

**Joint Public Hearing Minutes
Stormwater Authority & Planning Board**

**STORMWATER AUTHORITY – STORMWATER PERMIT
SITE PLAN REVIEW (SPR) – GARY ROME HYUNDAI, 150 WHITING FARMS ROAD
SPECIAL PERMIT (SP), EXCEED THE FENCE HEIGHT
SPECIAL PERMIT (SP), MULTIPLE SIGNS
(meeting is being recorded)**

On Tuesday, September 15, 2015, the Holyoke Planning Board held a joint Public Hearing regarding a Site Plan Review and Stormwater Permit submitted by Gary Rome Hyundai, for the property located at 150 Whiting Farms Road. The meeting was held at 6:00 p.m. in the 4th Floor Conference Room of the City Hall Annex, 20 Korean Veterans Plaza, Holyoke, Massachusetts.

Attendance:

Planning Board

Mimi Panitch Chairman
Christian LaChapelle..... Vice-Chairman
John Kelley Member
Eileen Regan Member
Harry Montalvo Associate

Planning Staff

Marcos Marrero..... Director
Jeffrey Burkott Principal Planner
Sharon Konstantinidis Head Clerk

Stormwater Authority

David Moore Chairman
Lori Belanger Vice-Chairman
Jose Garcia Secretary
Matt Sokop City Engineer

Others Present

Kim Masiuk Associated Builders
Tim Houle Associated Builders
Jim Richmond 120 Whiting Farms Road
Juliet Locke Vanesse Hangen Brustlin (VHB)
Keith Weners VHB
Kevin Schechterhe 1000 Main Street
Gary Rome 1000 Main Street
Jane Rome 1000 Main Street
Jerry Rome 1000 Main Street
Sara Krohn 41 Pearl Street
Kathleen Andeson Chamber of Commerce

Others Present

Gayle Keith 6 Farnum Drive
Helene Florio 31 Wellesley Road
Thomas Wilson, Atty 18 Carlton Street
Tim Ferreira 1000 Main Street

OPEN

At 6:04 p.m., MIMI PANITCH called for a motion to open the Public Hearing. A motion was made by EILEEN REGAN and seconded by JOHN KELLEY. The motion carried 4-0.

KIM MASIUK introduced Tim Houle, Gary Rome, and Atty Thomas Wilson. She stated that the plan should be very familiar as they recently were before the Boards to obtain a Zone Change and City Council Special Permits. She provided an overview of the existing parcel and abutting properties noting that the area was a mixed use of residential and commercial development. The undeveloped site contains a 3-foot elevation and soil restrictions making the stormwater system a challenge. In addition, an environmental assessment revealed ground water contamination and therefore the proposed stormwater infiltration was not on site.

Site renderings were viewed. KIM MASIUK explained the differences between the renderings viewed during the zone change and what was currently before the Board.

KIM MASIUK stated that the 30-foot entryway, located between Lynch Drive and Autumn Drive, accounted for large car carriers and emergency vehicles the ability to make a full circulation around the site without crossing the travel lanes. The 34,385 square foot building included 31,921 s.f. of enclosed space and 2,464 s.f. of canopy. She explained the layout of the building noting that all doors are high speed doors which minimize pollution, the wash bays have a system to recycle the water, and customer and employee parking would be located in the front, and service and storage in the rear. Relative to the grading, once the soil and survey was completed they were able to tailor the building to the site.

KIM MASIUK stated that the utilities were available in the street; the building has a full sprinkler system; at the request of the Water Department, additional fire hydrants were added; the LED high efficient lighting would be shielded, dark-sky compliant, and operate off-hours on a dimmer; and fencing was proposed all around.

Relative to drainage, KIM MASIUK stated that the runoff from the impervious surface would be collected in a hood and sump catch basin system to treat the stormwater, and travel through a separator before they enter a sub-surface storage tank. The tank is a closed-

system because the soil does not infiltrate, (0.1 foot per day) and overflow into the street system for a 10-year storm. During the pre-application meeting, the City Engineer requested the addition of paved waterways at the low point of the areas to make sure the water flows to Whiting Farms Road and travels towards Tannery brook.

Relative to landscaping, KIM MASIUK stated that front visibility was a vital component to the success of the dealership. Many trees and plantings were proposed throughout the site to provide buffering of the vehicles. The Dumpster, proposed in the rear, was well screened.

A Stormwater Operation and Maintenance Plan for Best Practices, plans for temporary erosion control and sedimentary basin, and a temporary Phasing Plan were submitted. The Elevation Renderings from the south-east corner were viewed; the building was 26.7 feet at the highest point. KIM MASIUK stated that earth tones would be used in order to blend with the surrounding residential neighborhood.

KIM MASIUK stated that a Special Permit (sect. 6.4.6.4) was submitted for multiple signs on a side; the main entrance ground sign measuring 25 ft x 8 ft would be internally lit. A Traffic Study was performed by VHB which indicated that no mitigation was necessary. She added that the dealership would employ approximately 75 employees with a July of 2016 opening.

