

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Taylor called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm and stated it was open to the public in compliance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231, Sections 4 & 13.

FLAG SALUTE

ROLL CALL: Members Present: Hughes, Suljic, O’Leary, Leuthe, Van Sickle, Potter, Madewell, Deller, Andersen, Carlson, Taylor.

Members Excused: None.

Members Absent: None.

Also Present: Ursula Leo, Esq.
Nevitt Duveneck, PE
David Banisch, PP

MINUTES: December 19, 2019

A motion to approve the minutes of the December 19, 2019 meeting with the noted corrections was made by Mr. O’Leary. It was seconded by Mr. Madewell and passed with a roll call vote. Ayes: Hughes, Suljic, O’Leary, Leuthe, Van Sickle, Potter, Madewell, Deller, Andersen, Taylor.

COMPLETNESS / HEARINGS / CONCEPT:

1. Torres, Jesus B:22, L:13.04 VAR19-6 (Deemed Incomplete 11/21/19)

The Board Secretary said she has not received anything from the applicant.

2. Lafayette Village Associates B:8, L: 26.05 VAR19-7

Mr. Sean Stone of Lafayette Village Associates and Mr. Michael Castoro of Signart Graphics were sworn in by Ms. Leo. Ms. Janine Cerra, Esq. was the attorney for the applicant. Ms. Cerra said they filed an application to construct a sign at the entrance of Lafayette Village.

Mr. Duveneck went over his report date January 14, 2020. He recommended the application be deemed complete.

A motion to deem the application complete with the requested waivers was made by Mr. O’Leary. It was seconded by Mr. Hughes and passed with a roll call vote. Ayes: Hughes, Suljic, O’Leary, Leuthe, Van Sickle, Potter, Madewell, Deller, Taylor.

Mr. Stone explained the need for the large sign they were proposing. He said they took the project on in 2018 and put a lot of capital into it. In order to get the larger box stores they require signage. Mr. Stone said they need to catch up to and set themselves apart from other shopping centers. He felt it would be classy.

Ms. Cerra submitted a three page handout containing a rendering of the proposed sign, specifications for the lighting element and a color temp guide which was marked and entered as exhibit A-1.

Mr. Castoro explained the sign to the Board. He said it is primarily an aluminum sign, the background is opaque and the only illumination will be the letters or logo of the tenant and “The Shoppes at Lafayette” heading. They kept the colors in contrast to keep it clear and crisp and will be easily read by traffic passing by. The light will be a warmer color. Mr. Castoro explained the size of the sign. Mr. O’Leary asked what would happen if a tenant, left to which Mr. Castoro said a blank panel would be put in its place. Mr. O’Leary asked if the sign would have a timer. Mr. Stone said he would leave that to the Board to decide. He said they could put a timer on the sign.

Mr. Taylor asked about the illumination of the sign. There was a lengthy discussion on the light direction, the light fixture inside of the sign and the light coming through the sign.

Mr. Taylor asked about the location of the sign. Mr. Stone said they chose that spot because it is a flat area, and would not obstruct the line of sight for cars pulling in and out of the site. There was a discussion on the location of the sign.

Mr. Andersen asked about the number of tenant signs on the sign. The Board agreed to allow the applicant to divide the larger spaces on the sign into smaller spaces. There was a discussion on the dimensions of the signs. Mr. Stone gave the dimensions of the existing signs on the walls on Route 15 and Route 94. There was a discussion on the height and size of the proposed freestanding sign. The sign will be double sided.

Mr. Castoro explained the light box and light distribution to the Board. There was a lengthy discussion on the light emitting from the sign. The Board agreed the sign does not need to be on a timer. There was a discussion on the size of the lettering on the sign.

Mr. Taylor opened the meeting to the public. With nobody coming forward, the meeting was closed to the public.

Ms. Leo went over the requested variances and the proposed conditions with the Board.

A motion to approve the application with the noted variances and conditions was made by Mr. Hughes. It was seconded by Ms. Van Sickle and passed with a roll call vote. Ayes: Hughes, Suljic, O'Leary, Leuthe, Van Sickle, Potter, Madewell, Deller, Taylor.

3. DeVenezia Realty, LLC B:4, L:2.04 (Deemed Incomplete 12/19/19)

Mr. Hughes, Mr. O'Leary and Ms. Van Sickle stepped down for this matter.

Ms. Megan Ward, Esq. of Kelly & Ward, LLC in Newton said she was representing the applicant. She introduced Mr. Mark DeVenezia and Ms. Michelle DeVenezia who are the owners of DeVenezia Realty, LLC and owner/operators of the Mulch Concepts business which operates on the property. She said they were before the Board for a subdivision and a change of use on the remainder lot. Ms. Ward explained the history and current uses of the property. She said the proposed minor subdivision does not include a use for the newly created lot. The remainder lot will continue the mulch business plus a newly proposed contractor storage yard. The residential use will be removed.

Mr. Duveneck went over the requested waivers.

A motion to deem the application complete was made by Mr. Madewell. It was seconded by Mr. Leuthe and passed with a roll call votes. Ayes: Suljic, Leuthe, Potter, Madewell, Deller, Andersen, Carlson, Taylor.

Mr. Robert Cunningham, PE, Mr. Mark DeVenezia, Ms. Michelle DeVenezia and Ms. Jessica Caldwell, PP were sworn in by Ms. Leo.

