

**CITY OF EASTHAMPTON PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**  
50 Payson Avenue, Easthampton, MA 01027



**Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, August 30, 2022**

**Planning Board Chair:** Jesse Belcher-Timme

**Planning Board Members:**

X	Christopher Cockshaw (CC)	X	Harry Schumann (HS)	X	James Zarvis (JZ)
X	Daniel Hartman (DH) (attended remotely)	X	Kenneth Iavecchia (KI)		

**Absent:** None

**Recording Clerk:** Eli Bloch (EB)

**City Planner:** Jeff Bagg (JB)

**Assistant Planner:** Eli Bloch

**Guests:**

- 1. Call to Order: 6:00pm JBT**
- 2. Public Speak: None**
- 3. Planning Board Minutes:**

7/19/2022 – JBT mentioned that the date said June 21<sup>st</sup> and that needed to be changed. JZ made a motion to approve minutes KI seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

**4. ANR's**

- 1.** James Carmichael & Emily Laine, 133 Parsons Street (Map 146, Lot 28) to exchange land with Matthew Goldman & Charlene Korza, 129 Parsons Street (Map 146, Lot 27).

Emily Holmberg of Holmberg & Howe was present representing the ANR for 127 & 129 Parsons Street. She explained that the two parcels were swapping back land but the frontage did not change. JZ made a motion to endorse the ANR, DH seconded, All voted in favor.

- 2.** Patrick E. O'neill et al, 43 Brook Street (no map & lot number) to add back land from Patricia LaRochelle Trust, 41 Brook Street (Map 167, Parcel 26).

Emily Holmberg of Homberg & Howe was present representing the ANR for 43 & 41 Brook Street. She explained that 43 Brook Street was adding back land from 41 Brook Street. EB explained that the assessor said it was okay to move forward despite the lack of a lot number. JZ made a motion to endorse the ANR. KI seconded. All voted in favor.

## 5. Public Hearings.

1. **Ken Shapiro d/b/a East Heaven-** seeking a Special Permit for “All other personal and consumer establishment” as a health spa, under section 12.7 and Table 5-1 (34) in an existing building with planned expansion and all other site improvements including parking and landscaping. Property is located at 150 Northampton Street (Map 128, Lot 100) in the Highway Business (HB) zoning district.

Jeff Squire was present representing the applicant. Ken Shapiro the applicant and his wife and business partner Robin Cole were also present at the meeting.

Jeff Squire explained the following:

- The proposal was to renovate and expand the building by creating a new entrance way on the southwestern portion of the building, expand the street facing side of the building, and build an open-roof second story.
- They planned to modify the existing parking lot to define spaces, drive aisles, and remove unnecessary pavement.
- They will add street trees and plantings along Northampton street.
- They planned to apply for Mass DOT approval to move the eastern curb cut so that it was not in front of the building.
- The new building would have a gross square footage of roughly 11,500 sq ft.
- 38 parking spaces are required per zoning and they are providing 45.
- The back of the building will contain an outdoor garden possibly with outdoor spas and outdoor hot tubs.
- Opportunities for drainage improvements other than reducing impervious surface are limited as there is nowhere to discharge water or tie in to existing storm drains.
- They propose to add two fourteen-foot-tall outdoor light fixtures that are downward facing and dark sky compliant and with minimal light spillover.
- They are asking for a waiver to the traffic impact statement.

Ken Shapiro explained the following:

- The emergency exit would be in the southeastern part of the building.
- The former show room would become a “chill out” lobby for after experiencing a hot tub or a massage.
- They have space for up to eight massage rooms but expect 5-6 for massage and then using the other ones for acupuncture, sound healing, or medical lifestyle coaches.
- He hopes to have a hyperbaric chamber at some point but at this point there are not enough funds.
- They could hire 40-45 employees in total but not at one time.

KI asked about the size of the sign. JS stated that it would be 8’ tall and against the building. KS also stated that it would be lit at night when the business was open.

HS asked about the type of construction needed to hold eight hot tubs. KS replied that steel and post beam was sufficient and hot tubs were held on roofs all the time.

