

COMMITTEE ON SPECIAL PERMITS

As a Committee of the Whole

APRIL 29, 2019 at 6:32 p.m.

WOBURN CITY HALL

COMMITTEE ROOM

Voting members present: Chairman Richard Gately, Alderman Joanne Campbell, Alderman Mark Gaffney, Alderman Darlene Mercer-Bruen, Alderman Edward Tedesco, Alderman Lindsay Higgins, Alderman Robert Ferullo, and President Michael Anderson. Absent: Alderman Joanne Campbell. Recused: Alderman Michael Concannon.

Woburn (Edens) LLC for Plan Approval and Special Permit Approval to permit the redevelopment of the existing Woburn Mall property into a mixed-use residential and commercial development at 300 Mishawum Road: Alderman Concannon recused himself and left the Committee Room. Representing the petitioner were Attorney Mark Vaughan, Riemer & Braunstein LLP, 700 District Avenue, Burlington, MA, 01803; Keith Hague and Brad Dumont, Woburn (Edens) LLC, c/o Edens 21 Custom House Street, Suite 450, Boston, Massachusetts 02110; and Steven Martorano, Bohler Engineering, 45 Franklin Street, Boston, MA, 02110. Motion made by Alderman Mercer-Bruen and seconded by Alderman Higgins to accept and make part of the permanent record a communication from John Spence, 30 Main Street, consisting of an email message and two maps of the Woburn Mall; approved, 7-0. Attorney Vaughan said a number of committee meetings have taken place thus far and there have been a variety of reports submitted. He said Christopher Kuschel of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) issued a report that was addressed in a subsequent submission by the petitioner. He said there has been some dialog about utilities with the City Engineer and Weston & Sampson, including a meeting last week that involved Mr. Martorano. He said it is his understanding that there is going to be a report about the utilities finalized next week. He said the petitioner's traffic consultant has provided an oral response to the city's peer traffic review report from Vanasse Hangen Brustlin. Mr. Martorano said he met with the City Engineer, the DPW Supt. and Weston & Sampson to review the water and sewer infrastructure for the project. He said there was also a meeting with the Conservation Commission last week and the petitioner is planning to submit a report next week. He said the utilities report will indicate there is sufficient water pressure to accommodate the project. He said he expects the city's water and sewer personnel to confirm the sewer system is in pretty good shape. He said there were a lot of inspections done. He said the city is concerned about grease entering the sewer system onto Commerce Way. He said Market Basket does have a grease trap, but some of the restaurants in the mall that are now closed did not have grease traps. Chairman Gately asked a question about the angle of the sewer pipe coming off the mall property. Mr. Martorano said the pipe does not drop down much. Chairman Gately said he is more concerned about the angle. Alderman Higgins asked if there is a plan the committee can look at. Mr. Martorano referred to the plan of record and showed the committee members where there will be a new manhole and line. Chairman Gately said he thinks the petitioner has done what he wanted than thanked them for accommodating his request. President Anderson asked about the status of the peer review of the utilities. Mr. Hague said there was a meeting last Thursday and the petitioner hopes to submit its report next Thursday, in advance of a potential committee meeting on May 13. Chairman Gately

asked about where the petitioner is with the Conservation Commission. Mr. Hague said the ConCom continued its hearing until its meeting on May 9 but is generally happy with the plan. Mr. Martorano said there were a handful of minor changes to the plan. He said there was the introduction of a walkway to provide a more linear connection through the parking lot. He said there will be a 4-foot sidewalk bounded on each side by a 3-foot area with grass, landscaping and trees. He said several parking spaces were shrunk to 17-feet in depth but remain 9 feet in width to accommodate the path. Alderman Mercer-Bruen asked if cars will be able to park on either side of the path. Mr. Martorano said they will. Alderman Mercer-Bruen asked if the curb will be made of granite. Mr. Martorano said it will. Alderman Mercer-Bruen asked if the granite curb will be eight inches high. Mr. Martorano said the curb will be six inches high. He said if it is any higher, cars can get damaged. Alderman Mercer-Bruen asked if a 6-inch curb will stop a car. Mr. Martorano said there is a buffer on each side to prevent a car from entering the walkway. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said six inches is pretty high. Attorney Vaughan said there is not really much of an opportunity for cars to gain speed. Alderman Higgins asked if the layout is similar to a development in Burlington that was also undertaken by the petitioner. Mr. Hague said it is and there have never been any accidents there. Mr. Martorano said the petitioner had to give up a couple of parking spaces to accommodate the walkway. Chairman Gately asked if the green areas will be irrigated by sprinklers. Mr. Dumont said the irrigation will be accomplished by hand watering. Chairman Gately asked if the trees will be deep-rooted to prevent damage to the parking lot. Mr. Martorano said the trees will be deep-rooted. Alderman Mercer-Bruen asked about proposed changes to the Mishawum Road area. Mr. Hague said those proposed changes are part of the traffic study. He said the petitioner has looked into a few options, principally pavement markings and enhanced signals. Chairman Gately asked if the petitioner is going to address the crosswalks on Mishawum Road. Mr. Hague said the pedestrian signals do not have timers and that will be something that will be considered. Chairman Gately said the crosswalks need something that catch your eye. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said reflective paint is obtainable. Chairman Gately said there is a new version of a crosswalk that activates flashing lights when a pedestrian pushes a button. Mr. Hague said the signals will be upgraded so the timing is a lot better. Chairman Gately said it is tough to cross Mishawum Road. Mr. Hague said the addition of a timing element will let pedestrians know how much time they have to cross. President Anderson said that is a good upgrade. President Anderson asked how the shopping carriage corrals will impact the parking. Mr. Hague said the carriage corrals bring down the number of parking spaces but the project is still in compliance. President Anderson asked if the petitioner has had a chance to caucus with the peer traffic reviewer. Mr. Hague said there was a meeting last week and there was a prior meeting to incorporate the requests made in the peer review. Alderman Mercer-Bruen asked if the petitioner has met with the developer of Woburn Landing to discuss the adaptive lighting. Mr. Hague said the petitioner has been meeting with the City Engineer and the peer traffic reviewer. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said she expects there will be more discussion about traffic when the public hearing resumes on May 7. Alderman Higgins asked where the standard-sized parking spaces are on the plan. Mr. Hague said the ratio of compact parking spaces is about 13 percent. Alderman Tedesco said a ratio of compact parking spaces of up to 20 percent is allowed. Chairman Gately asked if there are any more questions for the petitioner. There was no response. Chairman Gately told the petitioners he will see them Tuesday night.

Motion made by Alderman Tedesco and seconded by Alderman Mercer-Bruen to adjourn,
all in favor, 7-0. Chairman Gately adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

Attest: _____

Gordon Vincent
Clerk of Committees