

**NEW LONDON PLANNING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING
May 9, 2006**

PRESENT: Karen Ebel (Chairman), Dale Conly, Celeste Cook, Tom Cottrill, Jeff Hollinger, Ken McWilliams (Planner)

ABSENT: Sue Ellen Andrews, Sue Clough (Selectmen's Representative)

Chairman Karen Ebel called the **MEETING TO ORDER** at 7:32 PM.

I. HANNAFORD'S & NEW LONDON SHOPPING CENTER – Revised Final Site Plan Review: New London Shopping Center (Tax Map 59, Lot 8)

Karen Forni (Senior Property Manager, Hannaford Bros. Co.) and Glenn Wilson (Property Manager, Kimco Realty Corporation) appeared on behalf of their respective companies. Mr. Wilson explained that Kimco was now the owner of the New London Shopping Center, of which Hannaford was the anchor tenant.

Karen Forni referred to the plans presented and advised that there were conflicts with the 2003 amended plan. She advised that the plans presented contained new parking ratios, cart corral locations, paving, additional islands, parking near the house, and speed bumps near the portico. She pointed out two additional islands and two additional crosswalks. She also pointed out an additional island near the Newport Road entrance to direct traffic in and out of the parking lot. Ms Forni advised that handicapped accessible parking spaces would be located in front of the building and along the side of the building. She said that there would be five cart corrals along the front and four at the side. She advised that there would be an island near the post office connector and one near the detention pond with directional arrows to aid traffic flow. She described an island near the portico with a crosswalk to the handicapped parking spaces. She said that there would be a cart corral behind the portico and speed bumps to slow traffic passing through the portico. Ms Forni advised that the employee smoking area, the "smoker's hut", would be located behind the building. She said that the dirt parking lot would be re-surfaced with gravel and used for employee parking. She stated that there would be a 100-foot buffer between Hannaford's and the condominiums and that no trees would be removed. Ms Forni advised that the propane tanks would sit on top of gravel on top of a concrete pad located in the pine grove to the west side of the house. She said that the existing tanks do not meet the setback requirements where they are currently located. She said that the tanks would be enclosed by a chain-link fence with arbor vitae or something green to screen them from view.

Abutter Roger Sullivan (13 Cricenti Lane) asked if Hannaford would use the existing drive accessed through the driveway to the house. Glenn Wilson replied that only the tenants used the driveway to the house. Mr. Sullivan responded that some others had been using it to access Hannaford parking. PB member Cottrill observed that the proposed location of the propane tanks appeared to block access to Hannaford's via the house driveway. Mr. Wilson said that Kimco could block access with large boulders. Mr. Sullivan opined that Kimco could not impede tenant access to the house. Mr. Cottrill explained how boulders could be located to block through traffic, while not hampering tenant access to the house.

John McKenna (McKenna's Restaurant) stated that employee parking in the area was an on-going problem. He also pointed out that there was liability involved with parking behind the shopping mall. Ms Forni responded that she had read the letter that Mr. McKenna had written to Hannaford's store manager. She said that Hannaford personnel could not legally park behind the mall. She advised that Cricenti's employees had been able to park there because the Cricenti family had also owned that area. She acknowledged that employee parking near the house had been prevented this past winter because the area was used for snow storage. She said that Hannaford's store manager, Mike Plamondon, has advised Hannaford employees not to park near the restaurant. Mr. McKenna opined that the current white and yellow markings worked well and wondered if some type of lines could be painted to designate employee parking. Mr. Wilson responded that employees had been asked to leave the first four rows of parking for customers. He said that it was really up to the managers to enforce employee parking. Ms Forni said that she believed that most Hannaford employee cars would fit in the

parking area behind the house. Mr. McKenna stated that he would be concerned about the availability of parking from June to mid-October. He said that the winter months were less problematic.

PB member Cottrill asked where the Hannaford employees could not park that the Cricenti's employees had been able to use. Ms Forni demonstrated the area along the backside. Mr. Cottrill asked about snow storage. Glenn Wilson replied that the snow would probably be trucked out. He said that during the past winter, snow had been stored near the hardware store, but that had caused drainage problems for the property across the street. Mr. Cottrill asked who parked behind the shopping mall. Ms Forni replied that the retailers parked there.

