

**TOWN OF MANCHESTER
MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING
HELD BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
OCTOBER 7, 2024**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

In Person: Eric Prause, Chairperson
Patrick Kennedy, Vice Chairperson
Michael Stebe, Secretary
Teresa Ike (*late, not seated*)
Chris Schoeneberger
Daniela Luna (*late, sitting for REG-0006-2024 only*)
Michael Farina

ALTERNATE MEMBERS SITTING:

In Person: Zachary Schurin

**ALTERNATE MEMBERS SITTING
FOR REG-0005-2024 ONLY:**

In Person: Sara Van Buren

ALTERNATES PRESENT:

Electronically: Maliha Ahsan

ALSO PRESENT:

In Person: Megan Pilla, Principal Development Planner
Gary Anderson, Director of Planning and Economic
Development
Electronically: David Laiuppa, Environmental Planner/Wetlands
Agent
Nancy Martel, Recording Secretary

APR MANCHESTER LLC – Text amendments to the Form Based zone at Art. II, Sec. 26.01.02, 26.02.02, 26.03.03, and 26.05.03.I, K, and N. – Zoning Regulation Amendment (REG-0005-2024)

Mr. Ronald Bomengen, PE, LEED AP, Vice President with Fuss & O’Neill, Inc., introduced himself as representing Anthony Properties.

Mr. Brian Shiu, Vice President of Development at Anthony Properties, introduced himself. Mr. Shiu gave a brief synopsis of Anthony Properties. He detailed past and current properties under development.

Mr. Shiu remarked that, despite numerous efforts, the Parkade has remained in its current state for quite some time. The Form Based zoning in place has also existed for many years, and was most likely put in place when the vision for the property was different, he said, noting that the economic environment has changed, supply and demand has changed, and the vision for the property has changed. Anthony Properties envisions a primarily multi-family development with commercial pads on Broad Street. The current Form Based zoning does not fit with the company's vision for the property. He stated that they have worked diligently, along with staff, to develop a project that works within the zoning and meets the demands of the development agreement that has been signed with Manchester. In order to fulfill the vision that the Town and Anthony Properties have, and to meet the development agreement's demands, a text amendment is requested.

Mr. Bomengen described the intent of the Form Based zone, which will be met with the design. However, modifications will better suit the project. A brief description of these changes pertaining to the development was provided by Mr. Bomengen.

Section 26.01.02 FBZ Regulating Plan

Replace Map 26.01 – Form Based Zone Regulating Plan: Revised 30-April-2020 with Map 26.01 – Form Based Zone Regulating Plan Revised 19-September-2024.

Section 26.02.02 Street and Thoroughfare Types

Table 26.01 – Thoroughfare Types – Park Side Road (PSR) – Revise description as follows: A long and gently meandering thoroughfare running parallel to the Bigelow Brook linear park. This thoroughfare-type should be designed for slow speeds with two travel lanes, on-site parking, and significant tree plantings. (Eliminate “creating a transitional area between residential frontage on the north side of the parkway and open space on the south.”)

Mr. Lee Morrissette, AIA, LEED AP, Principal with Dietz & Company Architects, Inc., introduced himself. He stated that they have additional requests in order to meet the unit count and overall building size as agreed upon within the development agreement. Mr. Morrissette described each request in detail as it pertains to the development.

Section 26.03.03 Table of Site and Building Dimensional Standards

Table 26.03 – Building Lot Dimensional Standards – Revise the maximum building height for Multiple Residence Building Lot (MRBL) from 52' to 65'.

Section 26.05.03 General Building Development Standards

Revise Figure 26.7 – Building Height and Stepback Requirements. Revise the following text “3 story maximum height within 40' frontage zone” to read “3 story maximum height within 20' of the r-o-w line of Primary Streets.”

Mr. Bomengen reported that the park side road used in this layout is the driveway. Below that are 10-unit townhome style buildings that will have a back yard facing the multi-use trail and the park. There is a large green space behind those buildings that will be a nice buffer between those residents and the brook.

Mr. Schoeneberger asked how many units would be lost without accommodating the roof setback, and was informed it would be about 10 units.

Mr. Stebe requested clarification about the Broad Street connections, which was provided.

Ms. Pilla reported no comments or objections from staff. For Request #4 (to Revise Figure 26.7), she explained that, currently, the figure says one thing and the text says something else. They are requesting that the figure match what the text says.