GARY ROME thanked KIM MASIUK and TIM HOULE for their diligence in bringing the project forward. He stated that he was excited to move the project forward and continue to grow Holyoke. He thanked the Board for holding a special meeting (due to elections) as they hope to get a shovel in the ground by October and take advantage of the seasonal construction window.

DAVE MOORE opened both the Stormwater Authority meeting and Public Hearing by a 3-0 vote.

The stormwater system layout was viewed. KIM MASIUK stated that the system, designed for a 10-year storm, travels through a series of catch basins that flow from the northern part of the site traveling east to west, and enters a stormwater tank on the south-west portion of the site. Any overflow at the catch basins would enter the paved waterways, travel through hydrodynamic separators to remove 80% of the solids, and pass through a hooded sump pump to remove gas & oils before entering the City system. Overflow to the City's system would travel west and enter the catch basins near Tannery Brook (south).

WILLIAM FUQUA questioned if the sheet flow that travels across the lot entering the swails all goes into the tank and the excess comes out or does it bypass if it is a heavy enough flow. KIM MASIUK responded that it would bypass but that there were many opportunities for the flow to enter the system through the various catch basins.

WILLIAM FUQUA noted that the Stormwater packet was reviewed by Engineering Consultants Fuss & O'Neil and it was determined to have achieved the requirements of the Stormwater Regulations for a 2/10 year storm. The concern was for the greater than a 10-year storm and the excess that flows off the site and enters the City system. KIM MASIUK responded that per the Ordinance, it requires flow rates for a 2-10 year storm. During several meetings it was asked if flow rates for a 100 year storm were required as the 100-year storm would be too costly to move forward. The City Engineer (Matt Sokop) had agreed on a 2/10-year storm and therefore the plans were designed accordingly. The existing run-off currently enters a low point at the adjacent apartment complex (west); the proposed improves those conditions by matching the peak flow out at the street and not down the site. WILLIAM FUQUA reiterated that although the site design is perfectly adequate, his concern remained for what happens to the water off-site. KIM MASIUK responded that it was standard practice to design for a 2/10-year storm.

The Planning Board noted that the design was an improvement over the current conditions and exceeded the requirement of the Stormwater Authority.

GAYLE KEITH questioned the types of pollutants that would enter the system at Tannery Brook and who would oversee the maintenance schedule. GARY ROME replied that there is a trap next to the building intended to trap any oils from the service bays and there are several other traps on the site to filter the water before it leaves the site. WILLIAM FUQUA stated that the onus is on the property owner; GARY ROME stated that he would do his maintenance regularly to maintain longevity of the costly system.

WILLIAM FUQUA asked if further research was done to continue the model and check the impact of the run-off on the street. KIM MASIUK responded that it would be easy if there were a base model but to start from scratch at this point would delay the project for a year. WILLIAM FUQUA stated that the City maintains a high altitude model and, with some effort, it could be done.

GARY ROME asked if he had not bought the property, would the flooding at the apartment complex improve. KIM MASIUK responded that the site mitigated the 2/10-year storm providing huge improvements as compared to what exists.

TIM HOULE stated that the 10-year storm addressed 4-1/2" of rain in a 24 hour period as compared to the 100-year storm having 6-1/2" of rain. MIMI PANITCH responded that accounting for the 10-year storm would be an improvement over the current conditions, but noted that with increasing rapid climate changes, the 100-year storm could become the 10-year storm.

ATTORNEY WILSON stated that a lot of time and money has been invested in this project and Gary Rome did above what was required; the 100-year request would be an additional \$400,000 investment. Had the City Engineer required the 100-year storm, Gary Rome may not have gone forward.

The existing rain water flow conditions were discussed and compared to a 10/100-year storm relative to quantities and expense. GARY ROME reiterated that they exceeded the requirement and asking him to do additional investments would be extensive.

EILEEN REGAN stated that the conversation appeared to be going in circles.

JOHN KELLEY stated that the proposal was an improvement to the abutters and if there were a 100-year storm, the City would have more problems to worry about.

HELENE FLORIO stated that the City has put Gary Rome through an large set of hoops and the additional stormwater expense would be a deal breaker. The Site Plan Review was a definite improvement and the Boards should do whatever possible to allow a shovel gets put into the ground; she demanded that the Board support the project. CHRIS LACHAPELLE responded that Gary Rome has not been put through "hoops" but the "process" was no different to all the other developments. The process is to protect the City and its residents.

GAYLE KEITH agreed with Chris Lachapelle noting that when a project creates run-off it is important to see the whole process. It was a well thought out plan and the City should hold all the developers to the same set of standards. Although the project was well engineered and met the standards, the project did not improve the neighborhood.

The Stormwater Authority closed their Public Hearing. The Stormwater Permit was approved 3-0 with the usual conditions.

JEFFREY BURKOTT reviewed the Planning Department response to comments letter dated September 15, 2015.

Relative to #3, 3rd bullet, additional street trees and landscaping. MIMI PANITCH questioned the need to be highly visible as the location was a destination and did not rely on casual pass-by traffic. The residents expressed during the Zone Change survey their desire for a good amount of screening. After a lengthy discussion, Board decided to revisit the topic later that evening.