Mr. Cunningham explained the plans to the Board. He explained the structures currently on the property. He explained the drainage on the property. Mr. Cunningham explained the proposed contractor parking area for tenants.

Ms. Deller asked if there would be any proposed lighting for the parking area to which Mr. Cunningham said no. Mr. Taylor asked what type of trees were along the property line and who did they belong to. Ms. DeVenezia said they are old pine trees and they are on the DeVenezia property.

Mr. Banisch asked about the existing log pile and the stormwater runoff of the proposed paved area. There was a discussion on the log pile and stormwater runoff and the total impervious coverage. Mr. Banisch felt there was not enough information on the Stormwater runoff. There was a lengthy discussion on the stormwater runoff. There was a lengthy discussion on the limited amount of information on the plans and the property in front of the existing berm. The Board agreed to address just the use variance and the applicant will return with site plan approval. There was a discussion on what type of vehicles would be parking in the contractor parking area. Ms. DeVenezia said she had spoken to the owner of the adjacent pet cemetery

regarding the fencing. Ms. DeVenezia said she would continue the same type of existing fencing down the property to Route 94 to shielding the property from the pet cemetery.

There was a discussion on the traffic coming into and out of the site.

Mr. Taylor opened the meeting to the public. Ms. Patricia Heaney of 196 Route 94, Lafayette asked for clarification on the proposed berm. Ms. Heaney asked about the traffic accessing the site. Mr. Cunningham said most of the traffic would be during the workday. Ms. Heaney asked if anyone would be residing in the vehicles parked on the site to which Ms. Ward said no. There was a discussion on the traffic generated by the proposed use.

Mr. Ken Knauer of 196 Route 94, Lafayette expressed a concern with fire safety. He was concerned the mulch could self-combust and with the addition of diesel fuel in the trucks, it could get out of control.

With nobody else from the public coming forward, the meeting was closed to the public.

Ms. Ward asked the Board to carry the hearing to the February 27, 2020 meeting date.

A motion to carry the hearing to the February 27, 2020 meeting date without further notice was made by Mr. Leuthe. It was seconded by Mr. Potter and passed with everyone saying aye.

Mr. Hughes, Mr. O'Leary and Ms. Van Sickle returned to the Board.

AUDIENCE:

OLD BUSINESS:

1.) Amendment to Chapter 12 – Sign Variance

The Board agreed to carry this matter to the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

1.) Lafayette Fire Department Sign Presentation

The Fire Department presented a concept plan for a proposed sign. Mr. Bill Macko and Ms. Becky Goldsworthy spoke on behalf of the Fire Department and Fire Department Auxiliary respectively. Ms. Goldsworthy gave a brief history on the existing sign. She said there has been a sign there since the 1950s however; they wanted to make improvements to it. She explained the proposed new sign.

Mr. Macko went over the existing and proposed new sign dimensions. He explained the use of the present sign. He said they have the ok from the surrounding property owners.

Ms. Goldsworthy said they had received approval from the D.O.T. allowing the electronic sign. There was a discussion on the brightness of the proposed sign. There was a discussion on the sign being permitted in a residential zone. The Board expressed a concern with the special effects that an electronic sign can produce. There was a discussion on what types of advertising would be allowed on the sign. Mr. Hughes suggested an agreement be made between the Fire Department and the Township with some regulations. The Board agreed to send their recommendations to the Township Committee.

2.) Proposed Ordinance Changes

- Cluster Development
- Master Plan
- Uses in Non-Residential Zones

The Board agreed to carry this matter to the next meeting.

RESOLUTIONS: None.

ORDINANCES: None.

1.) Amendment to Section 13-7 Regarding Signs

A motion to recommend the proposed changes to Section 13-7 of the Sign ordinance was made by Mr. O’Leary. It was seconded by Mr. Madewell and passed with a roll call vote. Ayes: Hughes, Suljic, O’Leary, Leuthe, Van Sickle, Potter, Madewell, Deller, Andersen, Carlson, Taylor.

ZONING REPORT: See attached.
The Board had no questions with the Zoning Report.

LIAISON REPORTS:

Township Committee

Mr. O’Leary reported the Township Committee introduced an amendment to the Soil Importation Ordinance, which incorporates language from the State.

Mr. O’Leary said the Township is looking into purchasing generators for the Municipal Building and the Fire Department with grant funding. He reported that Val Court Road has been accepted as a Township road and the sidewalk project is moving forward. The Post Office node study has been completed and a community meeting is being set up. The Township Committee is getting complaints about the truck traffic on Beaver Run Road for the Quarry. Mr. O’Leary said the German Christmas market held in Sparta is looking to relocate to the Shoppes at Lafayette.

Open Space

Mr. O’Leary reported the Open Space Committee will hold a meeting to gather feedback on the plan update.

Economic Development

Nothing was reported.

BILLS: List #2

Mr. Leuthe went over the bills with the Board.

A motion to pay the bills as presented was made by Mr. Leuthe. It was seconded by Mr. Madewell and passed with a roll call vote. Ayes: Hughes, Suljic, O’Leary, Leuthe, Van Sickle, Potter, Madewell, Deller, Andersen, Carlson, Taylor.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Board, a motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Van Sickle. It was seconded by Mr. Potter and passed with everyone saying aye.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Pizzulo

Land Use Administrator