



BRISTOL PLANNING BOARD

MARCH 13, 2025 MINUTES

TOWN HALL
10 COURT ST.
BRISTOL, RI 02809
401-253-7000

Held: March 13, 2025 in person

Location: Bristol Town Hall, 10 Court Street, Bristol, RI

Present: Charles Millard, Chairman, Anthony D. Murgo, Vice Chairman; Steve Katz, Secretary; Member Brian W. Clark (arrived at 7:15pm); Member Richard Ruggiero; First Alternate Member Michael Sousa; and Second Alternate Member Jessalyn Jarest

Also Present: Diane Williamson, Director of Community Development, and Amy Goins, Esq., Assistant Town Solicitor

Not Present: None

Chairman Millard called the meeting to order at 7:06pm and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Alternate Member Jarest requested to make a change on page 3 as it should read “Adam McGovern” not “Ed McGovern”.

A motion was made by (Katz/Ruggiero) to accept the February 13, 2025 meeting as amended.

In favor: Millard, Katz, Murgo, Ruggiero, Sousa
Refrained: None
Opposed: None

C. Old Business

C1. (Continued) Report on the Economic Analysis of Selected Housing Strategies, Affordable Housing Trust & Recommendations

Board to request a Joint Workshop with the Town Council to review the draft Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan update and also to invite the local State Representatives to discuss pending draft Land Use Laws.

A motion was made by (Katz/Sousa)
In favor: Katz, Millard, Sousa, Murgo, Ruggiero
Refrained: None
Opposed: None

- C2. (Continued from February) Preliminary Plan Phase review for Major Land Development proposal** to construct a new Mt. Hope High School, including new tennis courts and athletic fields, at 199 Chestnut Street and to demolish the existing high school building. Owner: Town of Bristol / Applicant: Bristol Warren Regional School District/Lisa Pecora, Perkins Eastman, applicant representative. Zoned: Public Institutional. Assessor's Plat 117 Lots 3-7.

Applicant has agreed that the public hearing on the Preliminary Plan shall remain open until receipt of the necessary permits from the RIDEM.

The applicant has requested a further continuance to the April 10, 2025 meeting.

A motion was made by (Murgo/Ruggiero) to continue the application to the April 10, 2025 meeting.

In favor: Millard, Murgo, Ruggiero, Clark, and Katz

Refrained: None

Opposed: None

D. New Business

- D1. Fair Wind Properties Pre-Application Conference Comprehensive Permit at 206 Bayview Avenue.** Proposal to construct 17 new residential units in 3 buildings in addition to the existing 3-family dwelling on the property for a total of 20 units. Owner: Fair Wind Properties, LLC Zoned: R-10 Assessor's Plat 47 Lot 3.

Daniel Ferreira owner of Fair Wind came before the Board with a slide presentation to offer a visual during his presentation. Mr. Ferreira discussed the development of 17 townhouse style 3-bedroom residences with garages, along with an existing 3-family dwelling. It would be located behind the police station. He discussed the density study and yield map.

Vice Chairman Murgo asked Mr. Ferreira how many units would be affordable, and Mr. Ferreira advised that there would be 5 high end units that would be affordable. They would be the same quality as the other units.

Vice Chairman Murgo then asked if anyone had any questions. Alternate Member Souza asked about the drainage calculations and Mr. Ferreira advised that Mr. Principe would be better to answer that. Alternate Member Jarest had questions regarding the slopes on the rain gardens and the infiltration system. Diane Williamson advised the Board that this was just a pre-application high level concept, and it was non-binding, and that Mr. Ferreira was here just to exchange information.

Chairman Millard asked if the meeting was open to the public and Ms. Williamson advised that it was not, but that the public that was present could be invited to speak. Mr. Ferreira welcomed the opportunity to hear from the public as he found it helpful.

Alternate Member Jarest questioned the grassy play area's location near the manufacturing building and advised that she thought it was too small for the 3-bed units. Mr. Ferreira stated that he would look into that and see if it could be made larger and what screening he could provide to create a safe environment for the children. Chairman Millard asked what screening there was currently from the manufacturing area and Mr.

Ferreira stated that it was trees and brush which was not being removed, but will be added to with arborvitae. Mr. Ferreira then asked the Board if anyone knew of any plantings that deer would not eat and Alternate Member Jarest said they don't like green giant arborvitae and there should be a list on the internet of plants that are deer resistant.

Alternate Member Sousa then asked about the permeable pavement area. Mr. Ferreira advised that it was just a small portion of the driveway areas to provide drainage and that everything else would be asphalt.

Alternate Member Jarest then asked how wide the roadways were and Mr. Ferreira stated that the roadways were 20ft wide. He advised that it was presented to the Fire Department and approved. Alternate Member Souas advised that 20ft is preferred because it would make people drive slower and keep the children safer. Mr. Ferreira advised that they could put in speed humps, but Alternate Member Sousa advised that would not be good for plowing in the winter. Alternate Member Jarest said that as long as the Fire Department approved of it, then there was no issue.