JZ asked about traffic on Northampton Street and parking requirements. EB clarified that they exceeded the minimum number of spots which is 38. JZ asked about how many employees worked at any given

time. KS replied that there are at the two people at the desk and 8-9 massage therapists but that almost never happens.

JZ asked about deliveries. KS replied that he personally made trips in his pickup truck for the vast majority of their supplies and they only occasionally received a delivery from a tractor-trailer. JZ asked about access for emergency vehicles. JS stated that there is more than enough room for an ambulance or small firetruck. He also stated that large firetrucks if needed would likely want to be on Northampton street.

HS and JBT asked about water use. KS specified that all of the water in the facility turned over every ten minutes which far exceeded the standards of swimming pools. He stated that the outgoing hot water heats the incoming room temperature water. KS specified the total water use was less than 2,000 gallons per day.

HS asked about what would happen in the case of a worst case scenario pipe burst. KS stated that roughly 800-900 gallons could spill but would likely mostly dissipate on the roof. HS asked about snow removal. KS stated that there is a large trench along the northwestern portion of the lot where snow can be dumped.

The Board discussed hours. KS stated they would like to apply for the maximum number of hours allowable and would likely operate from about 10:00 AM to Midnight if allowed. JBT asked the applicant if they were looking for permission to include outdoor tubs and saunas in the back garden area. KS replied that they would like permission for outdoor tubs and saunas in the back garden. JS specified that the tubs shown on the rendering in that area are schematic and don't represent the exact location of tubs or saunas.

The board discussed fencing; if the outdoor tubs and saunas were fenced, where on the property would be fenced, and what the fencing would look like. KS stated the majority of the property would be fenced other than the side abutting the woods behind Sunset Motors. EB asked if the garden would be completely fenced in. RC stated that it would be and KS assented.

JZ asked about the nearest residence. The board and applicant discussed and decided it was likely on Florence Road. KS stated that their operations were quiet. RC stated that in Northampton they directly abutted residences and never had complaints. JBT stated that the only late night disruption would be cars which would be minimal. CC stated that anecdotally his husband used to live next to East Haven's previous location and had no complaints.

DH asked if Berkshire Design Group had looked at any ID trip generation models. DH asked if there was any need for additional signal timing to accommodate an increase in traffic. JS stated that he was involved in the River Valley Co-op development which had much larger traffic volumes and signal changes were not even needed for that. DH stated that because of this sites proximity to the intersection that some turning movements could be impacted. DH also stated that overall the proposed use of this site would be fairly minimal. JS stated that traffic would increase compared to an empty site but would be lesser than a retail use or other commercial uses.

DH asked about the paving detail. JS stated that the site plan had been done fairly quickly and they used a standard paving detail without knowing the depth of sub-base.

The Board discussed storm water.

- DH stated that because the lot is so flat he was concerned water would pool in the middle and he would recommend changing the grade to drain towards the new green space. RC responded that there is a slight grade that drains water off of the lot.
- DH stated that he would recommend removing the interior curb which blocks water flow and the western curb which would be difficult for plowing.
- DH asked where roof runoff would go. JS stated that he suspects there would just be gutters that discharge at grade.
- DH asked if there would be any sort of infiltration infrastructure like a trench drain, or dry well. CC also questioned why this was.
- JS stated there was no place to discharge the storm water, so anything that would fill up would have no place to discharge once it overflowed. JS also stated that the clay soils were not suitable for deep infiltration.
- DH and JS discussed removing the interior curb to allow sheet flow to go onto the newly created green space. Both agreed that this was a good and feasible idea that should be implemented.

The board discussed heat and energy needs:

- KS stated that they hoped to be carbon neutral but they did have a natural gas hookup.
- KS stated that they plan to install rooftop solar and had offsite solar that would also provide electricity.
- KS described various ways they planned to use renewable sources for their energy needs.
- KS stated that he planned to pursue geothermal for most of their energy needs but also could use heat pumps for heating both the hot tubs and the rest of the facilities, and provide air conditioning.
- KS stated that they planned to have a gas fireplace.
- JZ asked if the board needed to permit geothermal, JBT responded they did not.

