

**WETHERSFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING
JANUARY 21, 2004**

The Wethersfield Planning and Zoning Commission held a public hearing on January 21, 2004, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield, Connecticut.

Members present:

Earle Munroe, Chairman
George Oickle
John Hallisey
Scott Murphy
Philip Knecht
Matthew Cholewa
David R. Edwards

Members absent:

Joseph L. Hammer, Vice Chairman
Theresa Forsdick, Clerk
Robert Jurasin
Richard Roberts
John Adamian

Also present:

Peter Gillespie, Economic Development Manager/Town Planner

Chairman Munroe called the public hearing to order at 7:00 p.m.

APPLICATION NO. 1417- 04- Z. Town of Wethersfield Board of Education seeking Site Plan and Design Review approval under Article XXXI, §167-137 of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations for renovations & restoration of existing Francis Stillman School for conversion into Board of Education offices, located on the west side of Hartford Avenue in a B Residence at 127 Hartford Avenue.

Commissioner Oickle, Clerk Pro Tem, read a description of the application and then a memorandum (dated January 12, 2004 - on file) to Peter Gillespie from Michael Turner, Director of Public Works/Town Engineer which offered the following comments concerning the application:

1. Cover page Zoning table:
update the "Provided info under categories of front yard, side yard and rear yards.
2. Layout sheet SC-2:
Will flagpole be illuminated? If yes provide details.
3. Layout drawing SC-2:
Note 6 uses 1 space per 250 SF which equates to 48 spaces required vs. 38 provided. Provide explanation.
4. Site Utilities Plan SC-3:
BOE maintenance requested conduits to Hanmer Building for telephone interconnect. Is this included?
5. Site details sheet SC-8:
Detail 6 requires a foundation.
Detail 11 uses processed STONE base, not processed aggregate
Detail 12 use processed STONE base, not gravel
Detail 13, use 8" processed stone under pavement and 12" under concrete town specs
6. Site Details sheet SC-9:
Details 11 and 12 are these full cutoff lights?
Detail 15, what material is below 5" concrete

Clerk Oickle read a memorandum to Peter Gillespie from Nancy Rivera, Central Connecticut Health District, (dated January 13, 2004 - on file) indicating that the application had been reviewed and the water and sewage disposal, as well as the refuse storage concrete pad and three sided fence with gate containing it on the plan was noted, there was also an additional notation to grade to drain away from the parking lot and driveway. He also read a letter to Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager stating the approval of the certification of the Erosion and Sediment Control Plan for the Stillman Building (dated December 18, 2003 - on file) from the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission. A letter from Susan Smith 146 Hartford Avenue, supporting the project and praising the Town for its use of an existing structure instead of using up any more free space which is rapidly disappearing in the Town was read into the record. In addition a letter to Peter Gillespie from Judith Golden, Assistant Superintendent (dated January 16, 2004 - on file) was read which explained that there will be 26 Board of Education employees at the Francis Stillman Building and that 38 parking spaces will be provided. She added that it was not their intent to exceed the parking capacity provided on the plan. The last piece of correspondence which Clerk Oickle read was the Historic District Commission approval letter for the Stillman project which had two (2) stipulations:

1. The front stairs shall be granite
2. There shall be no chain link fence installed upon the border of the property.

Commissioners Murphy and Hallisey arrived at this point.

Mr. David Drake, Chairman of the School Projects Building Committee stepped forward and introduced members of Bianco Giolitto Assoc. who would be presenting the application tonight.

Mr. Daniel Weston, architect stepped forward and explained that they had been able to work completely within the framework of the building which was built in 1890. He then explained that the other members of the team would now continue with the presentation.

Mr. Richard Bosden, Director of Landscape Architecture, Design Professionals Inc., explained that his office had been charged with doing the site work which includes the civil engineering and landscape architecture for the project. The building which is located within the historic district of Town had received conditional approval from the Historic District Commission. They had also gone before the Shade Tree Commission and received their approval.