Chair Ebel asked how many parking spaces there were. Ms Forni replied that there were 450. Zoning Administrator Peter Stanley confirmed that there were 450 parking spaces, although in a somewhat different configuration than that shown on the plan. PB member Cook asked what "compact" meant. Ms Forni replied that a "compact" parking space was smaller than a standard parking space. Chair Ebel asked where the parking space count discrepancies were. Zoning Administrator Stanley pointed out the areas on the plan. He advised that those areas have been discussed with department heads and Hannaford has agreed to resolve the discrepancies.

PB member Cottrill inquired about the proposed islands. Mr. Wilson replied that the islands would be raised with seven-inch granite curbing and would contain ornamental trees or bushes and bark mulch. Abutter Jim Cricenti viewed the plan to see what impact the islands would have on snow plowing. He opined that the proposed islands would cut off tractor trailer access. Ms Forni responded that the radii had been checked and tractor trailer access would not be negatively impacted. Mr. Cottrill asked how the propane delivery truck would enter. Ms Forni replied that it would have to come to the front of the store and then go around.

PB member Cottrill questioned the need for a stop line. Ms Forni replied that there would not be a stop sign. Ken McWilliams advised that the issue had received a lot of discussion at the meeting of municipal department heads. Ms Forni said that traffic would stop at the crosswalk. Mr. Cottrill pointed out another stop location for traffic and suggested that a stop line or bar would work.

Ken McWilliams reported on the meeting of municipal department heads. He said that the parking space count required follow up, as did employee parking, and improvement of the parking area on the Ritchie lot. He advised that snow plowing and storage were discussed and that the snow would have to be trucked off site instead of putting it on parking spaces. It was noted that there were two storage trailers (one inherited and one rented) located behind Hannaford and that the Selectmen and Zoning Administrator had given Hannaford six months for removal. Glenn Wilson advised that the trailers would be removed by July 1, 2006. Chair Ebel asked if the trailers were being used for product storage. Mr. Wilson replied that one was being used by Flash Photo for storage of packing materials, and the other was used by the hardware store to store products.

Abutter Sullivan asked if the propane tanks would serve only Hannaford's. Ms Forni replied affirmatively. Mr. Sullivan observed that, according to the plan presented, a concrete wall and fence would prevent access to the tanks from the front, so it appeared as if access would have to be through Fenwood. Ms Forni explained how access would be accomplished. She said that she had walked the area that day, and she assured Mr. Sullivan that access would be possible. PB member Cottrill asked Ms Forni to demonstrate the route. Ms Forni did so. Mr. Cottrill asked about the footpath. Ms Forni replied that, during her afternoon walk, she had met and spoken with Tina Cricenti about the more often used path. Mr. Cottrill asked how many cars were now getting through from the tenant driveway. Zoning Administrator Stanley opined that a four-wheel drive vehicle would be necessary.

Abutter Ann Carter (6 Cricenti Lane) said that she was very concerned about the stumps and debris that appear to have been "dumped" on the property. PB member Cottrill inquired about the garage noted on the plan. Ms Forni replied that it was really more of a shed, than a garage.

Zoning Administrator Stanley advised that near Clarke's Hardware there is a crosswalk to "no where" that should be removed. PB member Hollinger asked why there shouldn't be a crosswalk to the other area of the

shopping center. Zoning Administrator Stanley replied that there should be and clarified which crosswalk he proposed eliminating. Mr. Hollinger said that he had not been aware that there were two crosswalks in that immediate area.

Chair Ebel stated that she wanted to have 450 parking spaces set on the final plan. Zoning Administrator Stanley assured her that a minimum of 450 parking spaces exist and that it would be a minor detail to have the final plan reflect the correct configuration. Glenn Wilson advised that it was Kimco's intent to re-do the drainage and to re-pave the parking area. Zoning Administrator Stanley recommended that it would be a good time to put in a handicapped ramp near the handicapped accessible parking spaces in front of Flash Photo. Chair Ebel agreed.

