



Town of Danvers  
**Planning Board**

Danvers Town Hall  
One Sylvan Street  
Danvers, MA 01923  
www.danvers.govoffice.com

Planning Board Members:

William Prentiss, Chair  
Aaron Henry  
James Sears  
Margaret Zilinsky  
John Farmer

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**NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING**  
**Danvers Senior Center/25 Stone Street**  
**May 8, 2018**  
**7:00 p.m.**  
**MINUTES**

William Prentiss called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Planning Board members Aaron Henry, James Sears, Margaret Zilinsky and John Farmer were present. Planning and Human Services Director Karen Nelson was also present.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**313 Maple Street.** Request by Daniel Corbett, Trustee of Jenkay Realty Trust for endorsement of Form A plan to separate the existing single-family dwelling from remaining land. (Assessor's Map 33, Lot 21) (*Approval Not Required Action Date: May 15, 2018*)

Prentiss told the Board that this application was being withdrawn due to a clerical error. The applicant was going to reapply at a later date.

**MOTION:** Henry moved to accept the withdrawal of the application for the Approval Not Required plan relative to the property located at 313 Maple Street. Zilinsky seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.

**MINUTES**

May 8, 2018

**MOTION:** Zilinsky moved to approve the minutes of May 8, 2018. Sears seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

## **CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING**

**Isle of Skye Estates Definitive Subdivision f/k/a Putnam Hill Estates Definitive Subdivision (105 Dayton Street).** Request for Definitive Subdivision Plan Approval submitted by 115 Dayton St LLC for property at 105 Dayton Street, pursuant to the Rules and Regulations Governing the Subdivision of Land, Town of Danvers Planning Board. Said property is located in the R-III Zoning District. The applicant proposes to develop a six (6) lot single-family residential subdivision on the property located at 105 Dayton Street. The site consists of approximately 5.03 acres of land improved with a single-family dwelling which will be removed. (Assessor's Map 31, Lot 61) (*Definitive Subdivision action date: May 4, 2018*) **(To be continued without discussion at the applicant's request to May 22, 2018 with the extension of the action date to May 31, 2018)**

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

**75 Sylvan Street.** Request for a Major Modification to an approved Site Plan pursuant to Section 4 of the Zoning Bylaw submitted by Brookwood Sylvan, LLC for property located in the Industrial-II Zone District for the construction of two new loading docks on the south side of Building 'A', relocation of an existing site driveway along Sylvan Street and reconfiguring the parking layout in the southerly portion of the site. (*Site Plan action date: May 21, 2018*)

Prentiss read the legal notice.

Tom Zajac, Senior Engineer with Hayner/Swanson, Inc., appeared before the Board on behalf of the owner and applicant, Brookwood Sylvan, LLC. Amy Grey, from Brookwood Properties, was also present. They are seeking a major modification to construct two loading docks on the south side of Building A. They will relocate an existing site driveway along Sylvan Street to accommodate truck access to the new loading docks. They will reconfigure the parking layout in this area.

The property consists of approximately 15 acres, and it is abutted by residential properties on Adams Street, Pine Street and Sylvan Street. This property is zoned as Industrial-2. This was the former Sylvania property. One million dollars was spent for the clean-up of the site. The site consists of approximately 274,000 square feet in three buildings with 900 parking spaces. The buildings have offices and warehouse space. Access to the site is by numerous curb cuts on Sylvan Street and Adams Street.

Building A on the southerly side of the property has been occupied by a single tenant, which is now being converted to a multi-tenant space. They are going to add potential types of users as opposed to typical office space.

Zajac said that they are proposing two new loading docks along with reconfiguring the parking area. This will accommodate the loading area and relocate an existing site driveway. The proposed configuration has the best minimized visual impact from Sylvan Street. There is no increase or decrease in the building area. There will be new curbing. Sidewalks will be

Planning Board Minutes

May 8, 2018

relocated for ADA parking spaces, and light poles will be relocated. There is no change to drainage. The project will result in a decrease of 900 square feet of impervious area.

The project will have a decrease of 45 spaces for a new total number of 871. A minimum of 863 parking spaces are required by the bylaw. This decrease still meets the requirement. There is a surplus of parking on site. Even with the decrease, there will still be sufficient parking available on the site.

Zajac said that trucks would enter off Adams Street and travel south to access the loading area at the rear of the building. Once the trucks were unloaded, they would exit through Sylvan Street. Presently they drive across the parking area. This would be an improved truck route with the relocation of parking and loading. They are proposing modifications to an approved plan for loading and site improvement.

Farmer asked what the current square footage was for office use and warehouse use from the total 274,000 square feet. Zajac said that 200,000 square feet is used as commercial office space, and 77,000 square feet is used as warehouse space.

Farmer asked if the space in Building A was currently mixed-use or office. Zajac said that the space is currently a commercial office space.

Farmer stated that there are less parking demands with a warehouse. He questioned if that was why 871 parking spaces is reasonable for that location. Zajac said that the concentration of parking is on the other side of the site.

Henry asked if trucks were going to be backed into the loading dock so that the headlights would be facing south. Zajac said that this was a recessed loading dock. There is light landscaping with a chain link fence between the site and the neighbors.

Henry told Zajac that they may want to pay attention to the headlight issues.

Sears questioned whether the 15 parking spaces on the plan that faced Pine Street were in reserve. It was determined that these spaces were actually being used.

Amy Grey, from Brookwood Properties, said that the concentration of parking was in the C & B Buildings.

Sears asked if they would have access towards the Sylvan Street side. Grey said trucks already drive behind the site.

Zajac said that the trucks would enter through Adams Street and navigate through the site. Now they drive out through the parking area to get to the existing curb cut. They will enter and exit the site more directly.

Sears asked what the screening was with the abutter. Zajac responded that it was light landscaping with a chain link fence.

Sears asked the hours of operation. Grey said they were marketing this site on spec. They do not have a prospect in mind. If they were to land a tenant that would need a dock, this area would be ready to go.

Sears said that the noise and hours of the trucks being on the site needs to be teased out. They cannot sit in the parking lot at 4:00 a.m. idling.

Grey said that this was not a new use. They do not know who the tenant is going to be.

Zilinsky said that landscaping is a concern, as is the tractor trailer trucks. She does not want the trucks idling. She would want them to come back to the Board with a tenant. She is concerned with the hours of operation. She would like some consideration for the buffer area regarding the truck route around the site.

Zajac said that the zoning regulations regulate truck deliveries. The applicant is coming before you as spec to make this tenant space more attractive. Grey would not have a problem coming back before the Board.

Zajac said that this was a single user tenant previously. There is not going to be an increase in truck traffic. Trucks will be using this loading dock.

Andrea Walke, 192 Pine Street. Walke said that her house abuts the south side of Sylvania. She has heard nothing but noise over the last 20 years that she has lived here. There are beeping noises from the trucks. It is more than just the loading docks. Walke said that she has called the company. She asked what time the trucks will be going in and out of the site, since they are in and out all the time now. All traffic and lights go towards the condominiums. Walke said that the neighbors would see this day in and day out. She said that the applicant is inconsiderate. She would like them to think about timing. She asked what the construction was going to sound like. They would like to sleep to at least 6:00 a.m. The traffic has kept them up. There is only a chain link fence with no shrubbery. Walke asked why they needed more loading docks since they only have a certain number of buildings and tenants. She told the Board that if they are adding two loading docks, they need to look at this due to the lights and traffic. This project will just aggravate the neighbors.

Rosen Georgieva, 97 Sylvan Street, Unit 4. Georgieva said that they hear noise all the time. He hears the trucks at night as late as midnight and 1:00 a.m. He is a truck driver and said that a majority of truck drivers are bad. They turn the area into a trash area. Georgieva said that he spoke with a truck driver who said he was going to sleep in his truck at the site. Landscapers come and work all night to do the snow plowing. It is not fair for the people that live there, especially when they are going to design a new driveway. Georgieva said this place is ridiculous now. He moved to Danvers 10 years ago and loves it. He wants to be able to enjoy coffee on the balcony on a Saturday or Sunday morning and not see trucks. He apologized if he hurt someone.

He wants the owners to say the truth. It can't be like this. He likes his peace and quiet. He does not want to hear trucks or loading docks.