Commissioner Oickle asked if that meant that they had been granted the blessing to remove the 5 trees out front. Mr. Bosden said that there was a letter which spelled out the decision. He added that a biopsy had been taken and submitted to determine whether the large fir tree was perhaps diseased or full of insects. At any rate any remaining trees would be pruned and or taken care of by licensed arborists.

Mr. Bosden said that public notice had been served to all the adjacent neighbors, and that all but one had accepted the certified letter, so it could be said that notice was effectively served. He added that they are also in the process of receiving flood plain management approval from DEP even though they are not within 1/2 mile of a floodplain. He began to address the physical details of the exterior of the project. He explained that the development and restoration would include the removal and replacement of the street sidewalks. Currently they are rough concrete and bituminous surfaces, but would be replaced with concrete on both sides.

The intent is to replace all existing sidewalks with concrete with the exception of the entrance by Hartford Avenue which would contain brick accents. The two side entrance ways would be accessed by the parking areas. They proposed removing the deteriorated pavement and replacing it.

Commissioner Oickle asked if they proposed redoing the entire pavement. He was told that this was the intent.

Mr. Bosden said that they would be changing the grade slightly to make the rear entrance of the building handicapped accessible. He added that there is a persistent gentle slope, in other words it is relatively flat, but to accommodate the storm drainage for the new parking area, there would be grading to result in the continuation of sheet runoff to the baseball fields in the rear of the parking lot. Although the parking lot paving would be surrounded by curb, the rear corner would be left open to allow for the surface runoff. In addition they proposed a 10' stone dust barrier between the

parking area and the ball field. To minimize the drainage to the ball fields they proposed a stone infiltration trench under the stone dust, to offset any increased flows. They would be removing and replacing the existing roof drains and the liters that go to the road would be replaced with new PVC pipe that go to an existing catch basin at the corner Francis Street and Hartford Avenue. All the existing utilities will be removed and replaced and upgraded.

Commissioner Oickle asked if that was because they were all old. Mr. Bosden said that most of them were very old and there were some code issues as well. They would be bringing in new telecommunications as well.

Mr. Bosden said that one of the items that had been raised by the Town Engineer concerned the conduit for the telecommunications to Hanmer School. He said that he wasn't sure it needed a direct conduit, but that it might be able to utilize the conduit being run out overhead. But he thought this would have to be addressed by the electrical engineer.

Mr. Bosden explained that there was a slight change to the plans shown in that the State has required a separate drop off parking lot with a 5' access aisle. What they did accomplish this was they shifted the parking striping to accommodate it in the middle of the parking area bay which has caused them to lose one parking space adjacent to the sidewalk but added an additional parking space to the center aisle and made up the lost space by making a notch in the rear island. The drop off area will be marked by a sign which says Drop Off Only.

No one present had ever heard of this request before, and other than the School Facilities saying that they had required it in all other school facilities in the state including Board of Education sites there was no other explanation for it.

Mr. Bosden said that in addition to the handicapped accessibility through 2 doors in the rear, they had created a loading bay for trucks and an enclosure to house the trash receptacles. To contain the HVAC units and the new pad mount transformer there will be a small retaining wall built slightly into the slope and additionally screened by rhododendrons. The wall will be 3' high and the shrubs will be 6' high at maturity. He said that with the 3' of the slope and the 3' height of the wall and the plantings there should be plenty of screening from Hartford Avenue. It would be visible from the parking lot but it would need to be for maintenance accessibility. He thought that with the new isolators the typical decibel rating would be pretty quiet.

The discussion then turned to the chain link fence shown on the plans. It was explained that during the design process it was brought to their attention that the playing fields are well used, and the fence was proposed to help isolate and separate the parking area from the playing fields. The applicant thought that the warning strip would at least serve to slow down players, but a fence would provide more of a barrier and a chain link design would be more forgiving to run into than a more ornamental style or even a parked car.

Mr. Drake pointed out that although the drawings had not been updated to show it, the Historic District Commission had killed the fence.

