

**City of Newburyport  
Planning Board  
October 19, 2022  
Minutes**

The online meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM.

**1. Roll Call**

Planning Board Attendance (in-person): Alden Clark, Beth DeLisle, Bob Koup, Jamie Pennington, Bonnie Sontag, Rick Taintor, and Don Walters

Planning Board Attendance (remote): Richard Yeager

Absent: Heather Rogers

Planning Director Andy Port and note taker Linda Guthrie were also present.

**2. Public Hearings**

- a) *Beth and Christopher Calitri c/o Lisa Mead, Mead, Talerman & Costa LLC  
6 Washington Street  
PBSP-22-8*

Don Walters made a motion to continue the DOD Special Permit Application submitted for 6 Washington Street to 11/2/22. Alden Clark seconded the motion, and all members present voted in favor.

**Motion Approved.**

*During the course of discussion and consideration of this application, plan(s), supporting material(s), department head comments, peer review report(s), planning department comments and other related documents, all as filed with the planning department as part of this application and all of which are available in the planning department, were considered.*

- b) *Market Landing Park Expansion & Restroom/Visitor Facility  
Newburyport Office of Planning & Development  
24 Merrimac Street  
PBSP-22-6  
Continued from 10/5/22*

Architect Dan Dwyer, Sasaki, 110 Chauncey St., Boston, demonstrated on drawings a change in the knockouts for lifting the building, if needed, and dark antique bronze door hardware is added to the materials list. He demonstrated on the north elevation a 5-ft fence with plantings on the east and west sides for the EV transformer. Additional building details are metal restroom doors clad in clapboard and a 1-inch thick wood trim forming a white band around the restroom door frame. The building sign proposed consists of individual, dark brown, metal letters 9 inches high

Planning Board  
October 19, 2022

in a serif font. Letters are held away from the wall by pins and rest on the white trim. All capital letters is recommended because the lowercase letter descenders show against the white trim. He presented alternatives using a sans serif font and white lettering, along with a proposal to silk screen the City seal and the hours of operation in white onto the glass windows.

Don Walters noted that the transformer is below the level of the foundation. Architect Merin Braco, Sasaki, said it's 1½ ft, or 21 in., above the flood elevation.

Don Walters said the corner siding might chip or crack as people walk by. Mr. Dwyer agreed and suggested a vertical trim to solve the problem.

Jamie Pennington said shingles are easy to repair and he would take that chance rather than using corner trim board.

Rick Taintor noted that the Harbormaster building does not have corner trim board. He asked if the transformer fencing was for safety or aesthetics. Mr. Dwyer said for aesthetics.

Rick Taintor supported the use of a serif font. The correct name of the font in the architect's presentation is Lucida Fax.

Richard Yeager asked if the intent, whether shingles or clapboard, is to let the exterior weather naturally to gray. He supported the dark brown lettering. Would there be recessed lighting in the front overhang so that people could see the lettering at night? Mr. Dwyer said yes.

Alden Clark likes the look of all capital letter font on the building. He didn't think upper and lower case would read well.

Beth DeLisle likes the serified capital letter font in dark brown because it harkens back to historic Newburyport. She could not envision how the City seal would look on the building windows.

Bonnie Sontag noted that the idea behind the large windows was to open up the interior view to the public. She thought they should stay clean. Mr. Dwyer said the seal would be semi-transparent.

Bob Koup said the paving surface in the front of the building is another option for the City seal. The graphic detail did not need to be prominent on the building because of the signage. He has concerns about the flush trim around the bathroom doors because it could experience a lot of wear and tear over time. Mr. Dwyer said that was a good point. Director Port supported a very thin metal trim for protection.

Bob Koup asked for details on the roof top mechanical equipment. Mr. Dwyer showed 2 drawings, one demonstrating that the equipment wouldn't show above the roofline and can't be seen from the sidewalk view and one showing the equipment from above the roof.

Planning Board  
October 19, 2022

Rick Taintor supported the idea of putting the City seal in the pavement instead of the window and prefers the dark bronze lettering. He suggested that the Planning Director could approve the bathroom door trim. He wanted to make sure they were durable.

