

**Natick Planning Board  
Hybrid (In-Person and Remote)  
January 18, 2023**

Chair Andrew Meyer called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM. Members present were Andrew Meyer, Glen Glater, Teresa Evans, Peter Nottonson, and Douglas Landry; and Associate Member Chris Therrien. Also present was Community & Economic Development Director Amanda Loomis.

**Executive Session**

Ms. Evans moved to enter executive session to discuss strategy within respect to litigation, Linda Valentin v. Town of Natick, where an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the public body. The motion was seconded by Mr. Glater. Roll call vote 5-0-0. Roll call vote 5-0. MOTION PASSED

Ms. Evans declared the vote and affirmed the entry into executive session at 6:07 PM.

The Board returned to open session at 7:08 PM.

**Public Speak:** *None*

**Public Hearings – Development Projects**

**7 Middlesex Ave:** *Application of Soap Dental, PLLC, for Site Plan Review to reuse a portion of an existing structure for a dentist's office*

*Document: 01.05.2023 DRAFT Decision 7 Middlesex revisions.docx*

Ms. Loomis reviewed the status of the draft decision seeking Board comment. She said that this draft incorporated comments from the applicant's counsel. Members raised questions regarding snow storage and signage.

Ms. Evans moved to approve the application, seconded by Mr. Landry. Roll call vote 6-0  
MOTION PASSED

Ms. Evans moved to close the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Landry. Roll call vote 6-0  
MOTION PASSED

**0 Magnolia:** *Application of Magnolia Lake Front, LLC (Jared Gillett) for a definitive subdivision plan. The project will include creating two new lots (for a total of three buildable lots), construction of a new roadway, and installation of associated infrastructure and landscaping (contd. from 12/21/22)*

Ms. Loomis said the applicant requested a continuance without testimony and noted that he had done so on multiple occasions. She said the application would need an extension for time

because the adjudication period would run out in March. Members discussed denying the application without prejudice. Mr. Meyer urged the Board to continue the hearing until February 1, then take up the possibility of an extension then.

Ms. Evans moved for a continuance to February 1, 2023, seconded by Mr. Landry.  
Roll call vote 6-0. MOTION PASSED

**41-43 Summer St:** *Application of Kevin Poulsen for Site Plan Review and Special Permits for Use and Aquifer Protection District (APD) (contd. from 012/21/23)*

Ms Loomis said the applicant requested a continuance to February 15.

Mr. Landry asked for an update on the status of the project. Ms. Loomis said the applicant was moving forward with counsel to clarify the question of the easements. She said they had submitted no new documents.

Ms. Evans moved for a continuance to February 15, 2023, seconded by Mr. Landry. Roll call vote 6-0. MOTION PASSED

**50 Pleasant St (PB-22-26):** *Application of Linda Valentin for Site Plan Review, Special Permit for Historic Preservation (§ III-J of Natick Zoning Bylaw), Special Permit for Aquifer Protection District (APD), Scenic Roadway Modification. (contd. from 01/04/23)*

*Document: 01.13.2023 50 Pleasant Street Three Task Memo.pdf*

Applicants Joel and Linda Valentin appeared before the Board.

Ms. Loomis outlined her three objectives for the evening established at the previous meeting. She reviewed the Sacred Heart Church project; she updated the base structure's square footage to include the four-season porch; and she created an option for a two-part approval process.

Ms. Loomis summarized her research for the Sacred Heart church redevelopment project often referenced as the "Eliot Street church project." She confirmed that the methodology to determine square footage for the "church project" was consistent with that for the current project. In the case of the "church project," the original public hearing was limited to the church building, and the redevelopment of the rectory was added in the second hearing. Square footage calculations for the church did not include any exterior spaces, just an interior stair. The square footage calculation for the rectory did not include the basement or porch. She noted that the original Historic Preservation Bylaw included a Section 4 that stated that 'the SPGA may modify density regulations for the district by 10%' but that this section was removed in 2017.

Ms. Valentin questioned the accuracy of the calculations presented by Ms. Loomis and asked what the allowed square footage for the project would be. Mr. Meyer said that 11,689 SF was the base number, including the four-season room and without additional modifiers. He said the square footage with the 10% new construction (1168 SF) allowed under the Historic

Preservation Bylaw would be 12,857.9 SF. He said the square footage with an additional ten percent from the Board's discretionary waiver would bring the total to 14,143.69 SF.

Ms. Valentin said she agreed with 11,689 SF as the base number. Mr. Meyer asked Ms. Valentin if she was still requesting deferral on certain submissions and a decision conditioned on the provision of an engineered site plan and other documents at a later date. She said she was.

At Mr. Meyer's request, Ms. Loomis outlined the potential two-tier approval process. She outlined a two-tiered process, with the first part being the approval of a historic preservation special permit with conditions, and site plan review to be undertaken later. The project would then go before the Conservation Commission for review of the stormwater management plan. Mr. Meyer said that the first decision would incorporate the requirement for all of the elements that were proposed for deferral subject to future receipt, review, and approval as a part of the same public hearing.

Mr. Landry asked what the Board was obligated to review at this stage of the project. Ms. Loomis clarified the Board would be conducting site plan review of the project, special permit for the aquifer protection district, and scenic road modification for Pleasant Street.

Mr. Nottonson noted that submissions that would be conditioned in the historic preservation special permit would have to receive Board approval to move forward.

Mr. Landry asked what mechanism would have deferred the required documents. Mr. Meyer said the submission of the required documents would have been conditioned in the historic preservation bylaw decision for submission at a later date. Mr. Landry disagreed with the mechanism in question being the historic preservation bylaw. Ms. Evans clarified the language required to condition the deferral of the required documents in a decision.