Alternate Member Sousa then asked about on street parking. Mr. Ferreira advised that there would be designated parking spaces and a garage and that on street parking would only be for emergency vehicles.

Member Katz then asked about the water pressure. Mr. Ferreira advised that Principe did the calculations and the water pressure would be great, but that water volume might be of concern. Member Katz asked if there were fire hydrants close on Bayview and Mr. Ferreira said that was correct.

Mr. Ferreira stated that as of right now with the development he presented which was 23 units verses 20 units there is a calculated usage of 9.9 gallons per minute at peak. He said that the water line can produce 75 gallons per minute for plenty of water on site. He further stated that the Fire Department wanted fire hydrants to be 650ft from the corner of the building and that they were well within it. He advised that he can move the playground area as it gave them a little wiggle room, but needs to stay within the 650ft requirements.

Vice Chairman Murgo asked Ms. Williamson if the variances that are being sought goes through the Planning Board or Zoning. Ms. Williamson said that it was up to the Planning Board as it was a comprehensive permit, but that there might be other variances needed as the project gets further along. Mr. Ferreira agreed and said that it was just a draft of their previous plan because they were ready to completely submit the plan but they made changes as he wanted to do more under building parking.

Vice Chairman Murgo asked if the buildings had basements or were they on slabs. Mr. Ferreira advised that they were on slabs, but that there would be plenty of storage because of the garages.

Member Ruggiero stated that he had a lot of concerns, with traffic being the greatest concern. Mr. Ferreira stated that there was a traffic study done. Member Ruggiero stated that the traffic light on Metacom is difficult as it is and this project would just add 40 more cars to the problem. Mr. Ferreira said that they would look into what can be done to make it safer. Member Ruggiero asked if there was a way to force traffic to only make a left turn out of the complex. Attorney Goins stated that once an application is filed and

a traffic study is done, then the Board had to take that traffic study and if the conclusion was that the road can handle it without conditions, unless there is a good reason for one, then the Board can't impose conditions. Member Katz stated that the Board would just have to rely on the traffic study. Alternate Member Sousa asked if Principe was doing the traffic study and Mr. Ferreira said that it was Crossman Engineering who did it and they did not see any significant impact on the light. Member Katz stated that light was controlled by RIDOT since Metacom is a state run roadway. Alternate Member Sousa stated that when he does return with this application, the Board would be interested in seeing if it can be optimized and could Crossman Engineering, who does traffic signals for RIDOT all over the State, do something to improve the situation. Alternate Member Jarest said that people in Town have said how hard it is to get across with this light and that maybe with this project there could be something done about it. Mr. Ferreira stated that maybe the State can do something to optimize the situation.

Alternate Member Sousa then asked about the rain garden design and if there was a way to modify it and make it more of a natural shaped area. Alternate Member Jarest asked about plantings and agreed that maybe a more irregular shape would help make the play areas bigger. She also stated that the yield density plan showed the driveway in a different location and with this plan it shows that the Almeida Apartments and his proposed project's driveways would be side by side and that there should be more of a distinction between the two. Mr. Ferreira said that there was an existing 3-family structure there on the east side and since it is a historical home, they were not going to relocate it.

Member Clark stated that he was concerned about the density in the general area since there is the Almeida complex and possibilities for others in the future and that it was a Town problem and this project may be just adding to the problem. Mr. Ferreira acknowledge the issue and was advised to look at the density of the site. He said that everything has to be taken into consideration in order for the project to be financially feasible especially since there will be 5 affordable housing units there.

Vice Chairman Murgo asked how many bedrooms would be in the affordable housing units. Mr. Ferreira stated that they would be 3 bedroom units and they would be the same size, layout, and quality of the other units. Chairman Millard stated that the design was a lot better than expected. Mr. Ferreira showed a slide of the interior layout and the garage/parking areas.

Chairman Millard stated that he did not feel the discussion needed to be opened up to the public. Attorney Goins stated that they could see if anyone wanted to speak about it. Mr. Ferreira said he was open to anything that the public may have to say.

Veronica Tucker of 40 Congressional Street asked if the garages would accommodate SUVs as compact cars are not family oriented, and would the units be pet friendly. Mr. Ferreira stated that originally the height of the garage would be 8ft but then he upgraded to 9ft to accommodate SUVs, and that the units would be pet friendly.

