

West Concord Advisory Committee
a subcommittee of the Planning Board

March 4, 2020

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the West Concord Advisory Committee (WCAC) was held at 7:05 p.m. in the Clock Tower Room at the Harvey Wheeler Community Center.

Members present:

Tim Alexander, Chair
Peter DeRosa, Clerk
Susan Mlodozieniec
Geoff Walton

1. Recommendation to the Planning Board re: ZBA Special Permit & Site Plan Review application for 113 – 115 Commonwealth Avenue. (Andrew Bonzagni to attend.)

Andy Bonzagni reviewed the application to the Planning Committee for 113-115 Commonwealth Avenue to receive a waiver from green space requirements when converting the existing storage space to apartments. The change will not impact parking space or any exterior change to the building. The change will increase population density in the Village, one of the aims of WCAC. The new apartments will be close to Rideout Park and the new Gerow land.

The Committee will indicate its support of the proposed waiver to the Planning Committee. They also noted the many compliments the building has received and that the building is frequently pointed to as the type of development desired in the Village.

2. Recommendation to the Planning Board re: Planning Board Site Plan Review application for 152 Commonwealth Avenue. (John Gates to attend.)

John Gates, property owner and owner of Nashoba Brook Bakery, presented the application to the Planning Committee to receive a waiver for parking relief on their property. John provided historical context and documentation related to the long time established practice of double parking on the property. Recently, however, it was noted that this practice is in violation of the community parking regulations which state that double space parking must be supervised by a parking attendant at all times.

John has worked with the Town Planning staff (Ray Mattee and Elizabeth Hughs) to propose an approach to mitigate parking concerns and to receive a waiver. The plans involve signing each double space with two signs, assigning the parking spots to a property tenant. The assigned tenant would be responsible for being the parking attendant for the spaces.

John also mentioned that further modifications to the property are in the planning phases which may increase parking in the future.

The WCAC appreciated the presentation and will indicate its support of the waiver to the Planning Committee.

3. Presentation to Committee re: Economical Distressed Area (EDA) designation as it relates to Massachusetts Brownfields Tax Credit Program (George Vernet & James Curtis to present.)

George Vernet, owner of the property including Teacakes and Twin Seafoods, presented their case to have a portion of West Concord designated an economic Distressed Area so that they may qualify for a brownfields tax credit for the environmental mitigation efforts the owners have undertaken to remove the contaminants for a previous dry cleaner (not the present dry cleaner adjacent to the property) and other previous buildings on the site including an old fire house.

The requirements for receiving a brownfields tax credit include the property being located in an EDA. An EDA has a variety of classification criteria which may be selected to cover a contiguous set of census tracts. While it may seem counterintuitive, the presenters provided documentation showing the majority of towns in MA and many with similar characteristics as Concord, being certified as EDAs without negative impact

An EDA certification would enable the property owners to receive a tax credit for between 25% - 50% of their clean-up costs. Qualifying for the higher tax credit percentage requires cleaning-up the site to higher, residential standards, which the owners plan to meet. The WCAC noted that meeting these clean-up standards required for the tax credit were desirable to the town and supported the application.

The application for an EDA needs to be supported by the Town Government and as a result, the Town Manager requested WCAC to review the proposal and to provide their recommendation.

The WCAC appreciated the presentation and will indicate their support for the application to the Town Manager.

4. Other business

- Ann Susman has requested to present at the next WCAC meeting on Parking.
- The minutes from January were unanimously approved.

Drafted and submitted by Geoff Walton