Mr. Bosden said that as yet they are not showing any free standing sign, but there will be a municipal white sign, which will be brought in for approval at a later date.

Commissioner Cholewa asked if the fence was killed all the way over to the dumpsters. Mr. Bosden said that the fence around the dumpster would stay but from there out was gone.

Commissioner Oickle asked why the fence had been killed. Mr. Drake explained that the Historic District Commission had not cared for the aesthetics of the fence but had also pointed out that there was no other school in Town which had a fence separating it from its playing fields and it had existed for over 100 years this way and that they didn't think it made any sense to do it now. He thought that there were other ways they could protect the parking from the playing field like trees and shrubs.

Commissioner Oickle argued that it was not a school. Mr. Drake answered that although it was no longer school they were still trying to recreate that atmosphere and it would still look like a school.

Mr. Gillespie said that it should be know that the Recreation Department still feels that the fence is necessary from a

potential liability issue and although the Historic District Commission removed the fence, that may not be the end of it.

Commissioner Cholewa explained that for the purposes of tonight's application the fence is not part of it although if someone wants a fence they would have to come back and modify the site plan. Mr. Gillespie added that they might not have to come back the Commission; it might have to go back to the Historic District Commission or the staff.

Mr. Bosden explained that the existing overgrown foundation landscaping would be removed and replaced and there would be additional trees along the perimeter of the proposed parking area as well as along Hartford Avenue.

Commissioner Cholewa wanted to mention that one of the parts of the site that is not visually appealing is the street with bollards on it that continues in front of the school and Hanmer School. He would like to see most of the paving removed in order to improve the look outside both streets.

Mr. Drake asked if there were actually houses along that street. Commissioner Cholewa said that there were actually bollards on it and that no one drove on it.

Mr. Drake said that although he agreed with the opinion, unless it was part of the referendum, then it couldn't be accomplished as part of this project because it would be a lot of money involved.

Mr. Charlie Viani, School Projects Building Committee stepped forward and said that he wasn't sure they would have the jurisdiction to leave this site to go over to Hanmer Street. Commissioner Cholewa said that it didn't really leave this site. He was proposing that they rip up the asphalt and replant grass which would improve the appeal of both properties instead of an abandoned road look.

Mr. Viani said that while the bollards are collapsible, he wasn't sure if the road was there for emergency vehicle access but they could investigate it.

Commissioner Cholewa said that there are situations where there is supportive structure placed under the grass so that it can still be utilized for emergency vehicles but it still looks and feels like grass. He thought since they were working so hard to beautify the building and putting so much money into it they should consider this eyesore right beside them, which is still on the Board of Education property.

Commissioner Oickle said that he would like to support this idea. He said that he always asked off-site questions of applicants and this could be considered slightly off-site. He considered that this was their job as a Commission.

Mr. Viani said that they would find out if they had the authority to do it then they would investigate it.

Mr. Bosden said that the revised drawings showed the proposed lighting which would consist of 42" high bollards with the black sky version of the optics, primarily adjacent to the proposed stairs and along the back walkway, which would allow appropriate lighting to show at night on the walkways alone. There would also be 2 10" lit poles right at the rear entrance. There would be 2 14' poles in the parking lot. The flagpole would be lit by a low level halogen light with the ability to follow the flag without any up shine at all.

Commissioner Knecht asked who would primarily use the building. Ms. Judith Golden, Assistant Superintendent stepped forward and said that the building would be used by adults but that there might occasionally be hearings in the building which would be attended by students.

Commissioner Oickle wanted to hear certain issues addressed like the difficulty in renovating old buildings, the height of the ceilings and the use of false ceilings.

Ms. Alma Martinez, Project Manager stepped forward and explained that with the exception of the west elevation, the other elevations would remain very much the same. There will be a new entry door but it will resemble the exiting door. All windows would be replaced with aluminum windows which will look exactly the same as the old windows. All the brick will be re-pointed, there would be new granite steps, new metal railings, new lighting. The existing slate roof will remain and be repaired as needed; the flat part of the roof will be replaced.

