



Town of Reading
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To: Zoning Board of Appeals / Board of Selectmen / Community Planning and Development Commission / Development Review Team staff
CC: Matt Zuker & Ken Chase, MKM Reading / Geoff Engler, consultant
From: Julie Mercier, Community Development Director
Date: March 14, 2016
Re: Reading Village 40B – Status Update

At their meeting of February 4, 2016, the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) opened the Public Hearing for the Comprehensive Permit Application for Reading Village at 39-41 Lincoln Street and 2-12 Prescott Street. The hearing was continued to the ZBA meeting of March 17, 2016. This memo is intended as an update to the ZBA from staff on progress made since February 4th.

53G Regulations

At their meeting of February 18, 2016, the ZBA adopted M.G.L. c.44 S.53G 'Employment of Outside Consultants' to establish a Special Municipal Account for Consultant Review Fees.

1.5% Land Area Calculation

Town staff utilized two different methodologies to calculate the amount of land area in Town dedicated to affordable housing. In the closest scenario, the Town is about 3 acres shy of the 1.5% needed to qualify for a safe harbor.*

40B Technical Assistance

Paul Haverty, Esq. is no longer providing 40B guidance to the Town; the Town is now working with George Preble, P.E. and John Gelcich, P.E. of Beals & Thomas, Inc. The Town's 40B Consultant is paid for by the State through the Massachusetts Housing Partnership.

40B Peer Review Consultants

As a follow up to the February 4th ZBA hearing and in coordination with the ZBA Chair per the Board's 53G regulations, Town staff have retained the following peer review consultants:

- Nitsch Engineering – peer review of civil engineering, stormwater, and utilities
- Green International Affiliates, Inc. – peer review of traffic and parking
- TBA Architects, Inc. – peer review of the building design and site plan

On March 10, 2016, the Town received reports from each peer review consultant. These reports were forwarded to the Applicant.* The consultants will present their findings on March 17th.

New Information from the Applicant

The Applicant has provided the following new information:

- Letter from Cube 3 Studio to Community Development Director re: Type VA Construction for Reading Village 40B, dated 2/17/16.*
- Responses inserted into 2/9/16 memo from Community Development Director to Applicant, received 3/10/16.*

Feedback from Neighbors

To date, Town staff have received fourteen (14) letters or emails from neighbors, all of which have been forwarded to the Applicant for consideration.*

New Information from Town staff, Boards and Committees

- Town staff held a 2nd Development Review Team (DRT) meeting with the Applicant on this project on 2/17/16. Many of the same concerns were discussed.*
- A brief statement was provided by the Historical Commission.*
- The Board of Selectmen held a joint meeting with the Community Planning & Development Commission on February 23rd. Town staff sent almost 400 letters to abutters within 1,000 feet of the site in advance of that meeting. Minutes from that meeting are pending.

Ongoing Staff Efforts

- Continued documentation of correspondence from abutters.
- Maintenance of a spreadsheet to track the Applicant's responses to concerns.
- Uploading of documentation to Town website: <http://www.readingma.gov/planning-division/pages/reading-village>

Recommended Process for ZBA Meeting on March 17th

- Call to Order
- Chair – read Legal Ad and Ground Rules for Public Meetings
- Chair – give brief overview of Board process with this Application
- Peer Review Consultants – present findings
- Applicant – opportunity to respond, present new information
- Board – discussion and questions
- Public Comment
- Board – determine next steps, date of continued hearing on this Application
- Adjourn

Outstanding Information

Town staff, the Board, the public, and the peer review consultants have made many requests for additional information from the Applicant. The Board has 180 days from February 4th to render a decision on the project or to seek a continuance from the Applicant. All new information should be submitted by the 90th day (May 3rd) at the latest or the Board should consider seeking a continuance from the Applicant.

Additional Peer Review Studies

Additional studies have been requested for the project. The Board should determine whether to authorize Town staff to seek consultants (or amend contracts with existing consultants) to conduct the following additional peer reviews:

- Feasibility Study for project with inclusion of gas station parcel
- Phase 1 Environmental Study of groundwater and soils given proximity to gas station site
- Town of Reading's Water and Sewer Capacity Analysis – to determine if existing pump station and piping infrastructure can handle added flows
- Traffic/Parking Study with scope expanded beyond the 3 study intersections
- Off-site Parking Utilization Study
- Fire and Public Safety Study

*Information provided to ZBA.