

**CITY OF EAST PROVIDENCE
PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES**

Date: May 10, 2021

Time: 7:00 PM

Place: Zoom virtual meeting

As a result of Covid-19 and the closure of City Hall, this meeting was conducted virtually through an application called “Zoom”.

Present: Eric Crook, Alan D’Aiello, Christopher Grant, Octavio Cunha, Michael Robinson (Chair), Michelle Rockwell, Travis DeCosta (Asst. City Solicitor), William Fazioli (Planning Director), Patrick Hanner (Staff), James Moran (Staff)

This is an open meeting of the East Providence Planning Board and is being conducted remotely consistent with Governor Raimondo’s executive order 20-25 issued on April 15, 2020 and extended by executive order 20-46 on June 12, 2020 due to the current state of emergency in R.I. due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus. In order to mitigate the transmission of the Covid-19 virus, we have been advised and directed by the state to suspend public gatherings and as such the Governor’s order suspends the requirements of the open meeting law to have all meetings in a publicly physical location. Further all members of public bodies are allowed and encouraged to participate remotely. The order allows public bodies to meet entirely remotely so long as adequate means of public access are afforded so the public can follow along.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was cited.

3. APPROVAL OF PLANING BOARD MINUTES

None submitted

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. Public Hearing- Schiavo Enterprises, LLC, Newport Center, Mixed Use Development - Land Development Project Proposal – Preliminary Plan submission; Application #2020 – 05 – LDP - Preliminary (Enclosure)

Mr. Brandon Carr of Diprete Engineering provided a slideshow presentation on the project, including timelines, project milestones, and overall site layout. The mixed-use development will consist of 2 Buildings: 4-stories each, 142 total residential units, 48 studio units, 55 1-bedroom units and 39 2-bedroom units plus commercial space.

Robert Clinton from VHB was sworn in. Mr. Clinton reviewed the traffic findings and analysis. Mr. Shekarchi would like to have Mr. Clinton recognized as an expert in traffic analysis and design.

On a motion by Mr. Grant, seconded by Mr. Cunha, the board voted 6-0 to recognize Mr. Clinton as an expert.

James Moran presented the staff's memo. Mr. Moran provided an overview of the proposal and associated timelines. The Planning department has reviewed the overall plan and finds the submission acceptable. Mr. Moran stated the required findings have been reviewed and are being met. The planning department is requesting items 1-28 under section IV part A of staffs memo be entered into the record as it relates to the Preliminary Plan submittal. The planning department finds the proposed Preliminary Plan development is consistent with the city's comprehensive plan, that it meets the general purposes stated in Article 1 of the regulations and further that the required findings of Section 5-4 of the regulations can be met. Planning department recommends Conditional approval of the Preliminary Plan submission subject to the 10 conditions listed in staffs' memo.

John Shelvin was sworn in. Mr. Shelvin is head of transportation at Pare. Pare completed a peer-review of the traffic analysis. Mr. Shelvin provided further details and feels all comments and issues have been addressed.

Various members of the board had a discussion with concerns on drainage, stormwater, and traffic.

Mr. Robinson opened the floor to the public. All participants were sworn in before giving testimony.

Residents of the community expressed concerns with the proposed development, specifically an increase in local traffic.

Steven Boyajian representing Gansett Limited Partnership with the address of 50-70 Newport Avenue has objected the proposed development based on a number of factors he provided.

Mr. Shekarchi stated he feels they are in full compliance with the proposal. Mr. Fazioli stated the zoning officer reviewed the proposal and was fully satisfied with the submitted proposal. No objections or comments were made prior to this meeting tonight.

Mr. Schiavo spoke briefly on the proposed development.

On a motion by Mr. Grant, seconded by Mr. Crook, the board on a roll call vote 6-0 to accept the staff recommendation and supporting exhibits into the record.

On a motion by Dr. D'Aiello, seconded by Mr. Crook, the board on a roll call vote 6-0 to grant conditional approval of the Newport Center Land Development Project Preliminary Plan submission subject to the 10 conditions set forth in the staff memorandum.

On a motion by Mr. Cunha, seconded by Mr. Crook, the board on a roll call vote 6-0 to delegate final plan approval to the Administrative Officer.

B. Advisory recommendation to the City Council to amend the City's zoning ordinance. Amendment to section 19-485 Affordable/inclusionary housing. (Enclosure)

Mr. Fazioli provided details on the city's affordable housing ordinance. The Waterfront Commission has always had a requirement for affordable housing within the development within the Waterfront District. Our zoning ordinance within the Waterfront District is not consistent with State law in 3 instances: Provide that in-lieu fees must be spent on affordable housing serving families earning no more than 80% AMI, provide that developers, not the Commission, shall determine whether to pay fees in lieu of development, and provide that in-lieu fees shall be determined by Rhode Island Housing.

Members of the board and Mr. Fazioli discussed issues related to affordable housing and the ordinance.

On a motion by Mr. Grant, seconded by Dr. D'Aiello, the board on a roll call vote 6-0 to table the advisory recommendation to the City Council.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next Planning Board meeting is scheduled for June 14, 2021

6. ADJOURNMENT

The board on a roll call vote 6-0 to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 PM

CC: Mayor Roberto DaSilva
City Council
Director of Public Works
City Engineer
City Solicitor
Fire Chief
Zoning Officer