Relative to #3, 4th bullet, requested adding additional trees to the terraced parking lot. MARCOS MARRERO stated that the concern was that the building did not completely shield the back parking lot.

Relative to #3, requested adding additional plantings along the southerly drive. New England Erosion Control Restoration Mix would be used.

Relative to #3, 6th bullet, rip rap stone would be used.

Relative to #5 Lighting, details will be provided and lights will be dimmed to 10% power during the evening.

Relative to #7 Building Design, the site will be buffered with landscaping and the building façade in earth tones.

Relative to #8 Screening, the parapet wall will screen the roof top mechanicals.

Relative to #11 Temporary Signs, a temporary sign packet will need to be submitted.

Relative to #12 Sign Details, the sign details were reviewed; all signs would be illuminated.

Relative to #13 Fence, a fence may be installed on top of the retaining wall as a security measure although not required.

Relative to #14 Demolition, Layout and Materials, the DPW may determine that the driveway width exceeds the standard driveway access permit.

Relative to #18 Sidewalk on Whiting Farms Road, a blacktop sidewalk will be installed from the driveway to the northern boundary.

Relative to #23 Site Visit, a site visit was not necessary.

JEFFREY BURKOTT stated that per the Fire Department's letter dated August 31, 2015, the turning radius was adequate.

Relative to the Special Permit request, KIM MASIUK stated that the chain-link fence was proposed at 8 feet for security purposes.

MIMI PANITCH asked what the permanent screening was that the residents could rely on. KIM MASIUK replied there would be a dense 100-foot wide vegetative buffer between the apartments and the development.

GAYLE KEITH stated that she had some education in botany and although there were some trees that had to be removed, there were plenty that could stay. The renderings showed the trees at maturity; the residents will be very shocked to learn that they have to wait 10-15 years for it to look like the rendering. She felt that the plantings proposed were "ugly" and did not belong there. Based on the City-wide survey results for that area, the residents wanted a "homey, softer, less industrial look from the road". She added that natural native plantings that promote birds, bees, and butterflies which will enhance the look and address environmental concerns.

MIMI PANITCH clarified that MS KEITH was seeking minor changes in vegetative mix. KIM MASIUK responded that without specific details requested, that redesigns would become costly. GARY ROME added that adequate screening was provided and it was unclear exactly what MS KEITH wanted. GAYLE KEITH responded that a softer outline and imaginative plantings would be an improvement.

EILEEN REGAN noted MS KEITH had not been happy with the past three proposals for the site. MS KEITH responded that, as deciders of the Site Plan Review, it would nice if MS REGAN pretended to take her opinion into account. MIMI PANITCH reminded those present that personal attacks were out of order.

GARY ROME added that there were more plantings proposed then what is depicted within the photo renderings. The Landscaping plans were viewed and the various types of plants to be considered were discussed.

SARA KROHN asked if native, horizontal, or mass plantings had been discussed. She suggested contacting the Conway School of Landscape design for the possibility of the students using this as a project.

JOHN KELLEY asked if the interested parties could meet and come up with a Landscape Plan that the Planning Department would approve as acceptable. GARY ROME responded that there could be many different opinions. He felt that his plan as proposed was "stellar" and that he had been sensitive to the needs of the residents.

GARY ROME noted that there were other abutting residents that were not present as their concerns had been addressed. He stated that he takes pride in his businesses; they are meticulously maintained.

SARA KROHN asked if the option to have a member of the Board mediate the landscaping discussion was possible. Although it was mentioned that it could be a possibility, EILEEN REGAN responded that GARY ROME has already indicated that he was satisfied with the proposed plan. JOHN KELLEY added that the GARY ROME business has proven his commitment to the City via his well run and maintained business.

MARCOS MARRERO stated that Planning Staff was not comfortable, nor do we have the capacity, to regulate the aesthetics at a level of determining species and placement of plantings. We are charged with enforcing the Ordinance that public policy makers have set forth relative to shrubs and trees to meet the goal of the Ordinance. Some matters are outside the realm of Government and a matter of being a "good neighbor".

MIMI PANITCH stated that the Board was charged with making sure that the development was "aesthetically compatible with the surrounding neighborhood" and holding the applicant to his word that all concerns would be met. It was in everyone's best interest to reach an "aesthetically compatible" solution.

JEFFREY BURKOTT asked if the existing 13 purple leaf plum trees could be carried over to the front green space as they are visually interesting; perhaps an additional 5 plum trees. GARY ROME replied yes. (#3, 3rd bullet)

GAYLE KEITH noted that just because she was the only one present as an abutter, did not mean that the abutters do not care.

KATHY ANDERSON stated that the Planning Board had certain rules and regulations to follow as well as Gary Rome. The proposed project was an improvement over the existing conditions. She noted that the residents originally wanted manufacturing and the proposed was an industrial building. She hoped that the private negotiation with a resident is not a continued practice going forward.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Planning Board, At 8:47 p.m., a motion was made by JOHN KELLEY and seconded by EILEEN REGAN to close the Public Hearings. The Public Hearings closed by a 3-0-1 vote. (MIMI PANITCH abstained).

Respectfully submitted,


John Kelley, Secretary Pro Tempore