

**TOWN OF SKOWHEGAN  
PLANNING BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES**

March 7, 2023

7:00 P.M.

Municipal Building, Council Room

**PRESENT:**

Steve Conley, Chairman  
Derek Chretien, Vice Chairman  
Jeff McCabe, Secretary  
Dan Luce  
Andrew Thorpe  
Randall Franck  
Anjanette McFarlin, Alternate  
Adrian Sincyr, Alternate  
Joel Greenwood, Planner  
Cynthia Kirk, Recording Secretary

**ABSENT:** Harvey Austin

**PUBLIC PRESENT:** See attendance sheet.

**1) QUORUM:**

Planning Board Meeting called to order at 7:00 P.M. Quorum was present.

**2) MINUTES OF THE February 21, 2023 PLANNING BOARD MEETING TO BE APPROVED:**

Motion by Andrew Thorpe to approve the February 21, 2023 Planning Board meeting minutes, as written. Seconded by Randall Franck. Motion passed 6-0.

Recording Time:

**3) SITE PLAN / SUBDIVISION:**

- A) Discussion of the Site Inventory & Analysis submitted by Sappi North America for the property located on the Varney Road (Assessor's Map 17, Lot 35). The proposed development is an 11-acre clay borrow pit expansion and will also include three exterior draining sedimentation pond outlet structures.**

Lisa Turner from Sevee & Mahar Engineers gave a presentation on the proposed project.

Joel Greenwood asked if any waivers were being requested. Ms. Turner said they are not requesting any.

Recording time: 10:39

**B) Discussion of the Site Inventory & Analysis submitted by Sappi North America for the property located at 1329 Waterville Rd. (Assessor's Map 18, Lot 12) for the proposed "Project Elevate" which includes an expansion of the Pulp Makedown Building, a warehouse addition at the Finishing and Shipping Building, the rebuild of the No. 2 Paper Machine, and rail line extensions to connect into the new Finishing and Shipping Building.**

Jenna Gilbert from Sevee & Mahar Engineers gave a presentation on the proposed project.

Jeff McCabe asked if the required DEP permits will fit into their timeline of construction. Ms. Gilbert said that they are pushing for those permits to meet the timeline so they start construction as soon as they can. Jeff also asked if there will be any mitigation required for the wetland impacts. She said they will be paying the fees for any mitigation requirements. Randall Franck asked if the under drain filters that are going to be putting in are able to be cleaned out and what their life expectancy is. Ms. Gilbert said that they will be maintained on a regular schedule as part of their stormwater system and believes that with good maintenance that they could last 20-30 years.

Joel Greenwood asked if they are asking for any waivers. Ms. Gilbert said they aren't. He also asked the Planning Board if any of them would like to do a site visit for either of these Sappi projects. Nobody asked for a site visit so they will forgo doing one.

Recording time: 24:24

**C) Discussion of the Site Inventory & Analysis submitted by New Balance Athletic Shoe, Inc. for the property located on Walnut Street (Assessor's Map 22, Lots 87, 94-1, 96 & 96-1). The proposed project is to construct a 120,000 sq. ft. single-story addition to the existing 5-story factory building with an additional 20,000 sq. ft. of the existing building being renovated.**

Rick Dunton from Mainland Engineering gave a presentation on the proposed project.

Jeff McCabe asked if they will be doing a traffic study due to the increase of employees and parking. Mr. Dunton said yes they will be however the increased amount of traffic does not trigger a traffic movement permit from DOT. Jeff also asked if the shifts at the factory will be remaining the same as they are now. Mr. Dunton said that as of right now they will be staying the same.

Randall Franck said it had mentioned in the application that DOT had maybe recommended increasing the traffic light times at the intersection going across the bridges. Mr. Dunton said that DOT had made that and some other suggestions about how to help the traffic issues at that intersection especially after the add so many new employees.

Jonathan Hogate asked if they will still be using the exit on the other side of Laney's. Mr. Dunton said they will be.

Jeff McCabe asked if there will be more retention of stormwater on site at the rear of the property where the expansion would be. He said he is familiar with the railroad bed behind the facility and it is already pretty wet back there now. Mr. Dunton said that they have worked closely with DEP in developing their stormwater management plan for this expansion and it should decrease the amount of run off from the site.

Richard Vicneire asked if they are going to develop anything in the wet/stream area behind the expansion. Mr. Dunton said there aren't any plans for that area and they want to keep

as much of the natural vegetation as they can there. They will also be retaining the snowmobile access as well.