Mr. Anderson pointed out the pedestrian multi-use access. Staff felt it important to maintain at least pedestrian access in a couple different areas on Broad Street if vehicular access is to be restricted to Green Manor. There will also be access from Green Manor and the trail system as well.

Mr. Prause inquired about the change in building height from 52' to 65' and how that compares to other buildings in the Broad Street area.

Mr. Anderson responded that, to his knowledge, it is definitely higher. It is in line with the zoning regulations for the Central Business District, which allows 75'; the Industrial zone, which allows 65'; and the Comprehensive Urban Development (CUD) zone, which allows up to 75'.

Ms. Pilla stated that the current maximum height for this type of building is 52' and much of what is in that area is less than 52'.

There were no members of the public to testify on the zoning regulation amendment and there were no comments from the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG).

Mr. Schoeneberger asked whether this is site-specific or an overhaul of the regulations throughout town. Mr. Prause responded that it covers everything in the Form Based zone, which is basically the Broad Street area.

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to close the public hearing. Mr. Schoeneberger seconded the motion, and all members voted in favor.

TOWN OF MANCHESTER/BENESCH – Regulation amendment at Art. II, Sec. 9.07 to allow the Planning and Zoning Commission to waive or modify residential screening requirements, consistent with other sections. – Zoning Regulation Amendment (REG-0006-2024)

Mr. Andrew Woodward, Professional Landscape Architect, from Benesch, introduced himself. Mr. Woodward gave a description of the location of the project. The proposal is for a three-story, roughly 70,000 sq. ft. public library. There will be two main entrances to the site, one on Maple

Street and one on Eldridge Street, as well as a one-way exit for the use of the service area and loading zones. He pointed out the utility area and geothermal locations for the site. The site contains 47 parking spaces, and the eastern edge of the property is where the business zone abuts a residential zone.

The request for the text amendment, according to Mr. Woodward, is to allow the Commission the ability to waive the current landscape buffer requirements between the residential zone and the business zone. They are seeking the ability to reduce the distance from 8' to 6' to allow full-sized parking stalls and have a two-lane entry and exit onto Eldridge Street. The plan is for a 4' cedar fence along the entire property line, along with evergreen trees and shrubs.

Mr. Farina asked whether this has gone to the Library Building Committee.

Ms. Pilla responded that it has not, because what is before the Commission is just a request to amend the zoning regulations to give the Commission the ability to grant a waiver. The Commission is not being asked to grant the waiver.

Mr. Anderson stated that the concept has gone to the Library Building Committee, but the concept does not include exact dimensions, fences or plantings.

Ms. Pilla reported no review comments or objections from staff. There were no comments or objections from CRCOG. If the text amendment is granted, the applicant would return and request the waiver.

Mr. Prause assumed this would apply to all business zones, as this is in the general requirements section. For any potential business zone plan abutting residential that arises, the Commission could apply a waiver.

Ms. Pilla agreed that they could, if such a waiver is requested and if the Commission finds it meets the proposed language:

The Commission may waive all or any requirements in this section (Residential Screening Requirements) or modify such requirements if it finds that existing foliage or natural conditions are sufficient to constitute a screen for the protection of residential premises, or that such screening is not feasible and not necessary due to site configuration or location.

After a question from Mr. Prause, Ms. Pilla replied that there is similar language in six different sections: In the screening requirements for schools and places of worship in residential zones and in business zones; screening requirements for school conversion to multi-family residential; screening requirements for historic mill conversion to multi-family residential; screening requirements for hotel/motel conversion to multi-family residential; and screening requirements for any developed Industrial zone properties that are adjacent to residential properties.

Mr. Schoeneberger asked why the regulation should be changed at this time if applicants have to apply for each instance. Ms. Pilla stated that what is actually being asked for is increased flexibility. At this time, applicants cannot request such a waiver in the business zone.

There were no members of the public to speak on the application.

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to close the public hearing. Mr. Schoeneberger seconded the motion, and all members voted in favor.

The Public Hearing was adjourned at 7:55 P.M.

I certify these minutes were adopted on the following date:

October 21, 2024

Date

Eric Prause, Chairman

NOTICE: A DIGITAL RECORDING OF THIS PUBLIC HEARING CAN BE HEARD IN THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT.