

COMMITTEE ON SPECIAL PERMITS
JANUARY 8, 2018 at 6:25 PM
WOBURN CITY HALL
COMMITTEE ROOM

Voting members: Chairman Richard Gately, Alderman Mark Gaffney, Alderman Joanne Campbell, Alderman Edward Tedesco, Alderman Darlene Mercer-Bruen

Non-voting members present: Alderman Mark Gaffney, and Alderman Michael Anderson, Alderman Lindsay Higgins and President Richard Haggerty

On the petition of Shaun K. Marsh, 101 Forest Park Road, new 900-square-foot-garage with two 10-foot doors: Mr. Marsh submitted a series of photographs showing where the trees are located on his property. Motion made by Alderman Tedesco and seconded by Alderman Mercer-Bruen to receive the photographs and place them on file; approved, 5-0. Mr. Marsh said he planted the trees when he moved in and there are 62 of them, and he expects them to mature and create more of a buffer between his property and his abutters. He said he envisions there will eventually be a green wall around his property. Mr. Marsh said the garage will not be visible from the street and once the trees are fully-grown no one will be able to see it from any vantage point off his property. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said the proposed garage is a nice-looking building and asked how high it will be. Mr. Marsh replied the garage is exactly 19 feet, 11 ¼ inches. He said there is no storage space, just two garage bays where he will park his trucks. Alderman Campbell said Mr. Marsh seems to be going out of his way to make the building look nice. Mr. Marsh said he would feel badly if his neighbors had to look at his trucks. He said he also wants a garage for security purposes, as people have taken wire off his trucks, and he would like to give his existing garage back to his wife for her car. He also said he would like to store the trucks inside so he doesn't have to clear snow off the roofs of the vehicles in the winter, and he said the garage will add value to his home. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said she appreciates Mr. Marsh submitting pictures of garages that will be similar to his. Mr. Marsh said he has one lettered truck and a second pickup truck, and he's not looking to start a huge electrical company. Alderman Concannon said his biggest concern is there will be a business run out the garage. Alderman Tedesco noted one of the Planning Board's four suggested conditions was a prohibition on business activity. Chairman Gately noted the Planning Board also commented there are no utility connections shown on the plans and asked Mr. Marsh if he intends to run electricity to the garage. Mr. Marsh said he has no plans to do so. Chairman Gately asked why Mr. Marsh is seeking to put in garage doors that are 10-feet high. Mr. Marsh replied 10-foot doors will allow him to park his trucks when they have ladders on top. Chairman Gately told Mr. Marsh he cannot run a business out of the garage. Mr. Marsh said he has a shed in the back left corner of his property that will come down once the garage is built. Chairman Gately asked Mr. Marsh if he plows snow. Mr. Marsh said he used to plow for the city, and he now does some private contracting work, but his focus is on the electrical business. Chairman Gately told Mr. Marsh if he plows snow he has to be considerate of his neighbors and refrain from making noise at 2 a.m. Mr. Marsh said he is trying to be a good neighbor. Alderman Gaffney asked Mr. Marsh how big his lot is. Mr. Marsh replied his lot is 18,193-square-feet, with 9.78 percent coverage that will instance to 16.37 percent once the garage is installed; still well below the maximum lot coverage ratio of 25 percent. Alderman Gaffney noted he has a 25-foot by 34-foot barn that is

grandfathered. Motion made by Alderman Tedesco and seconded by Alderman Campbell that the special permit “ought to pass,” with the following conditions suggested by the Planning Board: 1. The Plans of Record shall include both the Certified Plot Plan and Elevation/Layout Drawings submitted with the petitioner’s application; 2. No business activity or home occupation shall be conducted in/from the garage; 3. If there are to be any utilities connections, they must meet applicable building and zoning codes and be subject to separate applications, and; 4. The garage may not be used as a dwelling unit; approved, 5-0.

Vecna Technologies, Inc. for a special permit to allow six storage containers at 71 Pine St.:

Motion made by Alderman Mercer-Bruen and seconded by Alderman Tedesco to receive and place on file a memorandum from Building Commissioner Thomas C. Quinn regarding 71 Pine St.; approved, 5-0. Appearing on behalf of the petitioner was James Camire, of Vecna Technologies. Chairman Gately said finding out the building is for sale is not a good omen for the petitioner. Mr. Camire said he is not aware the building is for sale and does not know where that information came from. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said there is no way she is going to support a petition that calls for six storage containers. She said she is concerned that when someone calls the telephone number for Vecna’s location in Woburn, the line has been disconnected and noted the signs have been removed, and she is really concerned with what may be going on there. Mr. Camire said to his knowledge the building is not for sale and the trailers are needed for storage to create more room in the warehouse. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said it sounds like Vecna needs a bigger building, and she can’t ever recall the City Council approving a special permit for as many as six storage trailers. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said there seems to be a disconnect in that the neighbors think there hasn’t been an operation at 71 Pine St. and it is for sale. Mr. Camire reiterated he has never been aware the building has been for sale. Alderman Campbell asked why the phone is disconnected. Mr. Camire said he does not know why anyone would be calling the Woburn location because there is only manufacturing there, while the main office is in Cambridge. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said if you try to call Cambridge and get through to Woburn, you can’t. Alderman Higgins said she would like to know to whom Commissioner Quinn spoke before he wrote his memo to the City Council. Alderman Concannon said he is trying to visualize how the storage trailers are going to work, how often they will be accessed and what residential abutters are going to hear. Mr. Camire said the trailers will be located far away from the neighbors. He said they will be opened every day. Mr. Camire offered for submission photos of the area on the lot where the storage trailers will be located. Motion made by Alderman Tedesco and seconded by Alderman Mercer-Bruen to receive and make Mr. Camire’s photos part of the permanent record, approved; 5-0. Mr. Camire said there is maybe one neighbor who can see the back of the property and the trailers will not be located in the middle of the neighborhood. Alderman Concannon said the trailers would only be allowed for one year and that is perhaps a shorter-term solution than what Vecna is looking for. Mr. Camire said Vecna is looking for a more permanent location and the 1-year time frame would be acceptable. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said she is still concerned about moving stuff back and forth. She noted Carbone Real Estate currently has a listing for the building for sale. Motion made by Alderman Mercer-Bruen and seconded by Alderman Tedesco that the special permit “ought not to pass,” approved, 4-1, with Alderman Campbell opposed. Alderman Campbell said she would like more clarification. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said Mr. Camire has been sent to the Committee meeting

without the proper information. Chairman Gately said six storage trailers have never been allowed anywhere in the city. He said the Committee vote is 4-1 and the City Council will vote on the matter at its next meeting on January 16. Alderman Gaffney asked if Mr. Camire could request leave to withdraw. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said she has big concerns about the listing on Carbone Real Estate and said Mr. Camire would have to come back with documentation that the building is not for sale. Chairman Gately said Mr. Camire could call the City Clerk and request leave of withdrawal. Mr. Camire asked what kind of conditions would be attached to the special permit if it is passed. Alderman Anderson said there would be a condition that the trailers must be removed after one year. Chairman Gately said the City Council has never allowed six storage trailers. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said that is especially true for residential areas. Alderman Campbell agreed six storage trailers is an excessive number.

Motion made by Alderman Mercer-Bruen and seconded by Alderman Tedesco to adjourn, all in favor, 5-0. Chairman Gately adjourned the meeting at 6:58 p.m.

Attest: _____
Gordon Vincent
Clerk of Committees