PB member Cottrill noted that there were only two dumpsters identified on the plan and asked if only two were planned. Jim Cricenti advised that there were dumpsters connected to the store in the loading dock area. Ms Forni replied that they would be on a new concrete pad and located near a drainage basin. Mr. Cottrill asked where the "smokers' hut" would be located. Ms Forni pointed out the location. She said that she thought there would be speed bumps and that there had been portable ones. Mr. Wilson said that typically Kimco puts in speed "humps", not speed "bumps", as the "humps" result in much less liability because there is less tripping, decreased damage to cars, and it is possible to plow right over them. Mr. Cottrill asked about the usual summer speed bumps. Jim Cricenti described where the speed bumps had been located in the past. Mr. Wilson said that Kimco would put them wherever directed and that made sense. Chair Ebel and PB member Cottrill discussed combining a speed hump with the "smokers' hut". Ms Forni advised that Hannaford tried not to put them in the path of customers in front of the store. She said that they tended to topple carts and that some people do not see them, so they trip. She advised that there would be a speed hump near the portico to slow approaching traffic.

Abutter Ann Carter asked who she should contact in regard to the stumps and debris that have been dumped on the property. Glenn Wilson replied that Kimco Realty Corporation should be contacted and identified himself as the individual. He said that he would provide her with his business card.

Abutter Sandra Fajans (57 Cricenti Lane) said that she was concerned about the steep incline at the store exit. Mr. Wilson responded that Kimco has been looking at the pitch to see if it could be ameliorated. He said that any solution would be a long-term project. He said that, once touched, the entire exit must be brought into compliance with ADA codes and handicapped accessible ramps would be tremendously long. Mr. Wilson described the shopping center as aging and not up to Kimco standards. He said that it needs thorough planning and upgrading. He also opined that the existing design did not have a "New London look". Chair Ebel asked if there were another Kimco-owned shopping centers nearby. Mr. Wilson responded that Kimco was the largest owner of shopping centers nationwide. As examples, he mentioned Manchester, Vermont and Rockingham Mall as being nearby. He advised that a list of all sites and a company profile could be found on the Internet at kimcorealty.com.

Chair Ebel asked about snow storage taking over parking spaces. Jim Cricenti advised that all of the snow from Mascoma Bank eastward has been plowed toward the area beyond the hardware store, snow from around the Colonial Pharmacy building has been plowed toward the highway, snow near the restaurant has been plowed toward the detention pond, and the upper lot snow has been plowed toward the back and toward the Ritchie lot. Zoning Administrator Stanley reminded folks that the Ritchie area would no longer be available for snow storage. He estimated that approximately 50 parking spaces were lost to snow storage during the winter. He advised the applicants that they needed to acknowledge that loss and to take into consideration how very long it takes for stored snow to melt. Ms Forni responded that Hannaford policy does not allow snow storage in parking lots, as it becomes a hazard. Abutter Carter asked where the snow would be hauled. Glenn Wilson replied that the snow removal would be the responsibility of the contractor. Ms Carter reiterated her concern regarding the stumps and debris that appear to have been "dumped" on the property.

It was **MOVED** (Cottrill) and **SECONDED** (Conly) **THAT THE FINAL SITE PLAN FOR HANNAFORD'S & THE NEW LONDON SHOPPING CENTER BE APPROVED, SUBJECT TO (1) THE EDGE OF THE TRAVEL LANE BEING MARKED WITH A STOP LINE, (2) CONFIRMATION OF THE 450 PARKING SPACE COUNT AND LOCATION, AND**

REFLECTION ON THE PLAN OF THE COUNT AND LOCATION, (3) A 90° ROTATION OF THE PROPANE FARM, AND (4) REMOVAL OF THE CROSSWALK LOCATED ON THE SOUTHEAST END OF THE PARKING LOT. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Wilson said informally that, over the next nine months, he wanted to work with the PB and other members of the community to make the appearance of the shopping center more attractive and more in keeping with the rest of New London. General discussion ensued during which he described the process that would be followed within Kimco and he was advised re the procedures to be followed in translating proposals into actual changes.