Ms. Williamson asked stated that zoning required 1 parking space for a 2 bedroom unit and 2 parking spaces for a 3 bedroom unit. Mr. Ferreira advised that each unit will have 2 parking spaces, 1 in the garage and one in the driveway. Member Clark stated that with the roadway being 20ft, that would mean that only one car at a time could go down the road at the same time. Mr. Ferreira said that there was plenty of space and that the Fire

Department had no issue with the width. Ms. Williamson stated that there is a peer review engineer who guides the applicant to make sure they take everything into account. Mr. Ferreira said they went through it with PARE already and they had a meeting with PARE and the Principe team. Ms. Williamson said that they need to review that study again. Alternate Member Sousa stated that if it is PARE then they need to be advised that the Board is interested in the traffic light and the optimization of that light.

Chairman Millard asked if there was anyone else who wanted to speak.

Anthony Barrow of 1090 Hope Street came forward to speak. He said that he did not hear any consideration about environmental issues. Mr. Ferreira asked if he was referring to electric vehicles. Mr. Barrow asked about putting in charging stations ahead of time; what was going to be done about trash collection; how much power was going to be required for the area; and whether solar panels were being considered. Mr. Ferreira stated that the units would be designed in a way to that the garage would have the electrical for a charging station if the owner chose to install one at a later time. He advised that all of the roofs would be south facing and be designed to accommodate solar. He also stated that the trash collection will be located at the end of the site where the truck would be able to turn around at the hammerhead. Finally, Mr. Ferreira stated that there will be charging stations for residents only in a designated spot in the parking area.

Alternate Member Sousa asked if the power and phone lines would be located underground. Mr. Ferreira stated that it will come overhead to the property but then it will be fed underground to the units and that National Grid would take care of it. He stated that he will pay National Grid to do the engineering for the usage on site and he will pay for the infrastructure. He advised that there will also be using heat pump systems and there will be HVAC in all units and will be super efficient, and no fossil fuels will be used.

Chairman Millard asked if there was anyone else who wanted to speak.

Kelly Barret of 1090 Hope Street came forward. She said that 206 Bayview Unit 3B was being marketed as not a family-oriented unit and that no pets were allowed. Mr. Ferreira clarified that because that unit was a shared space unit with other renters, they erred on the side of caution not to allow pets due to possible allergies of other renters in that shared space and that was the only unit that was not pet friendly.

Vice Chairman Murgio asked about snow removal in the complex. Mr. Ferreira stated that he would have that contracted out. Member Clark asked if the snow would be stored on site. Mr. Ferreira stated there would be an area to store snow and it would be shown on the submitted plan.

Chairman Millard asked if there was anyone else who had questions or concerns.

Trisha Chalmers of D2 Bristol Woods Drive. She asked what was their definition of an affordable unit. Attorney Goins stated that was governed by State law. Ms. Chalmers asked what the rent for a 3 bedroom would be in Bristol. Mr. Ferreira stated that it was based on the person's income. He stated that 80% of average income is used to calculate rent and that right now in Bristol a 2 bedroom unit on Chestnut Street is \$2,800 a month and his would be approximately \$1,900 a month. He advised that it is managed by the Bristol or local housing authority. Ms. Williamson advised that it was the East Bay CDC.

Mr. Ferreira stated that East Bay CDC gets the applications and presents them to him and then they decide or the management company would decide on the application.

Vice Chairman Murgio asked if the units would be non-smoking. Mr. Ferreira stated that no smoking would be allowed in the units but that the tenants could go outside and smoke and that there would be quarterly inspections to make sure.

Chairman Millard asked what the next steps would be. Attorney Goins stated that the ball was in the applicant's court now and the next step would be a preliminary plan. She stated that there is pending legislation that would restore the master plan step for comprehensive permits, but only as an option for the applicant.

- D2. Comfort Inn & Suites Pre-Application Submission at Gooding Avenue** to construct an 80-room hotel. Property on south side of Gooding Avenue approximately 50 feet east of the intersection of Gooding Avenue and Broadcommon Road, near utility pole #218. Owner: D & M Boca Development, LLC Zoned: GB. Assessor's Plat 111 Lot.

Chairman Millard and Vice Chairman Murgio recused themselves.

Member Katz advised the Board that this was just for pre-application discussion and there was not going to be a vote. He advised that they wanted to hear from the owner/applicant first and then he would open it to the public if anyone had questions, but that the comments were to be at 3 minutes each so everyone with concerns could be heard. All with thoughts, like to ask to keep comments to 3 min max. He further advised that the Town would need an architect and a landscape architect who is registered in Rhode Island to assist the Technical Review Committee, a current traffic study, and a corrected RI Environmental Management permit because the current one was based on prior hotel which was a Mainstay and this is a Comfort Inn.