DH asked about chemical waste. KS said they used bromine and chlorine in small amounts that was not harmful. He stated that all chemicals came in tablet form.

JZ asked if there would be lights on the façade of the building. KS stated that there would be lights on the roof illuminating the tubs and there could be some but very minimal spillover. JS stated there would be minimal lighting on the façade as required for emergency egress, and possibly a small light at the entrance, and one along the northern part of the building to light up the path to employee parking. EB asked about the lighting on the sign and asked if the Board should consider a condition for the sign. JBT stated that this was unnecessary because the sign would need to comply with the sign ordinance.

### **Public Speak**

Bill Cannon, the owner of 158 Northampton Street which is two doors away from 150 Northampton Street, stated that the prospective owner and Planning Board should know that there is a drainage channel along the back of the property that continues to the back of his property and his deed has language that he must maintain the channel as does his neighbor Nicky D's. He suspected that the prospective owner would have the similar language in their deed. He clarified that the channel runs north away from 150 Northampton street towards his property. The applicant stated that they were aware of the drain and the property owner had shown it to them but they weren't sure if the deed would have the same language.

Bill Cannon also stated he was concerned that the building façade facing Northampton Street was just plain. JS stated that the updated building elevations presented at the meeting showed more details. Bill Cannon stated that he was encouraged by the plans for the second floor, and liked the idea of fenced in pods in the back garden area. He asked if the employees would go through the delivery entrance, the applicant clarified that on the floor plans there was a door on that side of the building.

Bill Cannon stated that having stated his concerns he was wholeheartedly in favor of the project both for the sake of renovating a building that has long been vacant, and to see a new business in Northampton. He re-iterated that there is a concern for traffic but that it is what it is. He stated that it is something that the Planning Board to look into how people will take a left into 150 Northampton Street. DH stated that fortunately that was the part of Northampton Street where the shoulder became wide enough to pass. JBT also stated that the traffic flow to East Heaven would not be constant like a retail or food service.

Ken Shapiro stated that when East Heaven opened in Northampton there were tumbleweeds going through the streets and people told him that when they took a soak at East Heaven they knew they could live there.

JBT asked if anyone attending remotely would like to speak. No one did.

#### **Vote**

JBT read through the findings of the Planning Board. The Board assented to the findings.

- JBT read through the conditions in a draft decision and the Board assented. J
- BT stated he would like to see a condition stating that the hours of operation should comply with any City By-laws.
- JBT asked about condition #3. EB stated that because of the size of the project that the Building Inspector needed to sign off on Storm water management practices.
- CC asked the applicants about their construction schedule. The applicant stated that they are several months away from starting construction.
- JZ asked if the Board would waive the traffic impact statement. JBT stated that they would waive the traffic impact statement.

*JZ made a motion to approve the special permit KI seconded the motion, and all voted in favor*

#### **6. Other Business:**

1. Review and approval of proposed Performance Guarantee amount for cell tower at 51 Brook street.

Michael Fentin of the law firm Shatz, Shwarz, and Fentin was present representing the applicant Cellco Parntership d/b/a Verizon Wireless.

The Board discussed the performance bond. JBT asked if City Engineering had looked at it, EB stated they hadn't. DH commented that a certified PE stamped it and thus felt it was trustworthy. *JZ motioned to approve the performance bond, CC seconded and all voted in favor.*

2. Review and approval of Certificate of Insurance for cell tower at 51 Brook street.

The Board discussed the certificate of insurance. JBT asked if the permit specified the City should be listed as an additional insured. EB clarified that the permit just asked for a certificate of insurance but did not specify that. Michael Fentin also clarified that the Zoning Ordinance was also silent on that.

*JZ made a motion to accept the certificate of insurance, CC seconded and all voted in favor.  
DH made a motion to adjourn the meeting, CC seconded, all voted in favor.*

*The meeting adjourned at 7:33 PM.*

*Next meeting 6:00 PM September 20, 2022*