Commissioner Oickle said that he thought that only wood windows were allowed in the Historic District. He wondered why they were allowed to replace the windows with aluminum when the home owners were not allowed to do the same.

Mr. Paul Courchaine 481 Main Street stepped forward and explained that the Historic District Commission will allow a like for like replacement, the material is not necessarily the issue but the principal of retaining the profile of the original window is of greater importance.

Ms. Martinez continued her presentation and explained that they would repair whatever pre-cast at the top and bottom of the windows that needed to be repaired. They would replace the 2 doors at the rear entrance to make them handicapped accessible by slightly lowering them and recessing them to give them some protection. Right now the only signage proposed would be raised aluminum letters over the doors/windows saying Wethersfield Board of Education.

Commissioner Oickle asked about a feature on the roof and wondered if it was cupola. Ms. Martinez said that it was an exhaust hood and it would be left so as not to change the look of the building.

Commissioner Oickle asked if they were dropping the ceilings in order not to heat a lot of unused space. Mr. Weston explained an interesting original feature of the building that they planned to utilize were the existing grill openings on the north and south elevations. The south openings would be used for fresh air intake which would horizontally travel through the building and exhaust from the north openings. In the corridors spaces they would be allowed to leave the higher ceilings, although the former classrooms, now offices would be lowered to 9'. The inside tract would hide all of the duct work.

Commissioner Oickle said that as a tax payer he was concerned about heating unnecessary spaces. Mr. Weston explained that they would be firing out all interior faces of all the exterior walls, the windows would all be low-e glass and insulating at the attic level. It will be fully sprinkled although the attic which would be dry sprinkled.

Commissioner Knecht asked how the building would be heated. Mr. Weston, said the building would have a gas fired boiler. He said that everything was being redone, as close to a gut and redo as he knew.

Mr. Drake said that at this point the building had been abated and gutted.

Commissioner Edwards asked about the noise levels of the HVAC units. Mr. Bosden said it would comply with local noise ordinances.

Commissioner Oickle asked for further explanation of the telecommunications line to Hanmer School. There was no information available on this request, as the request was new. In addition it was pointed that all schools are connected to the same central service and no one understood the need for a separate and additional line to Hanmer School.

Mr. Paul Courchaine stepped forward and said that as a private citizen while he appreciates the interest in bringing the streetscape up to par with the rest of the renovation he said that the referendum that the taxpayers approved had certain limits and he would not like to see the Commission create any new financial demands. However he said that speaking as the chairperson of the group responsible for the improvements to the pavement of the streets to Old Wethersfield, it was the hope and intent that when any new projects came up that addressed significant changes to sidewalks the same type of brick pavers would be used that were used throughout in Old Wethersfield. He would like the Building Committee to look at the cost of those pavers when they are doing their repairs and replacements to the sidewalks, it would be a great step forward to improving and increasing the look of the sidewalks in Old Wethersfield.

Commissioner Oickle asked if Mr. Courchaine was saying that he was against the idea of removing the pavement and replacing it with grass because of the money. Mr. Courchaine explained that if it was not a part of the bond issue approved then it should be made known to the taxpayers that because of deliberations and recommendations of the Planning and Zoning Commission the project will cost another X amount of dollars over and above the total voted for.

Mr. Drake said that if they could be given a direction in which to go in terms of the pavers, they could take a look at it, although they were already at the \$350,000 mark for the ground work without even touching the interior. The State is

reimbursing at a rate of 20%. Once they have all the bids for all the projects they are allowed to slide money around but they are trying to keep all the projects separate until that point.

There being no one else who wished to speak in favor of or in opposition to this application, this portion of the hearing was declared closed.

There being no one else who wished to speak, the public hearing was closed.