Member Katz went to say that he personally had deep concern over proximity of the project to Mt. Hope High School with the possibility of transient people going in and out of the hotel and he is concerned for the safety of the kids going to school. He advised that they need to see the floor plan as they do not want any rooms with kitchens per the Town Ordinance. He stated that they would need to see a drainage storage plan for a 10yr storm event at minimum, but would like to see more than a 10yr event. He advised that the Town Official stated that the gravity sewer will be problematic during heavy rain events and they need to see the hotel's plan for storage for peak flow, as well as the installation of a low pressure pump station. He said that it is well known in the Town that extreme wet conditions had a deleterious effect on the Town's sanitary sewer main resulting in excessive sanitary sewer surcharges and overflows downstream at the high school. He advised that the Board was interested in learning of the potential impacts to the surrounding neighborhood and community, and what are the applicant's mitigation plans, and the applicant would also need an environmental impact statement. He said that the Board would like the site staked out so the Board could do a site visit and get a better idea.

Michael Reznik, attorney for the owner/applicant started the presentation. He said there have been some changes since the last time this was presented to the Board. He stated that the property is at Gooding Avenue, Plat 111, Lot 1, and they are proposing an 81 room hotel which was originally going to be a Mainstay, but has since changed to a

Comfort Inn, and they would not have any kitchens in any rooms. He further stated that Mr. Duhamel who is the engineer would be talking about the specifics of the project which is on 9.78 acres and which a substantial portion of the parcel was going to be left in its natural state.

Attorney Reznik stated that the hotel development was allowed by right in a general business zone and that they were not seeking any zoning relief, or waivers from the Planning Board regulations. He stated that it was in conformance with zoning and is supported by the Comprehensive Plan. He understood that it was requested by the Town and the Board that the applicant obtain a DEM permit prior to coming back for a master plan or a preliminary plan or a combined master preliminary and the applicant did do that. He further stated that the RI DEM permit obtained was formal and subject to substantial public comment and that the permit was not wrong. He said that the permit was presently subject to minor modification before DEM which meant that there would not be another public notice. He said that DEM had taken the position that it is a minor modification and he expected in a very short time they would have an updated DEM permit. Member Katz stated that's why he said they needed a corrected permit.

Attorney Reznik said that they also need a State permit from RIDOT which was a PAP, which they had submitted to RIDOT with substantial back and forth and the review has been positive and they should have that permit in a very short time. He said that this has been the most robust pre-application package that has ever submitted for a project. He said other than the landscape plan, fiscal impact report, and environmental report, the applicant is ready today to submit for master/preliminary if the Board would accept it. He explains the contents of the packets that were submitted to the Board, and introduces the project team.

Attorney Reznik understands that there is a need for buffering and landscaping and that it is being worked on. He said that the fiscal impact statement will show the Town the direct and indirect infusion to the economy that flows from this type of hotel which is supported in the Comprehensive Plan. He stated that he would not answer any questions that are more for the experts to answer and that he would make sure that all of the experts were present in future meetings to answer questions, but if there are questions for the experts during this meeting, then he would pass those along and a letter would be drafted to answer them. He further understands that there are a lot of concerns about the storm water management and that they will be available to sit down with the community to discuss everything. He said they would like to have an appointment of peer reviewers for anything that the Town thinks should be peer reviewed.

Chris Duhamel of DiPrete Engineering is next to discuss the project. He said they are at the pre-application submission stage for it. He stated that the site is a 9.7 acre parcel on Gooding Avenue with 506ft of frontage and it is opposite Broadcommon Road intersection, is adjacent to the Andrews Court residential development to the west, and is adjacent to the Town's property to the east and south. He stated that there is a 30ft sewer easement that encumbers the site. He shows a survey by Baker Land Surveying which was completed as a class 1 survey. Mr. Duhamel advises that the 30ft sewer easement transects the site from north to south and that the site is zoned GB. He advised that there is public water and sewer available to the site. He said the wetlands were delineated by Natural Resource Services and Scott Rabidoux. They have located a wooded swamp over the property with an associated 50ft buffer and that it was approved by DEM and that there is 6.7 acres of wetlands. He stated that the eastern branch of Silver Creek abuts

the site and there is an associated floodway which was mapped by BETA Engineering through a storm water management study.

Mr. Duhamel then showed slides of the proposed development which utilizes 1.4 acres of the site and that the remaining area is to be left in its natural state. He said that 85% of site will be undeveloped and only 15% would be utilized for a 80 unit hotel with associated parking which will be 1 space per unit, and also required is a 14x60 loading space area. He said that the zoning setbacks have been met.

Mr. Duhamel goes on to show a slide showing the differences between the previous design (shown in red) and the new design of site. He said that access to the site has been relocated from near the residential property to the east boundary of the site. He said the proposed footprint of the Comfort Inn will be smaller and that architects from Silvestri Architects, Inc. have redesigned the site and redesigned the hotel. Traffic for the hotel has been analyzed by Solli Engineering and Kevin Solli, PE. They have evaluated it at peak hour and determined that there's a level service B and they have analyzed the intersection of Metacom and Gooding and have found no degradation of level service. The traffic study will be submitted for peer review.

