



BRISTOL PLANNING BOARD OCTOBER 10, 2024 MINUTES

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

Held: October 10, 2024 in person at the Bristol Town Hall, 10 Court Street, Bristol, RI

Present: Charles Millard, Chairman; Steve Katz, Secretary; Member Brian W. Clark; Member Richard Ruggiero; Alternate Member Michael Sousa, and Alternate Member Jessalyn Jarest (joined the meeting at 7:30 p.m.)

Also Present: Diane Williamson, Administrative Officer/Director of Community Development; Amy Goins, Esq., Assistant Town Solicitor; and Nicole Iannuzzi, Planning Board Peer Review Engineer and Consultant for Beta Group

Not Present: Anthony Murgo, Vice Chairman

Chairman Millard called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by (Clark/Katz) to accept the September meeting

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

Opposed: None

C1. Old Business -

(Continued) Public Hearing and Master Plan Phase review and possible action on same for Major Land Development for 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. The Applicant has requested waivers of State permits that are required for submission at the Preliminary Plan stage of review pursuant to State Law and the Regulations. Specifically, in accordance with Section 5.4 of the Regulations and the Major Land Development Checklist item No. E7, the Applicant has requested to proceed to Preliminary Plan review with the following permits to be provided as a condition of approval to be submitted prior to Final Plan Review – Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) Freshwater Wetlands permit, RIDEM Stormwater Construction Permit, and RIDEM Water Quality Certification.

Ana Riley, Superintendent, thanked the Board for continuing the meeting to review the timeline and the public outreach that has already happened.

Chad Crittenden of PMA Consultants discussed the project timeline. He stated that the project started 1½ years ago and they are currently in the construction document phase, and working on getting quotes/estimates and projects that they will be breaking ground in spring 2025. He stated that it should be a 2 year construction process with a June 2029 deadline. He stated that there have been a lot of events for community outreach including 3 abutters' meetings and 21

community meetings. He then asked if the Board had questions on the schedule or process timeline.

Chairman Millard said that no one had questions.

Mr. Crittenden then spoke about construction logistics. He stated that brand new curb cuts for a new parking area would be done. He stated that they will retain/maintain some of the field area to minimize any impact. He spoke about replacing parking spaces that have been lost. The project specs include all requirements for stormwater storage, dust mitigation, noise restrictions, and blackout periods.

Member Clark asked if they could stage the construction without or have minimal disruption on Chestnut Street.

Mr. Crittenden stated that there would not be any staging on Chestnut Street as there will be an access site on Metacom.

Alternate Member Sousa asked if there was a plan for other temporary parking.

Mr. Crittenden stated that there will be alternate parking on the eastern side of the site. That it would free up for overflow parking for roughly 60 vehicles and that it would be sufficient for typical school day. He stated that since the last time they were in front of the Board, there have been 3 different data points done during the school day.

Member Katz asked Mr. Crittenden what time of the day was the data collected.

Mr. Crittenden stated that the review was done at approximately 1:00 pm. He stated that even during events, there were still approximately 64 spaces vacant and that was with buses parking in the lot and that there was no parking demand.

Member Katz found that interesting as there was a picture in Phoenix approximate 1-2 weeks ago showing people parked in the cemetery. Member Katz stated that he was not criticizing Mr. Crittenden or the high school. That it was his understanding that it has been a common practice.

Mr. Crittenden agreed and stated that the wheels were in motion with the Church to put a gate there to prevent that in the future.

Chairman Millard stated that the cemetery will be putting up a gate to prevent it in the future.

Member Clark asked if the main entrance on Chestnut Street to field will be moved.

Alternate Member Sousa asked if there were any members of the School Committee present as he asked how the parking spaces are delegated. He asked if Seniors were allowed to park there, were Juniors in a lottery system, and how many spaces were needed.

Superintendent Riley stated that Seniors are allowed to park in the lot and that Juniors are on a lottery system. She stated that they did not have a wait list right now. She stated that enrollment continues to decline and that creating more spaces will allow more Juniors to park in the lot.

Alternate Member Sousa was concerned that there were approximately 200 Seniors who could get permits and along with the Juniors and staff members, 230+ spaces did not seem to be enough; however, he did see some empty spaces.