Public comment open.

Council President Heather Shand appreciated the Board's attention to detail.

Public comment closed.

Bonnie Sontag read through the decision with suggested edits. There would be 2 added special conditions. Director Port said the updated black & white drawings need to be incorporated into the plans.

Bonnie Sontag said the drawings show clapboard yet the Board chose shingles. Mr. Dwyer said all of the materials notations on the plans say shingle siding and wood plank doors.

Richard Yeager asked if the bathroom doors are unisex. Director Port said yes. Mr. Dwyer said 4 restrooms are ADA accessible and 4 restrooms will have baby changing tables. In the winter, when only 2 restrooms are open, they will be ADA restrooms with changing tables.

Beth DeLisle asked if more restrooms could be opened during special winter events. Director Port said yes.

Bob Koup asked if signage on the bathroom doors is the same material, character, and dark bronze color as the primary building signage. Mr. Dwyer said yes.

Rick Taintor said anything that's not related to the Visitor Center should be removed from the plan list in the special permit decision, which leaves the specific site plan and the elevations. He asked if the standard condition regarding the permit lapsing after 3 years should be modified. Director Port agreed and would use the same language from the Site Plan approval for a 5-year permit.

Bonnie Sontag read the 2 special conditions and recommended a minor modification for future plan updates so that plans submitted for each decision correlate perfectly.

Director Port said the plan approved this evening would be inserted into the Site Plan approval documents. The bid documents would also be reconciled. Ms. Braco said the bid level documents submitted for the 11/2/22 meeting would be consistent with the materials and layout approved by the Board this evening.

Rick Taintor would feel better if someone on the Board could review the plans before they go out to bid. Director Port agreed. Bonnie Sontag suggested she, as chair, and Vice Chair Rick Taintor do the final review.

Planning Board  
October 19, 2022

Bonnie Sontag confirmed that there was no finalized location for the City seal or any other graphic imagery. A third special condition would address that. She suggested the language, “on the building or on the site.” Winter usage of the bathrooms would be left to the Planning Office.

Alden Clark made a motion to approve the Downtown Overlay District Special Permit Application for 24 Merrimac Street (Market Landing Park Expansion & Restroom/Visitor Facility) as drafted by the Office of Planning & Development, with incorporation of the associated Findings and Special Conditions and as further amended tonight. Beth DeLisle seconded the motion, and all members present voted in favor.

**Motion Approved.**

*During the course of discussion and consideration of this application, plan(s), supporting material(s), department head comments, peer review report(s), planning department comments and other related documents, all as filed with the planning department as part of this application and all of which are available in the planning department, were considered.*

Bonnie Sontag said the project would return for a minor modification to reconcile the plans for landscaping and other site details on the Site Plan Review approval based on what the Board agreed to this evening.

**3. General Business**

*a) Approval of Minutes*

Beth DeLisle made a motion to approve the minutes of 10/5/22 as amended. Don Walters seconded the motion, and 7 members present voted in favor. Bonnie Sontag abstained.

**Motion Approved.**

*b) Other Updates from the Vice Chair or Planning Director*

Director Port said the Housing Production Plan could use a Planning Board liaison for the review process. Jamie Pennington volunteered. Director Port said Citizen Collaborative Training Sessions are offering fall workshops, he would send out an email so members can register.

The idea of changing Board membership from 9 to 7 members with 2 alternates has been reviewed by KP Law and ready to go before City Council as a zoning amendment. He would like a letter from the Board requesting this general ordinance and zoning change. Bonnie Sontag said that after the change in membership, alternate members will only be called on for a Special Permit. Councilor Cameron will sponsor the amendment.

The December 21<sup>st</sup> meeting is cancelled.

**5. Adjournment**

Alden Clark made a motion to adjourn. Bob Koup seconded the motion, and all members present voted in favor.

**Motion Approved.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:16 PM

Respectfully submitted -- Linda Guthrie