Mr. Duhamel advised that water has been provided to the development and Bristol County has made improvements. Hydro flow testing shows there is 70psi static, 60 residual at 1,400 gallons per minute flow which is more than adequate. He said that a gravity sewer can be built to join the existing gravity sewer on the site. He said they have been asked to have storage of peak hour flow during periods of flooding and then pump it into the sewer that can easily be accommodated with a 10,000 gallon tank.

Mr. Duhamel then showed a slide showing the floor plan of the hotel as designed by Silvestri Architects. The rooms will not have kitchens. The next slide shows the elevation showing the proposed building. The maximum height is 35ft and they have taken an average of the 4 corners as required by zoning and determined the elevation at 76.8ft would be an average elevation across the footprint and the grading provided would allow for a knee wall along the high end to allow for flat elevation of 76.8ft and not to exceed the maximum height of 35ft. Mr. Duhamel showed the next slide which showed the rendering of the color scheme being suggested by Silvestri Architects.

Mr. Duhamel then discussed the drainage on the site would allow for collection of the water from the roof and impervious driveway areas which would then be routed to 2 different drainage areas. He said that each drainage area would have an underground infiltration system and an underground detention system. He said that the location of the building and parking is all outside of any floodway associated with Silver Creek east branch and that there will be no alteration of Silver Creek and no filling of the floodway itself. He stated that it has been determined through analysis from BETA and DEM engineering review, as well as DiPrete Engineering. Member Katz asked if that meant there would be a net zero increase despite of the footprint displacing an area where water would otherwise go into the soil. Mr. Duhamel said that there is a flood path that goes across the property and the hotel and parking is located outside of that flood path and they made sure that the design would not impact the flood path in any way. He stated that they are leaving the capacity of the flood path just as it is. Member Katz asked that with the building there, there would be no increase in runoff and Mr. Duhamel clarified that based on the analysis it would actually decrease in runoff rate and volume. He said it would capture the impervious area. He said that this would be achieved by having

underground storage for the runoff before being discharged. He said underground storage will infiltrate the water quality volume of the storm way such that a decrease in runoff volume of 4 CFS which is about 2,000 gallons a minute and about 0.18 acre feet which is 60,000 gallons. He said they wanted to make sure that there was no added flow to the waterway and no added flow to the downstream neighborhoods and no increase to the high school. He said that he expected a peer review of the analysis to make certain that what was stated was correct. He feels confident in it. He said that DEM had already approved the Mainstay hotel and that they evaluated everything that DiPrete Engineering has done for the design of the underground infiltration system. He said they showed a sieve analysis showing that it was loamy soil and that it could qualify for an infiltration rate that is double what was actually analyzed.

Mr. Duhamel stated that they were also required to evaluate the 350 acre watershed of the eastern branch of Silver Creek and how that would be impacted by this development and whether that impact would have the same peak discharge, even though it's less water, there would be a delay so that it would go with the peak of the 350 acres. They had to show that it does not compound it. He said they would not be increasing the flow in the waterway. He stated that they've done the analysis with DEM Peer Review and had done extensive analysis that showed all of the possible combinations have been met. He said they look forward to a peer analysis by the Town and the Town's engineer.

Alternate Member Sousa asked if the system penetrating the high ground water table which is anywhere from 0 to 18 inches below the existing grade. Mr. Duhamel said that they are 4 feet above it so it does not penetrate it as there is quite a bit of fill required for the parking lot and that there will be 6ft to 8ft of fill within the most southeasterly boundary of the site. He said there is a deeper water table at the entrance to the site so they had a 4ft minimum separation to the infiltration structures which was a requirement of DEM and it has been met.

Alternate Member Sousa asked if they would be removing all of the organic material and topsoil so the material underneath will be the free draining material that Mr. Duhamel mentioned. Mr. Duhamel said that was correct and they have done soil samples within the areas of the infiltration systems. He said they have done sieve analysis for it and it was sandy loam. He said they have proved that there is a reduction overall for CFS in discharge rate and a reduction of 0.2 acre feet in stormwater volume and will have no effect on the east branch of Silver Creek.

Mr. Duhamel stated that they would be filing in 4,700sq.ft. of wetland area and they had to prove that there was no degradation to the overall wetland complex. He said there are 26 standards that have to be met and that Scott Rabidoux evaluated the wetland itself and Scott put a value on the preservation of the 8.5 acres that will be preserved. He stated that DEM believes that the alterations are warranted and approved it. Mr. Duhamel said that a peer review would be needed to reaffirm what DEM approved. He advised that DOT had been pending for some time, and he fully expected that they will have DOT approval soon. He said they received some additional comments from Bristol Water Pollution Control and will be working with them. He stated that since the process for the Planning Board is at least 3 steps, there is a lot of opportunity to review and make changes. He said that since this meeting was a pre-application stage, they wanted to introduce the project, take notes, answer any questions, and meet with neighbors, and make any changes as necessary. Member Katz said that was greatly appreciated.