George Oickle, Clerk Pro Tem

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APPLICATION NO. 1417- 04- Z. Town of Wethersfield Board of Education seeking Site Plan and Design Review approval under Article XXXI, § 167-137 of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations for renovations & restoration of existing Francis Stillman School for conversion into Board of Education offices, located on the west side of Hartford Avenue in a B Residence at 127 Hartford Avenue.

Commissioner Cholewa asked if all of the issues in Mr. Turner's memorandum had been addressed. Mr. Gillespie said that they had. There had been some concerns about the parking, and they were told there were 26 employees and were supplying 38 parking spaces. Although typically if there are any meetings they will be held in the evenings when most of the employees have gone home and we felt more comfortable with those numbers once that information was given to us. The rate of 1 parking space for 250 sq. ft. had been used by Mr. Turner in his comments, but a lot of the square footage will be used for dead storage, utility, and corridor space and so the use would not typically reflect the square footage. There is additional space peripherally at the school and on the street for overflow. He thought that given their historical review of parking in Old Wethersfield it would work.

Commissioner Cholewa asked if the decibel level of the HVAC could be handled administratively. Mr. Gillespie said that the file could reflect the manufacturer specification, and if need be they could require some baffling or insulation. But with the wall and the direction away from the street etc he didn't feel it would be necessary.

Commissioner Oickle wanted to address the fence issue and be clear as to why it had been turned down and why it wasn't needed. He wasn't sure it wasn't needed.

Commissioner Cholewa wanted to be consistent with the other Commission and additionally he said that aesthetically he didn't like it and that there would potentially be more injuries caused running into it, than chasing a foul ball that is pretty far off the playing field.

Upon motion by Commissioner Cholewa, seconded by Commissioner Oickle and a poll of the Commission it was voted to APPROVE Application No. 1417- 04- Z. Town of Wethersfield Board of Education seeking Site Plan and Design Review approval under Article XXXI, § 167-137 of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations for renovations & restoration of existing Francis Stillman School for conversion into Board of Education offices, located on the west side of Hartford Avenue in a B Residence at 127 Hartford Avenue with the following stipulations:

1. The chain link fence shall not be shown on the plans.
2. The projected decibel levels of HVAC equipment shall be submitted to Staff and any accommodations necessary to mitigate noise units shall be made per Staff review.
3. The Applicant shall report back to the Commission any possible changes made to non-used portion of Francis Street immediately adjacent to the site and across from Hanmer School and look into the feasibility of possible removal of pavement and replacement with sidewalk.
4. The Applicant shall report back to the Commission regarding the possible use of brick pavers in sidewalks consistent with the overall plan for Old Wethersfield

Aye: Cholewa, Oickle, Edwards, Knecht, Munroe, Murphy

Abst: Hallisey

A short break was taken at this time.

MANDATORY REFERRAL in accordance with C.G.S. 8-24 referred by Town Council to the Planning and Zoning Commission for discussion and action to exchange Town owned land with an abutting piece of property on Columbus Street owned by Steven Kelly, if the exchange is of equal land size and the property has no buildable lots.

Clerk Pro Tem Oickle read a description of the Mandatory Referral, in addition a letter from Dolores Sassano, Town Clerk to Earle Munroe (dated January 7, 2004 - on file) was read which requested that the item be placed on the agenda for the Planning and Zoning Commission's attention.

Chairman Munroe pointed out that this item had come before them a couple of times already but they had not had enough information on it to make any recommendation.

Commissioner Oickle said that he had been under the impression that they had sent it back to Council with a negative recommendation because they did not know what was to be gained by the swap.

Commissioner Murphy asked if the major difference this time around was that the first time it came without any recommendation from the Council that the switch be made and so it came without a proponent. But that now it is before us with the recommendation of the Town Manager. Mr. Gillespie agreed and that also no notice had been given to the surrounding neighbors, but that has now been done. Some of those neighbors came before the Town Council seeking information.

Commissioner Cholewa said that he agreed with Commissioner Murphy that last time the request was made as blank statement and no one was here to put forward an argument. He asked Mr. Kelly why this was being requested.