II. MASTER PLAN –Discussion of Proposal

Ken McWilliams referred to the New London Master Plan Update Agreement between the Town of New London and Kenneth McWilliams & Associates, LLC that was distributed at the April 25, 2006 meeting and solicited questions from the PB.

PB member Cook asked about the electronic copy reference on page 3 of the proposal. She wanted to know if that meant that it would be on the website. Mr. McWilliams explained that it meant that information would get to the New London town office administrators for distribution, as needed, via electronic means. He added that eventually a Master Plan draft would be published on the website for public review.

Mr. McWilliams also referred the PB to the cover letter. He reminded PB members that previously the PB had discussed holding the second public forum later in the process. Now, he is recommending drafting the future Land Use Plan and the Implementation Plan prior to finalizing the draft document so that any changes and public input can be incorporated.

Chair Ebel asked how the pricing worked. She asked if the final cost could be more or less than the amount stated. Mr. McWilliams replied that he has proposed a fixed cost fee, regardless of whether it took more or less time than he anticipated. He said that usually such projects exceeded the time allotted. Chair Ebel asked about the difference between the proposal that he had worked on for the UVLSRPC and the proposal now before the PB. Mr. McWilliams replied that a big chunk was the community participation, the updating of all maps in color, the reproduction costs, and updating the historical chapter. He also said that the facilities chapter might require more effort. Chair Ebel asked if the proposed 5% rate change reflected an increase in the hourly rate. Mr. McWilliams replied affirmatively indicating that the hourly rate in the second year would be \$52.50 and in the third year would be \$55.00.

PB member Hollinger asked who would provide the necessary GIS support. Mr. McWilliams replied that he has contracted with Shellie Hadfield, a former employee of the UVLSRPC, who now works independently out of her Plainfield, New Hampshire office. He mentioned that she had just contracted with Kimball Union Academy as well.

Mr. McWilliams reviewed the typical process of drafting and revision. He said that the PB would need to set parameters and abide by them

PB member Cottrill asked who had prepared the UVLSRPC proposal and questioned if Mr. McWilliams had been involved. Mr. McWilliams replied that he had been involved when the proposal was submitted two or three years ago. Mr. Cottrill asked who would be doing the public forum. Mr. McWilliams pointed out that originally the public forum was to be one day, now the proposal is for a day and a half in order to engender more public participation. He advised that more towns are recognizing the importance of the community participatory process and are using public input in addition to or in conjunction with an attitude survey.

Chair Ebel asked if the Board of Selectmen would also have to sign the agreement. Mr. McWilliams replied affirmatively. PB member Cottrill asked how the Master Plan update would be funded. Mr. McWilliams reviewed the process by which funds have been budgeted (\$15,000) and placed in capital reserve (\$20,500) as well as a future budget request (\$16,000) in either 2007 or 2008. Mr. Cottrill commented that the PB could sign

the agreement and then might find that no funds had been appropriated. Chair Ebel said it was also possible that the PB could also sign the agreement and the BOS not sign it.

It was **MOVED** (Cook) and **SECONDED** (Cottrill) **THAT NEW LONDON MASTER PLAN UPDATE AGREEMENT BETWEEN KENNETH McWILLIAMS & ASSOCIATES, LLC AND THE TOWN OF NEW LONDON BE APPROVED. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Chair Ebel signed two copies of the Agreement per Mr. McWilliams' instructions.

III. OTHER BUSINESS

- A. MINUTES of the APRIL 11, 2006 MEETING were APPROVED, as circulated.
- B. MINUTES of the APRIL 25, 2006 MEETING were APPROVED, as amended.

The **MEETING** was **ADJOURNED** at **9:20 PM**.

Respectfully submitted,
Judith P. Condict, Recording Secretary
New London Planning Board

DATE APPROVED _____

CHAIRMAN _____