Attorney Reznik stated that they welcomed the public's questions and comments, but that there may be some questions that were outside Mr. Duhamel's expertise and cannot be answered during the meeting. He stated that he would take all of the comments and questions and prepare a list for the experts that were not present so they can be properly addressed. He wanted to make sure that no one felt as if they were not being heard.

Member Katz invited the public to speak and to limit their comments to 3 minutes max.

Ted Spinard of 35 Dartmouth Street, asked Attorney Goins for some clarification. Attorney Goins reiterated that there would be no decisions made at the meeting including the potential request to combine stages since it was not on the agenda as such. Mr. Spinard wanted clarification since the new plan had not been reviewed by the TRC and until now the neighbors had not had an opportunity to express their concerns/objections to certain things contained in the presentation. He said that the new concept plan was stated as being very minor modifications, but he feels that when drainage is changed and a new report is presented, and the impervious area is increased, he didn't consider that as a minor modification. He said that on the previous modification, the public commented on it and DEM reviewed that which took about 4 to 5 months. His main concern is downstream flooding and how it would be addressed as he feels that it has not been addressed properly.

John Halliberta of 1101 Hope Street came forward to also express his concerns about the water/flooding issues. He asked what was done for test borings on the site. He is also concerned about the sewer system as over the years due to the Town building up, he had to install a backflow preventer. He feels that nothing has been done to improve the main sewer line to handle the flow. He asked who did the test boring, how deep did it go down, and what was found. He stated that this side of Town has shale rock and the other side has granite and it makes a big difference.

Vanessa Desjardens of 12 Robin Drive came up next. She stated that as a parent, her concern is the proximity to the high school. She feels that since hotels are frequented by professionals and transients, it is a perfect location for drugs, sex trafficking, and a public safety issue. She stated that another location should be picked. She is also concerned with the water/flooding issues in the area.

Patrick Barrosh of 103 Aaron Avenue came up next. He is a geologist and also has concerns with the flooding issue in the Town. He stated that almost all of the flooding problems are man-made and not due to natural causes like climate change. He said they are due to decisions eating away at flood areas, wetlands, and storm runoffs, and feels this project would just be another one of those problems. He stated that filling in wetlands will displace the water and it will go somewhere. He said that properties like this should be placed in a conservation easement so in the future someone would not chip away at the wetlands.

Member Katz asked if there was anyone else who would like to speak.

Betty Wheaton of 450 Hope Street came forward to speak. She stated that she is also concerned about the water like everyone else. She also stated that since Bristol is very historical, they should come up with a design for the building that would complement the area as the current building was just ugly.

Trisha Chalmers of D2 Bristol Woods Drive stepped up. She feels that the decimation of wetlands for an 80 room hotel and parking lot are both ridiculous and short-sighted. Like others, she too is concerned about the flooding issues. She would like Martin Wensic, the DEM Water Resource Supervisor, to come and explain why DEM approved this project. Her other concern was regarding traffic issues around Broadcommon Road as it is dangerous. She is concerned about what will happen when the hotel goes belly up as hotels in the area tend to do.

Judith Byrnes of 62 Seabreeze Lane came up. She asked if there would be another traffic study because the other was outdated and Member Katz said the Board had asked for a new one. She said she studied the traffic study and noted that they studied Metacom and Gooding Avenue and Gooding and Hope Street, but they did not do Broadcommon Road which needs to be looked at.

Emily Spinard of 35 Dartmouth Street came up next. She reminded the Planning board that she had submitted to the Town Council in December 2023 and to DEM a petition signed by 100+ people opposing the hotel regarding filling in and altering wetlands which may lead to more flooding. She then directed her comments to Attorney Reznik stating that he presented a very robust introduction but that this has been going on for 10 years and the wetlands should be protected. She has attended every meeting on this and stated that Diane Williamson had presented the Planning Board with the concerns of flooding, etc., but feels that they are still not being addressed. She said that the only thing that has happened is the presentation of another site plan like the one at the meeting tonight. She stated that the approved site plan by DEM was for a Mainstay hotel and now they are presenting a new site plan that has not been approved. Again, the concerns are for flooding, filling in the wetlands, coming up with different plans, and then trying to get those plans in at the last minute.

Veronica Tucker came back up. She stated that her dad, William Tucker, opposed the building of the high school because of the water concerns then. The high school was built and it has been underwater since that day. She only spent 2 years at the high school but remembers having to walk through water. She stated that people need to learn from it and know that they cannot fill in the wetlands. She said that the Town can keep filling in wetlands and expect that there won't be flooding as the water has to go somewhere. Learn from lessons. How many are we going to fill in and not expect flooding. She said that the wetlands needs to be preserved and repaired.