Chairman Millard stated that some people did not want to use the parking lot and then parked on the street to get out easier due to the one-way to get in/out.

Engineer Dave Potter, Pare Engineering stated that modifications were made to the plans and they were putting together supplemental information. He stated that the information was submitted on September 25, 2024 and that the same was reviewed at the TRC meeting. He said that 226 spaces were required for zoning and that the Ordinance stated that it cannot exceed 280 spaces. He stated that the plan has 248 spaces. He asked if there were any further questions.

Chairman Millard stated that they could move on to the next discussion point.

Mr. Potter continued with a discussion in the flood plain. He said that Silver Creek ran through the middle of the site. He stated that a water grade change was going to happen and that they have been considering how to design the site with a flood plain. He said that they have been using information from the FEMA map. He stated that they have been working with the Town and they did research and referenced the BETA Silver Creek water study and had a discussion with Nicole Iannuzzi, Planning Board Peer Review Engineer and Consultant for BETA Group. He found that the study intended to identify the problem areas and that it was not a model to create a new flood map. It was one-dimensional and completed to identify problem areas after storm events. It had great information but did not supersede the FEMA map. He stated that the Army Corp of Engineers was a doing study which was in the preliminary phase. He went back to the FEMA map of 2014 which contained the most recent information for the site. He reiterated the benefits of the project for the school which is currently in the flood plain. He stated that the new building will be moved out of the flood plain and that it would be a more sustainable design for safety and reduce property damage during flood event.

Alternate Member Sousa stated that this would only work if the grade is raised where the existing buildings is now so that it would continue to be above flood plain elevation with no resilient effect. He further stated that if the parking lot to the north and east of the building are set lower then that would allow for flood plain storage.

Mr. Potter stated that there would be 12,700sqft of fill in the majority of the area near the parking lot with landscaping.

Alternate Member Sousa asked if it would match the existing area. He stated that Silver Creek flows to Hope Street and that is the main evacuation route from Bristol and that if it floods it is a problem and that is a major safety concern. He stated that the climate since 1971 to 2024 has increased and there is a lot more going on. He said that unfortunately mapping and regulations to comply to have not caught up yet. He said that knowing that the high school is part of fabric of community there is are opportunities to reduce the problem. He stated that rather than go ahead and match the existing area, why not try to do a little better.

Mr. Potter stated that putting the building outside of the flood plain and doing work to remove that building does not create any fill along the flood plain. He stated that any portion of the site that is within the flood plain they could provide measures. He said that there would be more details in the preliminary plan phase.

Alternate Member Sousa stated that much of the flood plain right where Silver Creek goes under the buildings must have a constriction which is causing a lot of back up. He suggested that during the preliminary design phase, that they allow for some of that flow through which would

alleviate some of it and that a little more storage on Chestnut Street would prevent a back flow event and make it a little better.

Mr. Potter stated that the strategy is to not have any impact to wetlands or neighbors either up or down stream. He advised that moving the building is a huge benefit. He stated that they walked the wetlands on a dry day and that areas around them were still wet.

Member Clark asked what the plan for water mitigation during construction is.

Mr. Potter stated that the contractor is required to install a storm runoff on site. He said they spoke with DEM on how to mitigate the runoff and bring it down stream and that they will have basins to catch the runoff.

Member Clark stated that a high water table in a tight space can be problematic in a storm event.

Mr. Potter stated that DEM will be monitoring everything throughout the construction and that as far as impervious area, the gravel will have a different run off characteristic.

Member Clark stated that they just need to be prepared.

Mr. Potter said that DEM will review the plan and work with the contractor during construction.

Mr. Potter then discussed the storm water management. He stated that this would help everyone understand the project as it will provide a major benefit to Silver Creek and comply with the Town's storm water Ordinance. He said that the plan now shows all of the proposed developments. He said that the tension base that is on site now hardly has any impervious area and that it was designed for storage, and that 15bmps is proposed at the master plan. He stated that the water will flow down to a catch basin and then to Silver Creek. He further stated that instead of the water running from the roof to the parking lot, it will be held back by management systems which will allow the downstream area to benefit. He stated that the volume required by Bristol could be larger in an impervious area. He said that the water would be held in a system and it would be released over time, and that they did not want standing water on site and that it would be in an underground chamber to have time to infiltrate into the ground. He said that south of the new athletic field, there would be a large underground chamber and that the information on that would be submitted for preliminary plan review.