Reilly Finnegan, 97 Sylvan Street, Unit 6. Finnegan said that their bedrooms are close to the chain link fence. The trucks blow their horns and idle on the site. This proposed route would direct them closer to our bedrooms. It would come right up to the chain link fence. There are no hours of operation. There is noise at all hours of the night. She does not trust any hours of operation that are established being adhered to. Finnegan said she moved to Danvers four years ago. This would make her move out of Town. This site is already a problem, and this project would make it worse.

Linda Dieter, 188 Pine Street. Dieter said that her property abuts the parking lot on Pine Street. She has lived in her home since she has been two years old. This house has been in her family since 1942. She felt this site keeps encroaching closer to the neighbors. The owners do not listen to complaints. They continually move snow during the winter. No one parks in that area, so she felt there was no reason to plow it. Dieter said they had a big musical event recently on a Sunday, and the neighbors were never consulted. The event blared music. She is tired of never being heard. This would send headlights into their bedrooms and make more noise. It would cause more aggravation than what exists presently. Dieter said that they were told the last time this was remodeled that it would be office space. The loading docks were being used for deliveries for the office space. They have never kept their word. She would implore the Board to listen to the neighbors.

Estelle Maroney, 181 Pine Street. Maroney said that this was quite an eye-opener. Living at 181 Pine Street, they look at the whole parking lot. She felt that what happens to the neighbors really needs to be considered. She has lived here for 46 years. The site has had improvements. The old fence and landscaping done been replaced. Maroney said that she is getting older and wants peace and quiet at night. The trucks are idling, and she cannot sleep. One night she called the police about an idling truck which was immediately shut off and quiet. They have never gone through what they are going through. It is time that someone pays attention. She does not want to move north since there is nothing affordable in Danvers.

Farmer said that he is concerned, and felt the building needs a professional management company.

Grey said that Brookwood Financial Partners is the management company as well. It is headquartered in Beverly.

Farmer questioned the snow removal.

Grey said that snow removal is tricky. When tenants are coming to work early, you have to plow during the storm and try to push the snow to the areas that are not in use. Grey said that there is a lot of moving snow back and forth. They cannot wait until 8:00 a.m. to plow.

Farmer said that for residents, an office use is indicative. A warehouse is going to bring more trucks to the site, it is not easy access.

Grey said that they are chasing the highest demand. This site was originally all industrial. They found a tenant for 40,000 square feet of the 90,000 square-foot area. This space has a very high clear height. There is very little warehouse space in this area. Grey said that they have been chasing light manufacturing since 2016.

Farmer asked if the management company enforces the restrictions.

Grey said that she would have to consult with the property manager. The tenants are responsible for abiding by the law. If they get a complaint, they can speak to the tenant. She is not sure who the enforcer is. They can be the go-between or the communicator.

Farmer asked if it is built into the leases.

Grey said that tenants would have to abide by the occupancy permit.

Henry said that this applicant has an action date before the next meeting. Can we have more time for dialogue since we will not have the time tonight to do this.

Sears felt the decision should be conditioned that once it is determined who the tenant is going to be, the applicant will need to come back before the Board to determine the hours of operation along with the truck requirements on that side of the building.

Zilinsky said that she is concerned. She felt the tenants are not abiding by the hours of operation. The property company may need to meet with the residents. We have industrial and residential abutting each other. There is no consideration to noise and truck lights and the change of route for the trucks. There are concerns regarding the idling and beeping. They need to sit with the residents and talk with the management company to stop what is happening.

Prentiss said that like others on the Board and in the audience, he has grown up in this town. He is impressed with the site. He likes that it has been cleaned up and is more active. The truck pathway is an improvement, but the drawback is what has been voiced tonight. They need to see the applicant come back to address the lights from the trucks. They need to have some guidance as to what can be done from the Board. He felt there should be some type of obstruction/plantings along the fence to block the lights.

Prentiss told the applicant that if they wanted a vote tonight, it would probably not be in their favor. There are trucks on the site 24/7. Are the trucks stopping and staying on the site? Are they making deliveries to places that are open? If these are trucks not associated with any of the building's uses, that needs to be addressed. There needs to be some mitigation that the people in this area are not listening to a truck's horn, idling or lights.

Zajac told the Board that he and Grey were not aware of the issues of the idling trucks and noise. If there is an enforcement issue from the Town or the property management group, they can get some firmer answers. They are focusing on the warehouse use. They are seeking a light manufacturing loading area. This is a tough site since there is industrial right in the heart of a residential area. They have heard the concerns and are amendable to adding some screen fencing and landscaping to alleviate the headlight concerns.

Prentiss told Zajac and Grey that staff would like to be involved to discuss how to work this out and reach out to the abutters. This needs to be mitigated to have the right type of restraints. This needs to go with the approval from the Board.

**MOTION:** Zilinsky moved to extend the action deadline for the application for the major modification to site plan to May 25, 2018 and continue the application to the next Planning Board meeting scheduled for May 22, 2018. Sears seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Henry wanted confirmation from the applicant that they were in agreement with the extension of the action date and continuance request. The applicant confirmed this.

## **ZONING INITIATIVES**

**Kick-off Visioning Session/Downtown Commercial 1 and 1A Study.** Following the community site tour our planning consultant from Brovitz Community Planning & Design will present an overview of the C1/C1A study area existing conditions and request community input. Participation by stakeholders will provide the vision to evaluate current zoning regulations and provide recommendations for future alternatives to be considered.

Ted Brovitz, from Brovitz Community Planning and Design, said that he has been working with the Planning Board and Planning Department looking at the C-1 and C1-A Zoning District. They are working on a new project with the zoning in the downtown area and are looking at the commercial and industrial districts. They want to provide economic opportunity and development where there are gaps.

The scope of the project will be the downtown area. They have received information from the assessor's office and Planning Board. They are trying to figure out what the characteristics are that make up downtown Danvers today. They will hold public information sessions and visioning sessions. They will get familiar with property businesses and business owners. These changes will be driven by the community rather than the consultants. It is important that the vision process is successful. They will hold a design workshop where there will be maps with ideas of what type of development the people of Danvers want to happen as well as public improvements. They will be looking at open spaces and streetscapes. All these changes will leave the new generation with a vibrant downtown. The goal is to translate these visions into the design guidelines. They will look at the types of buildings, characteristics, signage, façade treatments and trees. This is a walkable part of Danvers. They want to ensure that walkability and the pedestrian environment are sustained.

Brovitz said that they are putting together zoning amendments. They are looking at the possibility of mixed-use in buildings with commercial and residential. There are many mixed-use buildings in the downtown today that predate zoning and special permits. They need to determine what amount of mixed-use the public is comfortable with. This is the latest planning initiative in the Town.

Brovitz said that in the 1980's there was a Downtown Improvement Plan which included Cottage Street and Conant Street. This is when the street trees were planted. The Housing Production Plan done in 2014 identified housing opportunities to provide a diversity in the housing stock. A Traffic Management Report was done in 2017, and a Parking Study was done in 2015. They are looking at public and private areas.

Brovitz said they looked at an existing conditions report to see development patterns along with zoning challenges and opportunities.

This area is the center of Danvers and at one point was the only major commercial district in Town. It is surrounded by the Danvers square neighborhood. Brovitz showed pictures of the downtown over the years.

Brovitz described the trends in this area. It is 20 blocks, and the average length of each block is 272 feet. For a walkable district, shorter blocks are needed so you can look through corners and create depth. The street width vary from 18 feet to 140 feet. The main width is from 40 to 60 feet with sidewalks on both sides with mature street trees. There is parking behind and to the sides of buildings. You want the parking to be shared.

#### Project Area Evaluation:

- This area has 142 parcels on 25.2 acres
- The average lot size is 9,806 square feet. Some parcels are under 5,000 square feet
- 127 buildings average 110 years old
- Average building size is 6,872 square feet
- There is an average floor area ratio (FAR) of .95
- Estimated 220 dwellings in the downtown area with a density of 18 units per acre

#### Downtown Open Space:

Brovitz said that there is not a lot of open space in this area, but there is great open space in the surrounding neighborhoods.

#### Downtown Area Thoroughfares:

There is a lot to look at on Maple Street. There are some gaps with street trees. There are some buildings with parking in front that does not look good. The goal is to interface the buildings and the public realm. There are things that can be done in the design guidelines and bylaws to

develop this area. He likes the outdoor display at Danvers Hardware. There could be outdoor dining with small tables and chairs. It is important to have a lively area. You want to look at the regulations to address how the space between the buildings is being used in a positive way. A restaurant business can be increased by 30% with outdoor dining.

#### Current Zoning:

The current uses are fairly restrictive. Mixed-use is not allowed. They want to create an attractive pedestrian environment. What happens between the sidewalk and the face of the building is important. The parking regulations are fairly high. The parking standards are higher than what is required. You do not need a lot of parking site-by-site. It is still important to create some gathering areas with open space. Open space is critical to the downtown.

#### Public Realm Activation & Design Standards:

There is traffic and pedestrian flow. There are areas to overlap for businesses and the public sidewalk for displays/dining. The goal is to break down the street into different pieces to make it active. There will be throughway and frontage zone standards. Break down the street into different pieces and make it active in different ways.

#### Character-Building Zoning & Design Standards:

This will look at building design, landscaping, parking, the buildings' relationship to the streets, and open space amenities. They need to make sure of the relationship of the buildings' envelopes and public spaces since this is what makes a downtown successful.

#### Issues, Challenges & Opportunities:

- Protect the historic character
- Compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods
- Limited Opportunities with the current zoning
- Adapting to changing markets. Growing demand for mixed-use. To have residential units downtown.
- Enhance property conditions and values
- Improving streetscapes conditions and pedestrian environment. Right now there are 14 parking spaces in front of the CVS and bank. This could be a civic plaza. What are the scenarios that could take place there.
- Create open spaces for people to gather
- Facilitate new investment in the project area
- Provide housing choices. Make opportunities for people that want to downsize.

Sears asked if Brovitz could delineate the area that was being discussed.

Brovitz showed the area on the plan.

Peter Flinker, from Dodson & Flinker, Inc., said that a lot of people have pointed out what is working well, what are the things that need to be fixed and what needs to be celebrated and preserved. They have found that they need to deal with the conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles.

Flinker said that there are areas where street trees need to be replanted. Presently there is not enough soil for the roots to grow. People want to sit under a canopy of a tree since it provides psychological comfort. This is different from a zoning study due to the public realm. The downtown has wonderful historic building structures. The old-fashioned retail need is gone. Today you go downtown for what you are interested in getting. Many go downtown for entertainment. There needs to be a place that is wonderful to go back to again and again.

Flinker said that the downtowns are evolving into places to see other people and engage in community life. All of this depends on what is happening along the streets and sidewalks.

Flinker pointed out that the wires are already underground.

Bill Clark, 163 Hobart Street. Clark said that Danvers square once had large elm trees that were wiped out in the 1950's from hurricanes. They have planted a large number of the trees in the street, but they did not have a provision to fertilize them and water them. Downtown Salem has beautiful street trees. Danvers has to get a better attitude about maintaining street trees. They need to plant and maintain the trees. There has been pushback in the past to using whiskey barrels for plantings. The water system needs to be replaced in the square. These issues need to be addressed.

Dan Bennett, 12 Page Street. Bennett thanked Sears for asking Brovitz to show the area they were discussing. He lives on Page Street. There is no provision in the bylaw for noise. He would like the Board to look at noise issues that happen with early morning exercise classes.

Brovitz said that all these things need to be taken into consideration. He does not see bump outs for pedestrians at intersections. This would create a shorter walking distance and let the walker be seen by drivers.

Sears pointed out the flashing light on Route 62 and asked if that might work for the crossing at the Mobil Station. He likes the idea of bump outs. He felt there were great ideas for the street trees and pavement. He asked if they could look into grants that would get the funds necessary to do this type of work.

Brovitz said that there are a lot of grant programs out there for these types of things. You could have a system where you are making a signal to the drivers where there are conflicts between people and vehicles.

Steve Bartha, Town Manager. Bartha pointed out MassWorks. He said that when there is a plan in place. The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) would be eager to

work with the Town to improve the downtown area. MassTrails has expanded to trails other than paved trails. There are opportunities to see what might be available to the Town.