Steve Conley asked how much impervious surface is being added to the site with this project. Mr. Dunton said he doesn't have the exact figure with him but he can get that. He doesn't believe it is a tremendous increase because most of the property is already developed and they will also be adding some green space back to the property with this project.

Ty Strout said he lives at 7 Willette Street which is near this project. He said that he attended the public meeting that was held by New Balance about a month ago and he thinks this is a great project. He said he does have some concerns about the water draining onto his property. Ty said they already have an issue with water runoff currently because it is supposed to go into a storm drain up the street now however with the pitch of the stream it doesn't make it and it pools at the end of his driveway. He has had to replace his driveway 3 times in the last 10 years. He has addressed this with the Highway Dept. and he is glad that they are taking the steps to look at improving it. His other concern is the new roadway for the trucks to go around the building. Those lights are going to be shining right into his house now. He has spoken with New Balance and they said there will be a vegetation put in there and they will also look at a possible fence as well. Other than those concerns, Ty said he is happy about this project.

Steve Conley said that the Planning Board would like a site visit. It was decided to do the site visit on March 21, 2023 @ 4:30 pm.

Tom Lufkin asked if the additional storm drains will be going across the old railroad. Mr. Dunton said yes. Mr. Lufkin said that the drains within the railroad bed have been plugged up for many years and asked if the town has any plans to clean them out so the water can drain through them. Bryan Belliveau said that the railroad bed is actually owned by the state, not the town. Mr. Lufkin also asked if there are any plans on putting a traffic light by Laney's for when people get out of work at New Balance. Brandon Purrington from Greenleaf Construction said that one thing that New Balance is willing to do to help with the traffic is possibly staggering the shifts of the workers some so they aren't all leaving at one time. Derek Chretien said that would make a big difference with the traffic and really help out.

Recording time 01:04:18

#### **4) ITEMS BY THE PUBLIC:**

Mark Tanner from the Federated Church on Island Avenue said he is sorry he was not able to make it to the public hearing for the Maine Spinning Mill project. He said he watched the meeting online after and he would like an explanation about the parking that was approved for this project. He said they were allowed to count municipal parking spaces towards the requirements and he knows they will be using the spaces beside the church for that. Mr. Tanner also stated that if you look at the right side of the church in front of his apartment building, the church actually owns around 19 feet there that appears to be being used for a one-way exit from the 7 Island Ave. building. He doesn't know how this can be taken care of.

Steve Conley said that they required them to provide all of their over night parking for the hotel and apartments on their own property. As far as the 25 spaces allowed in the municipal parking lots, those would be on a first come first serve basis for the commercial aspects of the project.

Jeff McCabe said that the town owns some gravel space beside the Tewsbury Hall and maybe the town could help with paving and putting lines out there. Mark said that would help but they still need spaces close to the church for the elderly. Derek Chretien asked if he had any proposals on what he would like to see happen with the one-way exit. Mark said he would think that it will need to be moved over so it is not on the church's property. Jeff McCabe asked if he has talked

with the developers about this yet. Mark said he hasn't yet. Steve Conley said he would encourage him to talk to them first to see if a solution can be obtained.

Recording time 01:15:55

**5) COMMUNICATIONS:**

**None**

**6) UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**None**

**7) NEW BUSINESS:**

**None**

**8) COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE:**

**None**

**9) ITEMS BY:**

**• SELECTMEN:**

**• DEPARTMENT HEADS:**

Bryan said that Cindy took some Freedom of Access training today and he was looking through the information and found that every Board member is supposed to take that training. He said they will make sure that they all are able to get access to the training. Bryan also said that we received the application for the Travers Storage Unit expansion today. He also mentioned that as much as they all want to go through the process of reviewing all of these projects as fast as possible for the developers, he thinks we need to slow down a bit and maybe just schedule one project per meeting so nothing gets missed. Bryan also stated as a reminder that these Site Inventory & Analysis reviews are just that and it is not a public hearing. It is completely up to the Chairman if they want to hear public comments during this part of the review but just to be mindful of everybody's time. Steve Conley said that all of their meetings are public meetings. Joel said there is a difference between a public meeting and a public hearing.

Recording time 01:20:27

**• MEMBERS:**

Jeff McCabe asked what the window is for Mark Tanner to appeal the decision on the Spinning Mill Site Plan. Joel said it is 30 days from the date of approval.

**• CHAIRMAN:**

Nothing

**• STAFF:**

Nothing

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion by Dan Luce to adjourn at 8:21 p.m., Seconded by Anjanette McFarlin. Motion passed 6-0.

**Minutes approved on March 21, 2023**

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**Chairman**

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