Chairman Millard asked if anyone had any questions.

Alternate Member Sousa stated that if there is no increase in volume, then DEM is not concerned.

Mr. Potter said that they will have a report submitted to DEM and to the Town and the volume tables will be there.

Alternate Member Sousa asked how long would it take to infiltrate the ground from a storm, would it be days or weeks?

Mr. Potter said that it would be approximately 72 hours with the storm water management system.

Alternate Member Sousa asked if they were using a porous pavement for the walks and said that New York has a specific pavement that it used for such a purpose, and they have 3 different companies for it. He stated that this would be a great opportunity for that.

Mr. Potter said that it was discussed last time at TRC, that soil does not infiltrate that well and that there is a cost benefit to consider. He stated that around 24 inches of stone under pavement was recommended but they can look at it further. He stated they did concrete walkways and they need to be creative to accomplish all goals and that they will have more information in the next phase.

Chairman Millard asked about how many retention ponds were on the new site.

Mr. Potter said that there were 3 and that they were getting retention from smaller areas, that there will be a combination of systems including an underground system, 1 on the west, 1 on the north, and 1 on the south but that may change.

Alternate Member Sousa said that he liked the pervious pavement and that he thought it would work well.

Mr. Potter moved on to the synthetic turf issue and whether or not DEM would allow. He stated that Massachusetts saw synthetic turf as porous, but Rhode Island does not consider it. Mr. Potter said that every synthetic turf they have worked on they have shown to DEM. They met in July 2023 and then reached out in September 2024 and asked DEM if they had any concerns. DEM stated that they would not have any issues with the type of system that was proposed since it was similar to other schools in Rhode Island.

Mr. Potter then discussed on to the operation maintenance of the storm water management system. He stated that typically it consists of the removal of trash, picking up sediment that was collected, the placement of poles in the system to monitor levels of sediment, mulching, and mowing. They want to keep BMPs closer to the building and keep them as pretty as possible. There will be more simple BMPs further away with less grass, mulch, and stone. He stated that there will be a budget for the maintenance. Mr. Potter further stated that they will put together a manual to submit to the DEM.

Member Clark asked if the BMPs are ignored, then when do they fail?

Mr. Potter said that it would depend on the amount of sediment accumulated in them.

Member Clark asked for a ballpark estimate.

Mr. Potter stated that if there is 9 inches to 1ft of sediment in the water level, then it may fail. He stated that the sediment will be in a pretreatment bay and it would be a while before there was significant deterioration.

Member Clark stated there were concerns about the school's maintenance history.

Mr. Potter understood the concerns with maintenance and said that there would be a manual and schedule in place and that the grass would be mowed at least 2 times a year. He said that there could be more of a discussion about it down the line. Mr. Potter then asked if anyone else had any questions and then moved on to the athletics field.

Kris Bradner, Traverse Landscape Architects, said that the rendering showed the fields that currently exist on the site. He stated that the Baseball field does not exist at the school and that currently there is no support for a field hockey team. He said that the proposed design gives the ability to keep the field in northwest corner, with a track & field area with synthetic turf which would allow for greater use of the field. He introduced Christy Belisle, Athletic Director, of the high school to talk about the needs at the current school.

Christy Belisle, Athletics Director, stated that synthetic turf bring home a baseball field, which is a dream for the community. She advised that synthetic turf would allow for more play hours. She stated that the main function of an athletic department is to provide sports to their students. As the field is at the present time, maintaining a grass surface only allows teams to play through Thanksgiving. She said the existing field is being used by 8 teams which is difficult in a season and having it last safely. She pointed out that teams can only participate when it is not raining/wet for safety reasons. She also stated that synthetic turf would eliminate the problem of geese being on the field. Geese are a protected species and if there is no food then there are no geese. Ms. Belisle stated that they had to turn down the opportunity for being a hub for the pop warner league, but if there is synthetic turf then it would allow groups to utilize it. She stated that it would obviously increase opportunities for the band to practice and other uses.

Chairman Millard asked if anyone had any questions.

Member Clark stated that he did not see any bathrooms in the plan as part of construction at field.