Mr. Steven Kelly stepped forward and explained that back in the old days they used to have 25' wide building lots, so that there are a series of these lots back there. The Town evidently foreclosed on 6 of these behind the Wells Road property, I bought my particular lot back in 1981. He explained that it is all wooded and he has yet to ever set a foot on it, although he pays taxes on it. His Wells Road property has a garage on it constructed way before zoning that is about 6" from the property line; if he could swap his landlocked wooded parcel on the other side of Columbus Street with this piece adjacent to his property then it would allow him to use his property better although it is wetlands. 20 years ago he explained that he had contemplated the idea of developing the property on the other side of Columbus, but would have to had come in from Folly Brook for approximately the depth of one lot and then bend into Columbus, the other part of Folly Brook was to have been abandoned in favor of Columbus but now that will never happen because Folly Brook has been made a bike path. He could utilize the land if he had the parcel next to him but he could never build on it.

Ms. Bonnie Therrien, Town Manager stepped forward and said that Council had referred it back to the Commission to give Mr. Kelly the opportunity to speak. As far as any benefit to the Town from the swap goes, she said that there might be some benefit to the Town in the form of Passive recreation. She said that it was an equal swap in term of size, but a subcommittee had looked at it and then got referred back to both Town Council and the Commission to take one more look at it. The Town has no plans that she is aware of for the land or the area.

Commissioner Hallisey asked what would happen if the Town abandoned Columbus Street. It was explained that if the street is abandoned the adjacent property owners automatically own the land up to the center point.

Commissioner Knecht asked if a positive referral would create any sort of precedent. Mr. Gillespie answered that all cases are taken on a case for case situation.

Commissioner Oickle asked for assurance that the addition of this parcel would not create a buildable lot even if Columbus Street were to be abandoned. Ms. Therrien said that that was a condition that the Council would place on

this swap. In fact that was one of the concerns of the neighbors that the lot would be made into a buildable parcel and they were against that.

Mr. Kelly said that the neighbors were concerned that if they had a real deep lot, then someone would stick a house back there.

Commissioner Oickle said that the Commission was talking about not allowing back lots in the new regulations. Sometimes you can work something out even in these wetland areas.

Upon motion by Commissioner Cholewa, seconded by Commissioner Murphy and a poll of the Commission it was voted to Issue a Positive Referral to the Town Council for the request to exchange Town owned land with an abutting piece of property on Columbus Street owned by Steven Kelly, provided the exchange is of equal land size and the property has no buildable lots.

Aye: Cholewa, Murphy, Edwards, Knecht, Hallisey, Munroe

Nay: Oickle

Preliminary pre-application review of plans for the Construction of an addition at 38-46 Wells Road.

Clerk Pro Tem Oickle read a description of the item and a letter from the Zoning Board of Appeals (dated September 26, 2003 - on file) to Paolo Mozzicato, stating approval for an application seeking variance to erect an addition having less than the required parking spaces, and covering more than 25% of the lot frontage with impervious material, and having less than the required buffer strip from a residential zone at 38-46 Wells Road, P. D. Business Zone, with the following stipulation:

1. No rear deliveries before 8:00 AM or after 6:00 PM.

Commissioner Cholewa asked how much of an addition and how much of the required parking spaces was a variance granted for. Mr. Gillespie said that there was some wiggle room in the specifications and although he pulled the file and brought it with him, it was very generic in nature.

Mr. Bob Linnet, Architect, stepped forward and said that they hoped to get feedback from the Commission on their proposal to build a one-story 6,426 sq. ft. structure with a basement, and two separate one-story additions to the existing commercial structure of 480 sq. ft. and 180 sq. ft. respectfully for those additions at the corner of Wells Road and Silas Deane Highway. The owner was granted a variance already as was pointed out to build within 15' of the rear property line. He said that he would like to review the existing site plan and then the proposed site plan.

