - B. Visitor and ADA Spaces – 15 spaces are proposed. Spaces should be standard 9' x 18'. Two HP spaces and one HP Van will be designated. These spaces are located directly opposite the ADA curb cut on the sidewalk to the school entrance. The current proposal shows a depth of 14' for spaces cut into the existing lawn. This was intended to save the row of decorative trees. However, this leaves roughly 4' overhang of parked vehicles in the loop access area. The ZBA may wish to remove and replant the decorative trees to reduce any vehicle conflict in the loop.
  - C. Bus Parking – Two bus parking spaces will be added along the loop area.

Landscaping – There are no proposed changes to the landscaping with this plan. A majority of the site landscaping is not shown on the site plan. The decorative trees near Parking Lot B have been noted on the plan.

Drainage – A new catch basin will be installed to address runoff from Parking Lot A (roughly 7,500 Sq. Ft.). The catch basin will not be treating any suspended solids. Underground connections will be established with the existing catch basin system and drainage at the site. The DPW director will finalize the exact location of the new catch basin as field work commences. Drainage for Parking Lot B (roughly 2,500 Sq. Ft.) will flow from the lot to a graveled perimeter of the new parking area and then into the lawn area where there is a catch basin that flows toward Bay Road. The gravel strip is a natural way to absorb runoff, solids, and to maintain the landscaping. Drainage for Parking Lot C (roughly 2,000 Sq. Ft.) will flow into the existing catch basins in the loop road adjacent to the new parking area.

#### Public Safety / Circulation / Signs

- ADA Spaces – A crosswalk from the ADA van space to the curb cut should be striped after paving is complete. This was requested because the ADA spaces are located across a drive aisle.
- Pedestrian Safety & Sidewalks – The sidewalks are noted on the plan. The applicant agreed to install three ADA ramps along the sidewalk adjacent to the new Parking Lot A to improve accessibility at the site. The ZBA may wish to request another ADA ramp at the curb in front of the building for consistency.
- Circulation – The applicant noted that the circulation pattern for school drop-off and pick-up will remain. The ZBA may wish to secure a letter from School Principal denoting the circulation plan. The DPW was amenable to striping arrows on the pavement to indicate a preferred one-way circulation in Parking Lot A. The ZBA may wish to request additional painting of arrows in the existing employee parking lot to demonstrate the circulation for exiting the site through the Public Safety and Council on Aging parking lot.
- Signs – The applicant plans to install three signs for the ADA parking spaces. If additional signs are proposed for visitors, compact cars, and designated administrative parking, they should be noted on the plan.

Site Features- There are no changes proposed to the site features at this time. The topography lines are visible on the larger scale drawing of the site. The location of snow storage, dumpsters, utilities, and water supply are not visible on plan but exist on site. There are seven light poles (LP on plan) in the existing employee parking lot. The front of the school building is lit in the evening hours as well. There are no new lights proposed for the new parking lots A & B. However, most employees are gone in the day time and the site is reasonably lit in the evenings.

#### General Discussion

- Barr Grant / Downtown Planning Summer Meetings  
K. Cheetham provided an update on the Barr Grant and downtown planning effort. She informed the Board that she was working directly with the consultant and had recently completed a site walk to familiarize the consultant with the study area. The goal for the

grant is to develop community consensus on a vision for the downtown and to produce zoning recommendations for future development. Two focus group meetings will be held over the summer to incorporate input from downtown residents, business owners and property owners.

E. Howard was concerned that the process would not result in a wastewater treatment plant. He would like to see more effort placed on determining the site features for locating a treatment facility and the soil analysis. P. Clark added that financing and implementation capacity may have held up previous efforts for wastewater treatment.

R. McKean suggested that any efforts to introduce traffic calming measures for the downtown area would be important. Pedestrian safety is a concern for the community.

P. Clark asked if the Winthrop School was part of the downtown plan? K. Cheetham noted that it was included in the study area.

- Zoning & Planning

The members of the Board discussed general planning concepts. The Board deliberated about the role of the Planning Board with regard to regulatory functions and planning functions.

K. Cheetham asked the Board if they were willing to review the In-Law and Accessory Unit bylaws. The Chair of the ZBA noted at a previous meeting that there was increased interest in developing accessory units but that the bylaws were complicated. There are currently four different types of bylaws for these units. P. Clark noted that the restrictions were put in place to keep the identity of Hamilton as a single family residential community.

- Other Discussion Items

Chairman Howard noted that he was scheduled to meet with the Town Manager and Chair of the Board of Selectmen. He asked the Board if they had any topics of concern for this meeting. The members agreed that the role of the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals with regard to site plan review was something they would like to address.

## **Adjourn**

9:25 PM R. McKean made a motion to adjourn. P. Clark seconded. All voted in favor.