Mr. Potter stated that it is in one of the alternates and that they will know after bids are submitted. Their goal is to include bathrooms.

Member Clark said that it should be a part of the plan not just an alternate.

Mr. Potter said that they are hoping to do it and it depends on the estimates they receive.

Alternate Member Sousa said that synthetic turf is needed to be provided for more use.

Mr. Potter stated that the new building location will be much closer to the fields and that the building would be set up to be open during community events.

Member Ruggiero said he had the same concern and did not understand why all of the fields were at the high school and then the baseball field was at the Guiteras School. He stated that to not have all of the fields at the high school would be a mistake. He worries that every time kids get into a vehicle to drive to a game there is a danger involved. He said that if they can locate it, would service the kids much better.

Ms. Belisle agreed.

Member Ruggiero said that he would feel much better with it.

Mr. Potter agreed with Member Ruggiero. Mr. Potter said that the turf is a big piece of making it happen and that one turf can replace 3-4 grass fields.

Alternate Member Sousa said that since Mrs. Bradner wrote the memo, it is assumed that the one turf standard testing will be done and that it will copy or mimic grass field in terms of potential injury will have some give like a grass field.

Mrs. Bradner said that her colleague, Robert Shaw, could answer it. It was presented with the next slide in the presentation that showed the overall upfront costs of low end grass, high end grass, and synthetic turf.

Chairman Millard asked what was the replacement cost of the turf and how often would it need to be replaced.

Mr. Shaw stated that the turf would need to be replaced every 10-12 years. He recommended a synthetic turf system with a carpet with infill and a shock pad for safety, air drain, geotextile, stormwater module, geo-membrane, stone base, and subgrade. He said that the infill would be an organic infill to eliminate any contamination. He stated that no bacteria will grow or live long and that there is a standard for turf safety. He further stated that any technical questions could be answered by his colleague.

Alternate Member Sousa asked if there would be rain water harvesting.

Mr. Shaw stated that he would love to do that as an innovative way to use water to irrigate the fields.

Alternate Member Sousa said that maintenance is key to synthetic turf and asked what goes into maintaining it.

Justin Robertshaw, Traverse Landscape Architects, said that it will be groomed by a broom behind a golf cart which would sweep the field which helps to keep the infill level and helps maintain longevity.

Alternate Member Sousa asked if it would give as much as grass does.

Mr. Shaw said that it would mimic the give of a grass field.

Member Katz said that maintenance at the high school has not been great in the past and asked if there was some type of warranty with the field and that maintenance is key.

Mr. Shaw said that the warranty is for 8-10 years and that the turf would last up to 12 years if it is well maintained.

Chairman Millard asked what the replacement cost would be.

Mr. Robertshaw said that the replacement cost is not the same as the initial installation cost which would be between \$600,000 to \$800,000 to replace if they are only replacing the carpet and infill, and using an organic base infill like pine, carpet would get recycled.

Chairman Millard said that it would be approximately \$1,000,000 in 12 years possibly.

Mr. Shaw said it was a possibility. Chairman Millard asked if the school department would have a budget for it.

Nicky Piper, Chairperson of the School Committee, said that they would reserve \$80,000 a year for the next 10-12 years for maintenance.

Chairman Millard asked if they were committed to it.

Ms. Piper said yes, they are committed to it and that it is a big project and they take it very seriously.

Mr. Shaw then went on to talk about the irrigation wells. He stated they have a consultant to answer any technical questions. He said that basically there would be wells on site to feed the irrigation system of 300,000sqft. They are trying to balance the cost. He said that irrigation system cost is a need no matter what. He stated that drilling a well is an attractive option but there is no guarantee they can find water. He feels there is a decent chance to find water and that they can drill a deep depth to develop a well large enough for the system. They are evaluating the cost benefit of drilling a well and the process of evaluating the underlying bedrock. They are required to sit down with DEM to discuss the application. He said that it comes down to evaluating the underlying Aquifer.

Chairman Millard asked if they would need to use 40,000 gallons of water a day.

Mr. Shaw said no that it was just for the peak summer. He said that there will be sensors to tailor the amount of water needed. He further stated that the irrigation systems try to take advantage of the natural climate which saves approximately 50%.