He went on to describe the site. He said that currently there is one building with 2 tenants in a total 7,234 sq. ft., with 2,584 sq. ft. being commercial. The main portion is Savings Bank of Manchester. They would maintain the two (2) curb cut accesses off the Silas Deane Highway. The zoning requirement bordering a residential area is a 25' setback, but the existing building is within 15' and we went for the variance in order to build the new building in line with the old. It was granted to us because we agreed to provide extensive landscaping between the residence and the property.

Commissioner Cholewa asked Mr. Linnet to amuse him by revealing the hardship which required the variance. Mr. Linnet said that if they built out 25' they would not meet the parking requirement.

Commissioner Cholewa asked if he really meant that if they built the size building they were proposing then they couldn't meet the parking requirement. Mr. Linnet said that they wouldn't meet the parking requirement or the square footage required of a minimum of 4,000 sq. ft.

Commissioner Cholewa assured them that they had approved other buildings of less than 4000 sq ft by being creative.

Mr. Paul Mozzicato, developer explained that when they were in the early developmental stages they wanted to do it right, so they had met with various people in the Town. They had been recommended and guided and one of the

points said that 4,000 sq. ft. was the magic number. Originally they were looking for something smaller, but it would work for them. In continuing their 15' rear yard, they were only asking for what they already had. Parking was a small issue. They had their land resurveyed and found that they had actually gained 10', so the 25% coverage is really not accurate. He said that they were adding more green space.

Commissioner Cholewa asked what the square footage of the building was. Mr. Mozzicato said it would be 6,250 sq. ft.

Commissioner Cholewa asked what the reference to the magic number of 4000 sq. ft was all about then. Mr. Mozzicato said that referred to the minimum square footage.

Commissioner Cholewa said that here is where I see some potential problems. It seems that you have received variances in order to pave just about the entire site over the setbacks which are usually not allowed to be paved, to fit the largest possible building to make it economically feasible. The variances are inartfully worded at least the way they are worded on the variance letter and he said that he was not even sure what they mean. He said that he is looking at a site, which is paved out to the street and very close to the neighbors with not very much green and not very attractive. He added that he was not sure how much discretion he had left after what ZBA did but I would exercise it to improve whatever he can.

Mr. Mozzicato said that his aim is really to improve the corner as it sits.

Mr. Linnet said that although they sought a variance for the rear setback, they conform in every other way. There was a single parking space differential when they went to ZBA but at this time they are not sure how the buildings will be tenanted and he pointed out that the current site is 2/3 paved, perhaps even closer to 4/5 paved. But all the paving would be redone. He continued his presentation and explained that they would be connecting the 2 buildings with a covered walkway and would maintain the open courtyard between the existing building and the new one. There are windows and an entry vestibule in the existing building that would have to be eliminated if the buildings were connected also if we connected them then we would have to sprinkle the existing building. The new one will be fully sprinkled. There is extensive landscaping already along the border. Phase 2 of the project would be to restore the existing building with brick facing. He explained that there is an existing extremely ugly retaining wall on the border of the property; they would be redoing it completely.

Commissioner Cholewa asked if the plan was to have garbage trucks back down that narrow little space beside the building and the neighbors. He was told that they currently utilize it and would continue to use it.

Commissioner Oickle asked if there were any complaints from the bank concerning the access drive or traffic problems. Mr. Linnet said that they were proposing moving the ATM to the opposite side.

Commissioner Oickle asked if there had been any notice to the neighbors. Mr. Gillespie said that there was a history with the neighbors at this site and he had suggested that the architect meet with the neighbors. He said that initially they were more concerned, but they were ultimately successful with the addition of further plantings and landscaping. But he had suggested that when the plans are finalized they go back to the neighbors for comment.

Mr. Mozzicato said that they would be expanding the 4' buffer to 6' in order to please the neighbors. He added that he was building a basement at his expense to house the mechanicals and sprinklers etc.

Commissioner Oickle felt that they were building too close to the neighbors and they were overbuilding the site and he would like to see a little less.