Anthony Barrow of 1090 Hope Street came up. Appreciates the detailed presentation on the application. He stated that after looking at the site plan, the hotel would need a minimum of 150 kilowatts fixed charge for it which would require the utility company to build a transformer or upgrade the transfer station. He feels that the cost of upgrading will be passed along to the residents. He asked if there would be any consideration for the installation of solar panels on the roof or a solar canopy over the parking lot. He advised that it should be taken into consideration to help the hotel financially. He suggested filing for an SBA 504 or 507 which could be a good way to fund the project and to offset the cost of electricity to the ratepayers. He was also concerned about the property's food waste and preventing rodents in the area.

Member Katz asked if there was anyone else who wanted to speak.

Gabe Ferrera of 4 Church Cove Road came up. He asked if the applicant makes all the requirements and does everything needed according to the State or the Town, does the Town still have the final say on the project? Attorney Goins advised that there are requirements by State law for this type of project which is a major land development project. She advised that just because an applicant secures permits from DOT or DEM doesn't mean it is a done deal. She said that the applicant still has to present to the Town and check off all of the boxes to be satisfied by law for approval, but the Town still has to review everything.

Member Katz asked if there was anyone else who wanted to speak.

Bob Daponte of 36 Dartmouth Street came up to speak. He is concerned with the flooding problem in the area as he lives downstream. The Town had to put pumps in. He feels that the 12 inch main can't handle the water from 80 showers, sink, and toilets. He asked how high the retaining wall on Gooding Ave would be. He said that the water from the lot is going to end up in the stream. He said between this project and the high school, that enough is enough and filling in the wetlands should not be done. He also stated that if the hotel failed, it seemed like Roger Williams would turn it into an off-campus dormitory.

Barbara Robinson of 51 Seabreeze Lane came up to speak. She asked for clarification on if the Town has the final say on the project as she feels the prior response to that question meant that as long as all of the boxes were checked off, it would go through. Attorney Goins said that DEM has certain requirements, the State law sets standards and requirements to be met by the applicant, and the Town has an expansive list of findings that need to be satisfied before the project could be approved. Member Clark stated that if everything is satisfied then they would probably have to pass it, and that they just can't decide that they don't like it and not do it.

Anthony Barrow came back up to speak but Member Katz asked him to wait to see if there was anyone else who wanted to speak first.

Wayne Zina of 74 Gooding Avenue approached to speak. His property is adjacent to the project and he was concerned about safety. He asked what was going to be done for safety and privacy. He said that strawberry shrubbery would not prevent people from walking into back yards and invading privacy. He was also concerned about the design of the building and asked if there were windows on the west side of the building which would be facing his back yard where his 3 stepdaughters play and that is not respectful. He asked them to keep it in mind.

Anthony Barrow came back up to speak. He wanted clarification on the regulations and requirements of the State versus local municipalities.

Member Katz asked if there was anyone else that wanted to speak. He emphasized that this was just a pre-application conference and that no vote would be taken tonight.

Member Ruggiero said he had some major concerns. He stated that he didn't put much stock in traffic studies as they were not reliable. He also had major concerns about flooding, sewer overflow, and wasn't sure how the land got approval from DEM. He feels that the hotel should not be built on wetlands and that hotels in Bristol have failed, along with a Portsmouth that failed. He doesn't think Bristol needs a hotel.

Attorney Reznik stated that Bristol's Comprehensive Plan identified that General Business zoned area as a place to put a hotel. Member Ruggiero stated that just because it may be a place to put a hotel, did it make sense to do so. Member Clark asked Attorney Reznik if he wanted to respond, but Attorney Reznik said he already did.

Mrs. Spinard came back up. She stated that Attorney Reznik said it passed the Town's approval, but that it had not been corrected since 2015 in the narrative. She said that the narrative was revised in 2022 still said that the Town supported the hotel but that was not correct. She stated that the Town Council wrote to DEM stating that they were neither for or against it and that DEM should take into consideration flooding, etc. She stated that the applicant needed to stop saying that the Town supports it as that was not correct.

Attorney Reznik responded, stating that he did not say that the project has been approved by anyone. He was referring to the Town's Comprehensive Plan and that it stated that the zoned area was appropriate for a hotel in the Future Land Use Map. He said that he was not making any representation about approval of the project. He said that the Comprehensive Plan and the Future Land Use Map stated that this development project was appropriate for the area.