Chairman Millard asked if there were storage tanks included.

Mr. Shaw that the focus was on wells but that has been done in the past. He said that the nice thing about rainwater harvesting is the irrigation systems can shut off to cut costs.

Chairman Millard asked if there was a chance they might need a tank instead of rainwater harvesting.

Mike Igo from Aqueous stated that it is not an impossible task but a tall task and that it is possible to still use well for irrigation.

Chairman Millard asked if it was probable.

Mr. Igo stated that from a cost perspective they are looking at it as a payback analysis and that they are evaluating that as well. He said that what they've noticed is that water authority rates go up faster than inflation and it is something to evaluate and if a system can pay for itself, that's great.

Chairman Millard said this should be done now and they can consider bathrooms to be done later.

Alternate Member Sousa said that first it was too much water and now it seems that there is not enough water.

Mr. Igo said that when looking at the rainfall data, then yes there is a lot of water, but no one can be sure when a rainfall will happen, and a soil profile needs water all of the time. He stated that capturing water amounts needed is possible but there is the economic aspect to consider. He said alternatives need to be reviewed before they go down that route and waiting for rain is not a great strategy.

Chairman Millard said that they should come up with a well and storage tank that would give us the water we need.

Alternate Member Sousa said that maybe a surface collection system would work, and that rainwater harvesting is a major part of it and an economical way of going forward.

Member Katz agreed and asked why they couldn't tap into the watershed and it would help the neighborhood.

Mr. Igo stated that as a team, they will have their investigator look at it. He stated that an irrigation system is great and they would only need to run it for 7 months and the system works great.

Chairman Millard said that the rainwater would eventually end up in the well.

Mr. Igo said that the irrigation well is a priority for everyone and they just need to run the numbers by the Committee.

Chairman Millard said that when they come back with an analysis the Board would want to see a water cost projection if water was purchased from Bristol County Water Authority.

Mr. Igo said that was a priority for everyone.

A motion was made (Katz/Clark) to open the hearing to the public.

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

Opposed: None

Mr. Ted Spinard stands to discuss concerns.

Member Clark said that they read his letter and they take it seriously.

Mr. Spinard said that he spoke at the last meeting as well and that his main concern is the flooding that is currently effecting neighborhood and whole water shed. He feels that the issue has not been adequately addressed by the consultants or the Bristol/Warren Regional District. He stated that the flood issue was brought up and he was told it would be addressed. Mr. Spinard stated that it was questioned by Mr. Hartley from the East Bay Rhode Island newspaper in July of 2023. He feels it has been addressed by telling him not to worry about it. Mr. Spinard feels that the FEMA maps says that the area is not being flooded and the BETA study never went for a map revision. His first question was directed to the professional consultant design team asking if they were aware that Chestnut Street had been closed 14 times from 2001 to 2021 because of flooding and if they were aware of the flooding, would that alter their confidence in using the FEMA maps. His questioned whether the FEMA maps addressed the impact of the sea level rising and if not, why not, and if so, did it alter their confidence of using those maps and if not, why not. Mr. Spinard then questioned the drainage study. He said that BETA also said the study was not designed for flood elevations. He said that the BETA study used the proper methodology even if it was saying that the BETA study was not designed specifically for flood elevations, it certainly was a lot better information than FEMA. Mr. Spinard asked if they were aware that the study did show an increase in flood elevations around the high school, the neighborhood, and Chestnut Street. He said it was a much better reflection of what is. He felt that they were using outdated erroneous FEMA maps. He said that flooding is a serious issue that needs to be addressed.

Member Clark said that the Board's peer review engineer Nicole Iannuzzi could address that issue.

Nicole Iannuzzi said that there were a few studies done that the design team could respond to such as the Silver Creek study.

Mr. Spinard asked if she agreed that her study has more detail than FEMA.

Ms. Iannuzzi said she would have to look.

Mr. Spinard said that the flood insurance study did not indicate anything and that the FEMA maps have been traditionally outdated and had not been using enough information.

Ms. Iannuzzi said that information for cross sections are not detailed and there were GIS contours and not impoundment area and that there was not enough detail.

Mr. Spinard asked what she thought FEMA used.

Ms. Iannuzzi agreed that there needed to be an updated model which is not in the works at this point. She stated that the Army Corp of Engineers was working on it.