Brovitz said that there is a strong relationship between the streets and the development of areas. They need to make complete streets happen. They need to create the foundation to go after programs like MassWorks.

Tammy Troubetaris, 12 School Street. Troubetaris asked the background of Brovitz and Flinker. Brovitz said that he was a community planner and community designer. His background is helping downtowns be successful. Peter Flinker said that he was a landscape architect and certified planner. He and Brovitz started partnering on downtown projects. You need to think about design issues in the downtown area. You need to think about the relationship between design and the economy. This needs to be done with the people that are living and working in the area.

Troubetaris said that she lives on School Street. She said that there are water main issues and felt that there have been capacity issues. When you talk about mixed-use, that brings more volume. Troubetaris felt that pedestrian crossings also need to be addressed on the side streets as well.

Brovitz said there are desire lines for pedestrians. They need to make sure they have appropriate crossings.

Gardner Trask, 31 Fellows Street. Trask said that he is the chair of the Danvers Affordable Housing Trust which helps generate more housing opportunities in Town. The common arguments are traffic and parking. We also do not want buildings that create a canyon effect like Cabot and Rantoul Streets in Beverly. He felt they needed to get in front of those arguments very early.

Brovitz said that there is a fine line between comfortable street enclosure and the canyon/shadow effect. Would we be comfortable with the look if both sides were built out. If not, a setback could be done.

Flinker asked if there were questions concerning parking.

Diane Langlais, Selectman, said that they had a parking study done.

Brovitz said that there were a lot of good suggestions in the parking study. They looked at public and private parking areas. Parking is a major issue. The ratio of spaces to buildings could be better utilized. There is a wayfinding study being done for signs directing people to the parking areas. The amount of spaces are different due to drive-thrus. There is the question of whether they can work with all the banks in the area to utilize their spaces for economic development. He felt it was a good time to look at what steps they can take now.

Sears asked if there was an inventory of the height of buildings in the C-1 & C-1A zones. When they were rezoning Maple Street, they were dealing with the I-1 zone which had a height of 55 feet, which was reduced to 45 feet. Could the height in these districts be 35 feet to not allow the canyon effect.

Brovitz said they received the number of stories from the assessor's office. They can get a good sense of what the height is today.

Sears asked if a parking garage would make sense. If they built out the zone, would there be a parking garage? Could they have a two-story garage in an existing parking area?

Brovitz said that they need to keep that option open. There is also the possibility of underground parking. They have to allow the type of development that will generate a garage for underground parking. Some people are not comfortable parking in garages. A lot of towns thought they could solve their parking problems with garages.

Flinker said that a parking garage in North Hampton is very well used. It has a raised cover that leads right into the retail establishment. It is well designed and integrated into the pedestrian system. Due to this garage, parking is not required when a new building is constructed. Everyone pays a fee to support the municipal parking system. This has subsidized the downtown.

Brovitz added that they are not allowed to put parking in the downtown area. They pay into the public parking system. The parking is distributed in a way that benefits everyone. It is not like a common garage. There is a tall deck that allows a lot of light to pour into the garage so as not to feel like you are in a dark cavernous space.

Clark said that he does not want Danvers to look like Rantoul Street in Beverly. He said that he would be afraid of buildings at a height of 55 feet. Some buildings would lend themselves to underground parking. He would hate to see the height of the buildings at the streetscape be three-stories high. He would like setbacks.

Brovitz thanked the crowd for coming out this evening. He told them that there would be a workshop done in June. There are grand ideas for downtown Danvers. Brovitz told the audience to reach out to him. He will also be doing office hours to talk with people about their thoughts and ideas.

Prentiss thanked the Town Manager and Selectmen for extending their meeting and coming to this meeting.

## **BRIEFING**

Planning staff and chair will update the Board on various items of interest.

Nelson asked the Planning Board to look at their calendars for a June meeting. She is not sure if a Saturday would work or an early weeknight to do the visioning session.

The Board preferred an early weeknight meeting.

Nelson said that they would look at the Town Hall calendar.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Farmer moved to adjourn. Zilinsky seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Francine T. Butler

The Planning Board approved these minutes on May 22, 2018.