Commissioner Murphy said that he thought that the intersection was a signature intersection for the Town and it doesn't look as nice as it should on any of them however at least on one corner the buildings are up close to the street. He wondered if any consideration had been given to moving the buildings forward and putting the parking in the rear. Mr. Mozzicato said that the existing building has tenants and there was no way to build a second building without somehow blocking the first building, and then there was the question of where would we put the utilities or the service areas. The slope of the land would necessitate a ramp. In addition any of the tenants we spoke to requested parking in

front.

Mr. Mozzicato said that he wanted to carry the aesthetics all the way around and beef up the corner with more landscaping.

Commissioner Cholewa asked if they had given any thought to continuing the idea created by the Mobil Station across the street and incorporating annuals and color.

Mr. Linnet said that they had been working with the Silas Deane Revitalization Trust and the Silas Deane Master Plan to work in concert with them about the landscaping.

Commissioner Murphy said that it would help him get over some of his concern about what this project presents to the Silas Deane Highway, if there some very ambitious landscaping on that corner.

Mr. Mozzicato said that they would be coming back with a final plan and a list of plantings.

Commissioner Cholewa asked if they had considered a raised roof instead of the flat roof. Mr. Mozzicato said that they needed the raised parapet to hide the HVAC units.

Mr. Mozzicato said that they would be removing the stucco from the existing building and refacing it in brick to match the new building. They intend to keep the business open during the construction and renovation.

Commissioner Oickle said that there was a day when banks were the highest quality buildings in Town, but now a days they could stand a lot of renovation.

Mr. Paul Courchaine, Chairperson Silas Deane Revitalization, said that they had held a couple of meetings with the architect and they have been very receptive to date. He said that they had suggested moving the building to the front of the property, but from an economic perspective it wouldn't make sense, one of the major reason being the loss of access. He mentioned that 4000 sq. ft comes from the Master Plan as the minimum we like to see. Other pointes they had discussed had been the landscaping, they have incorporated the screening to the rear of the property and plantings on the existing green swath on Byrd Road, and they talked to them about the corner. We do have a schematic in terms of what we like to see relative to stone walls and planters. He said that a letter had been sent to Mike Turner after their last meeting, and that the applicant had agreed to do what they suggested at that corner. One additional thing is because of the amount of asphalt that would be in the parking area, islands would make it impossible to utilize the building as it is currently construed, but f they could provided screening areas along the Silas Deane Highway in the form of trees, then that provide the screening we would like to see. He said that they walk the fine line between the Master Plan and what can be expected in terms of economic development.

Mr. John Lepper, Tree Warden stepped forward and by reviewing the site plan page for page he gave his opinions and recommendations for the site which included replacing the burning bush shrubs proposed with a less invasive species and he provided several alternatives. He also suggested the addition of more major trees along the State property if there is room and along Byrd Road, as well pruning schedules and recommendations for the proposed trees.

REVIEW OF ZONING REGULATIONS

Mr. Gillespie said that he had some handouts which he would ask the Commissioners to read which included proposed wordage for the pre-application process.

APPROVAL OF [MINUTES OF: January 6, 2004](#)

Upon motion by Commissioner Oickle and seconded by Commissioner Cholewa and a poll of the Commission it was voted to approve the minutes with the following changes;

1. On page # 4, paragraph 10 1st line, omit the word THAT.
2. On page 8, Other Business, 1st line, change FORM to FROM.

Aye: Oickle, Murphy, Cholewa, Knecht, Edwards

Abst: Hallisey, Munroe

OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Cholewa wanted to know if there was any way to stop the sorts of applications that came before the Commission like Jamie's Jungle. There was general discussion of defining a dividing line which might eliminate those items that don't meet minimum requirements.

There was also discussion about a meeting between the Planning and Zoning Commission and ZBA in order to possibly avoid the confusion and sometimes outrage over variances that are sometimes granted.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

George Oickle, Clerk Pro Tem