Chairman Millard stated that it was not in Mr. Spinard's purview to address questions directly to the peer review engineer at the meeting – comments and questions need to go through the Board.

Mr. Spinard said that a new FEMA study is to be done and that this new building was based on outdated information. He said that the BETA study has more information than FEMA and it should at least be considered.

Chairman Millard said that was the standard.

Member Clark said that they listened to Mr. Spinard and take his concerns seriously. He agreed with Mr. Spinard on a lot of it but they have to base it on what they have. He acknowledged that it was frustrating, but he encouraged Mr. Spinard to continue to be a part of the process.

Mr. Spinard said that he made a case and asked if it is not going to be considered tonight, then why would it be considered in future.

Alternate Member Sousa said that they got a copy of the report but the meeting was designed to address the structures and what can be done, not for a flood plain study. He said that the climate has changed and by regulation they are limited. He said that the applicants need to get approval to go beyond to just meeting the limitations. He stated that the high school acts as a dam and that he was looking forward to the preliminary design. He further stated that if they did not address this tonight then they could be doing preliminary for a long time. He stated that the Superintendent was hearing everyone loud and clear and the way to address the issue was by a design to alleviate flooding concerns on Chestnut Street and extra water for irrigation. He said that they are bound by limitations of regulations.

Mr. Spinard said that professional responsibility means taking the best available information and do something about it regardless of what FEMA map says.

Emily Spinard stated that she agreed with her husband and asked what decisions were being made in the meeting.

Amy Goins, Assistant Town Solicitor, stated that the only decision at the meeting was for the master plan. She stated that the Planning Board was there to consider a waiver so the applicant could submit to the next stage of preliminary plan without having the DEM permits in hand. Attorney Goins stated that the applicants asked to be allowed to submit for the next stage until RI DEM issues the permits, to approve the master plan application, and, if so, grant waivers for the next step.

Ms. Spinard said that she had attended information sessions concerning the building of new high school and spoke with Town officials and the school board and was assured that the flooding issue was being taken seriously. She said that they were always told that DEM has to issue permits for any building and knew that DEM updated regulations. She stated that in October they received a letter from the Planning Board and that red flag went off with the request for proceeding to a preliminary plan review without DEM permits. She said that she found it very problematic and asked what happened to the commitment of taking the flooding issue seriously. Ms. Spinard also felt that the most important check list items are being deferred or waived and asked why they were proceeding and the using the FEMA map. She stated that anyone who lives here knows it is incorrect and that Chestnut Street and the area flooded 14 times. She stated that additionally, Rhode Island Coastal Resource says that the FEMA maps are outdated. Ms. Spinard said that this is not the way to proceed nor was it what they were promised and that the flooding issue has to be taken seriously, and shortcuts and waivers are not good and she is opposed to it.

Diane Williamson stated that this meeting was advertised regarding a deferral of the permit until final but that has been clarified and the applicants want to submit to Planning for a preliminary application without the permit and open the preliminary review; however, no preliminary approval would be given without the permit.

Member Clark said that in order for the applicant to even come, they have to get DEM permits. He stated that the applicant wanted to do design work and before preliminary approval they need to have get permits in hand.

Ms. Williamson said that the check list waiver was for only the preliminary submissions and that Planning was not asked to grant the preliminary approval until the DEM permits are in hand and that this was a check list waiver to submit the preliminary application without permits.

Alternate Member Sousa said it made a lot of sense and it would have impact on the final design.

Mrs. Jackson stood up to support the synthetic turf idea. She stated that her daughter is a junior at the high school and is a soccer player. She stated that the goose poop was an issue and said that it is awful, gross, and unhealthy. She supports the idea of a turf field and said that there are fewer turf injuries unlike injuries on grass which is bumpy. She states that her daughter has already had 2 injuries on grass surfaces and that synthetic turf is a safer field to play on.

Chairman Millard agreed regarding the goose issue.

Mrs. Jackson also said that the maintenance and grass height is not being maintained and that it is an issue that needs to be taken care of and asked everyone to support the synthetic turf.

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

A motion was made (Sousa/Katz) to close the hearing to the public.