Ed Pimental came up to speak. He was involved in the original review of the Mainstay hotel. When he got back into this project, he reviewed the regulations as there have been significant changes across the State of Rhode Island. He said that every community had to revisit their Comprehensive Plan, zoning regulations, and land development subdivision regulations, and vet them out as to what they deem to be appropriate usage. He said that the big thing is if a town feels that a use may be appropriate, then it should be looked at and scrutinized more on a site by site basis and that they should impose the requirements for a special use permit and with that provide specific and objective criteria. He stated that Bristol did so by downscaling the size and massing and he brought it to the applicant's attention and it was redesigned with a smaller footprint. He said that the Comprehensive Plan states that hotels are one of the most required land uses and it still says that and that it should have been revisited and amended, but it still allows for hotels in the GB district. He said that since there were concerns about hotels in the area, that it should have been revisited while reviewing the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map.

Mr. Spinard came back up and said that the Comprehensive Plan also stated that they should not be building on wetlands. He said that what the applicant referred to is only one element of the Comprehensive Plan as there is recreation, conservation, and economics and all state that you don't build on wetlands in the Town and particularly around Silver Creek because of the flooding issue.

Member Katz stated that this is a great discussion being had and that they were not rendering an opinion on it. He said that State law has changed over the last few years which had taken a lot of control away from the towns and cities, and Bristol had to make changes. He said that the Comprehensive Plan did state that this is a site for a hotel. He stated that the Town and the applicant were going to have to go through a series of steps together with reviews, plans, and peer reviews, and that they were not rubberstamping anything, and the applicant will have to prove their case consistent with State law and Town ordinances, and their peer review will have a say.

Margaret Godwin of Terrance Drive came up to speak. She said that the people on Dartmouth Street and the whole Town has a flooding problem. She said that it shouldn't be done because once the wetlands are gone, they are gone forever. She said the Town needs to do their due diligence.

Alternate Member Jarest stated that she reviewed everything and found it frustrating to read an outdated document regarding stormwater mitigation from 2010. She said that DEM should have a more updated document, and she found it frustrating that it was presented today. Attorney Reznik wasn't sure what documents she was referring to as he said that all documents submitted for the pre-application were updated materials. Alternate Member Jarest stated that the DEM documents were revised on December 20, 2022, but they referenced outdated stormwater mitigation guidance from January 29, 2010. Attorney Reznik didn't want to get into a discussion without his expert, Scott Rabidoux, present. Member Clark stated that Alternate Member Jarest was just voicing concern and was not asking questions. Alternate Member Jarest stated that Attorney Reznik was being argumentative and disrespectful to the Board. Attorney Reznik denied it and stated that in the beginning of the meeting he stated that they need to do a meeting with the experts present. Member Katz suggested that Attorney Reznik take Alternate Member Jarest's comments and concerns about the material back to the experts and provide the Board with input as the document references are 10 years old. Attorney Reznik said that it was submitted to DEM and DEM reviewed it and it was part and parcel to their approval. Alternate Member Jarest stated that the document should reference the updated stormwater management manual and not the one from 2010. Attorney Reznik said that he would speak to Scott Rabidoux about it.

Alternate Member Sousa stated that a major evacuation route is Hope Street hope and there is a major flooding problem where Silver Creek crosses Hope Street. He said that the discharge has to be looked at from different points in time as it could exceed it and have a problem. He said that's what happened with Tanyard Brook and now it is a mess because it was looked at improperly. Mr. Duhamel agreed with Alternate Member Sousa. Mr. Duhamel stated that the watershed analysis provide that there was not. He said that the wetland package was updated and it referred to 2015 work and then revisited the site to make sure there was no alteration of wetlands during the process, and that the stormwater manual was revised in 2018. Alternate Member Jarest stated that wasn't incorporated in what the Board had received and that it referenced the manual from 2010. Alternate Member Sousa said that when they come back they should submit clean documents and updated information. Attorney Reznik understood and will make sure that everything is updated and in the meantime if anyone had questions they could contact Attorney Goins who will pass that question onto him and he will present it to the experts and get the appropriate responses.

Member Katz asked if the experts could be present next time so concerns and questions can be addressed. Attorney Goins said the next step in the process would be a master plan application filing which would trigger a TRC meeting. She suggested that after the TRC meeting, if the applicant still intends to request a combination of mater and preliminary plans, then that would be an appropriate time to come to the Board and review the TRC meeting results and have the experts present. Attorney Reznik stated that he looks forward to the TRC meeting and that the technical experts will be there and that during the next meeting with the Planning Board, he will have all of the experts present.

Member Katz asked if anyone else wanted to speak.

Mr. Spinard approached again. He stated that the documents says that the Town supports it, and the Town does not support it. He said that he would like the document corrected as there is a letter from the Town Council.

Attorney Reznik clarified that they have not received any support or approval from the Town and he was just referring to the Comprehensive Plan.

Member Katz made a motion to adjourn.

E. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:55 pm by Katz

Respectfully submitted by Kathleen M. Maynard, Recording Secretary

Date Approved: 19 April 2025 Planning Board: _____