Tim Donahue, 17 St. Thomas Ave, noted the Town assessor's calculations on interior habitable space and area as found on the Town website, which were lower than the numbers discussed now. He said the historic structures that were meant to be preserved were no longer recognizable in the submission and raised concern about the size of the current project.

Brad Peterson, 7 Dover Rd, reiterated Mr. Donahue's points. He asked for clarification for how the measurements were calculated for the current project. Ms. Loomis clarified that the current project's methodology for determining the square footage was consistent with that of the "church project." Mr. Peterson questioned whether some spaces considered habitable in the calculation were not in fact habitable.

John McConville, 9 St. Thomas Ave, reiterated prior concerns regarding project size and scope.

Mr. Meyer asked Ms. Loomis how long it would take to produce a draft of the first tier of a two-tiered decision. Ms. Loomis said she could have a draft decision in circulation by February 3.

Ms. Evans moved for a continuance to February 15, 2023, seconded by Ms. Therrien. Roll call vote 6-0. MOTION PASSED

**1 Superior Drive:** *Application of Superior Drive Hotel Owner, LLC, c/o XSS LLC for modification of the overall site plan and to previously approved decisions PB-12-17; PB-14-17; PB-278-18; PB-17-19 (contd. from 2/1/22)*

*Document: 2023.01.18\_Town of Natick Planning Board Meeting\_1 Superior Drive.pdf*

Ms. Evans read the public hearing into the record.

Applicant Eben Tormey (XSS Hotels), Attorney Katherine Garrahan, Katie Snyder (National Development), Justin DuFresne (civil engineer), Vinod Kalikiri (traffic engineer), and Jason Diorio (architect) appeared before the Board. Ms. Garrahan presented an overview of the proposal and the plan to amend previous decisions to develop a separately branded hotel in a structure to be integrated with the current hotel building.

Mr. Tormey described his company's operations and the objective of the project. Mr. DuFresne reviewed the site plan, including the proposed addition, parking, and a minor change to the perimeter multi-use path. The 22,536 SF addition would have 56 hotel rooms, bringing the total room count for the two hotels to 192. He briefly reviewed the utility plan, stormwater management plan, and emergency vehicle access.

Mr. Kalikiri presented the parking analysis and clarified the area of study. He briefly reviewed existing connectivity for bicyclists and pedestrians and noted that the site is bounded by roadway on all four sides. He proposed that a number of the spaces would be sized to accommodate compact cars. Mr. Diorio presented the proposed floor plan, elevations, and signage for the addition, noting that the two hotels would share a common lobby.

Mr. Nottonson spoke in favor of the project.

Mr. Glater asked for clarification on site lighting and the opportunity to review the landscape plan. Mr. DuFresne clarified the existing landscaping plan and the trees that needed to be transplanted for the addition. Mr. Diorio said they were not planning additional downlighting on the addition. To Mr. Glater's question about rooftop solar arrays and EV charging stations, Mr. Tormey said that while there was not a plan for solar panels, they currently have two EV charging station and might install two more.

Mr. Landry asked whether the two sets of signage would be confusing. Mr. Diorio said this was designed to differentiate the two brands in the same building, but noted that the shared lobby meant that guests could not go astray.

The Board and Mr. Tormey discussed the shared parking and the plan to "restripe" the parking lot to accommodate additional spaces. Mr. Tormey cited data that showed parking utilization was not exhausted even during peak use.

Mr. Landry asked for clarification on why the traffic study did not account for traffic entering from the west. Mr. Kalikiri said the majority of the traffic through the area arrived on the site from points north and south, not from the west.

Mr. Glater asked if the traffic data accounted for the redevelopment of the Neiman Marcus buildings. Mr. Kalikiri said that planned or proposed projects are required to be a part of traffic data.

Mr. Meyer asked if the applicants were friendly to cleaning up the landscaping and excess trash on the state land immediately adjacent to their property. Mr. Tormey said they had, to the best of their abilities, worked to tidy the problem areas.

Mr. Meyer suggested that informational signage would help potential hotel guests find multi-use paths to local amenities within walking distance. Mr. Tormey agreed that more information promoting walking to local attractions was a priority. Mr. Meyer said a physical sign may provide more helpful information for visitors to Natick.

Ms. Evans asked if there was any data on pedestrian and vehicle “interactions” on that portion of Speen St. Mr. Kalikiri said the traffic study included pedestrian collisions, which included one instance of a pedestrian car collision in the five years of data collected for a single intersection.

Ms. Evans asked about the topography of the property and the path. Mr. Dufresne said within the bounds of the property the grading was either flat or had been made flat.

Ms. Evans raised concern about the percentage of compact parking. Mr. Dufresne said their decision was based on language in the zoning bylaws associated with their zoning district. Ms. Evans reiterated the sentiment of the Town Engineer that having such a significant amount of compact parking was not best practice.

Ms. Evans expressed concern that the language in the legal ad did not making specific reference to the issuance of a special permit.

Ms. Evans moved for a continuance to February 1, 2023, seconded by Mr. Landry.  
Roll call vote 6-0. MOTION PASSED

## **2023 Spring Annual Town Meeting**

- 1. Downtown Gateway Zoning District - none**
- 2. Residential Cluster Development - none**
- 3. Use Regulation Table - none**
- 4. General Housekeeping - none**

## **Planning Board Business: 09.14.22 Minutes**

Ms. Evans moved to approve the minutes September 14, 2022, seconded by Mr. Nottonson.  
Roll call vote 6-0. MOTION PASSED

January 18, 2023

Page 6 of 6

Ms. Evans moved to adjourn at 10:05 PM, seconded by Mr. Glater. Roll call vote 6-0.

MOTION PASSED