In favor: Clark, Katz, Millard, Ruggiero, and Sousa
Opposed: None

Alternate Member Sousa asked BETA if they could expand on their latest memo.

Ms. Iannuzzi said that DEM increased their rainfall data.

Alternate Member Sousa said that they have heard a lot of information and know that flooding is an issue. He asked if there was a way to evaluate the design and possibly have a combination of rainwater harvesting and a well. He just wants to look at ways to alleviate the flooding in the neighborhood and Chestnut Street.

Alternate Member Jarest said that this is an opportunity for everyone to set a new direction for storm water in the Town and that this was the perfect opportunity for it. She encouraged everyone to work together on it.

Member Clark stated that maintenance is important as there was a track record of poor maintenance and could they put in a condition about it.

Attorney Goins stated that the school district relies on two Towns for funding and suggested that there could be a separate motion to make a recommendation to each Town Council for joint finances to that effect and that it would not be proper in the motion for the Master Plan.

Member Katz said he wanted to add 1 thing that he felt it was a great night with great interactions and conversations. He said the two main issues are irrigation and flooding. He asked that as part of the preliminary design plans there should be prospectives of the potential 10, 20, or 30 years from now and design for that.

Alternate Member Sousa said that what they really don't want is a lot of back and forth and that they wanted to cooperate and really encourage a workshop to make sure the design progresses.

Member Ruggiero addressed The Spinards. He said that the Board is concerned about the flooding and giving preliminary plan approval is the best way to move forward to address the concerns they spoke about. He said that during the process those things have to be addressed before the final master plan approval and that giving preliminary plan approval is the right thing here. He understands that they are very concerned and those problems will be addressed.

Ms. Williams corrected Member Ruggiero and said it was master plan approval that the applicants were seeking at this point in time.

A motion was made (Clark/Katz) that it be requested that Joint Finance Committee of the Bristol Warren Regional School District approve an earmark in the budget to make sure that drainage maintenance at is funded.

In favor: Clark, Katz, Millard, Ruggiero, Sousa.
Opposed: None


A motion was made (Katz/Sousa) to approve the Master Plan as presented in the draft motion which is attached and made a part of the minutes.

In Favor: Clark, Katz, Millard, Ruggiero, Sousa
Opposed: None

A motion was made (Clark) to adjourn the meeting.
In favor: Clark, Katz, Millard, Ruggiero, Sousa.
Opposed: None

Meeting adjourned at 9:19pm

Respectfully submitted by Kathleen M. Maynard, Recording Secretary

Date Approved: 14 November 2024 Planning Board: 

DRAFT PLANNING BOARD DECISION

OWNER/APPLICANT: Bristol Warren Regional School District
ADDRESS: 199 Chestnut Street
PLAT AND LOT: Plat 117, Lots 3,4,5,6,7
APPLICATION: Major Land Development Master Plan – Mt. Hope High School

The Planning Board finds that:

1. The subject property consists of the existing Mt. Hope High School campus including and athletic fields and parking areas.
2. The proposal is the construction of a new High School building. The project includes a new building, athletic fields, parking areas, loading areas, site features, utilities and stormwater management systems. Upon completion of the new building, the existing High School will be demolished.
3. The proposed development is consistent with the general purposes stated in Article 1 of the Planning Board’s subdivision and development review regulations.
4. The proposed development is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
5. The proposed development is in compliance with the standards and provisions of the zoning ordinance.
6. The proposed development has adequate and permanent physical access to Chestnut Street.
7. The Board has considered any testimony at the Public Hearing.
8. There will be no significant negative environmental impacts from the proposed development, with any conditions of approval.

The Board grants a Checklist Item Waiver for the RIDEM permits at the Preliminary Phase with the agreement that the applicant will agree to continue the Preliminary Phase until receipt of the permits so that the permits are submitted prior to the Planning Board action on the preliminary phase application.

Master Plan approval for the Major Land Development for the new Mt. Hope High School campus as shown on the plan set entitled “Mt. Hope High School” dated as revised September 4, 2024 – Sheets 1-32 of 32 prepared by Pare Engineering, Perkins Eastman, MCA, Traverse Landscape Architects and LEC Environmental Consultants, Inc. along with revised sheets from Pare, Sheets C3.0-C3.5 dated as revised September 25, 2024.