

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP  
PLANNING AND DESIGN COMMITTEE  
Mansfield Downtown Partnership Office  
Town Hall – Conference Room B**

**Tuesday, September 20, 2011**

**MINUTES**

Members: Steve Bacon, Laurie Best, Jon Hand, Manny Haidous, Frank McNabb, Peter Millman, Ruth Moynihan, Betsy Paterson, and Karin Randolph

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm

Guests: Linda Painter, Mansfield Director of Planning and Development

Storrs Center Team: Geoff Fitzgerald and Fred Gardner (BL Companies), and Lou Marquet (LeylandAlliance)

**1. Call to Order**

Steve Bacon called the meeting to order at 5:07 pm. Attendees introduced themselves.

**2. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**3. Approval of Minutes from June 21, 2011 and July 19, 2011**

Betsy Paterson made a motion to approve the minutes from June 21, 2011 and July 19, 2011. Frank McNabb seconded the motion. Steve Bacon noted that the meeting on July 19 was in Conference Room B, not the Town Council chambers. Ruth Moynihan abstained from voting on the July 19 minutes. The minutes were approved with the amendment and one abstention.

**4. Review of Zoning Permit Application for Village Street in Storrs Center**

Mr. Bacon introduced Ms. Painter, Mr. Fitzgerald, Mr. Gardner and Mr. Marquet.

Mr. Bacon noted that the Town of Mansfield is the applicant for the Village Street and Transit Pathways zoning permit application, a similar situation as the parking garage and intermodal center.

Geoff Fitzgerald introduced Fred Gardner who is BL Companies' Director of Traffic and Engineering.

On behalf of the Town of Mansfield, Mr. Fitzgerald explained that the application encompasses new streets -- Bolton Road extension from Storrs Road to the Village Street where it intersects with Post Office Road.

Mr. Fitzgerald put the boundaries in context by showing the location of Phase 1C buildings and future phases surrounding the Village Street.

Mr. Fitzgerald reviewed the maps as part of the application.

He said the stormwater grates will be similar to grates in Dog Lane.

Jon Hand asked if the trees will be on compacted gravel. Mr. Fitzgerald replied in the affirmative and said the roots can still reach down far.

Mr. Fitzgerald said the crosswalks will include both colored pavement and stamped concrete.

He showed the site amenities being planned including bus stops, trash receptacles and benches. Mr. McNabb asked if the bus shelters will be open and Mr. Fitzgerald replied that they will be open with a windscreen on one side. It will not be plexiglass, but mesh.

Mr. Fitzgerald said the team recommended these particular site amenities based on the consensus from the Committee at its meeting in June.

Peter Millman asked if all utilities will be underground. Mr. Fitzgerald said that the utilities on the new streets will all be underground as well as on Dog Lane up to the Greek Center.

Mr. Bacon asked about the design on the Bolton Road Ext. Mr. Fitzgerald said the bump out shown is for deliveries that will service Phase 1C. Mr. Bacon asked if people would try to park there. Mr. Fitzgerald said there will be signage there to deter parkers.

Mr. Fitzgerald said there will be a 5 foot snow shelf along the new roads that will allow the Town to pile snow to melt.

Manny Haidous asked about timing on when buses will line up behind the garage. Mr. Fitzgerald said the buses will not be staged on that road until Village Street is built. The radius is wide enough for buses to execute the roads and turns.

Cynthia van Zelm asked Mr. Fitzgerald about the changes made to the intersection near the intermodal center. Mr. Fitzgerald said there had been some concerns raised about the safe pedestrian access in this area. The intersection should function as a yield area to pedestrians. The design evolved to take out a few parking spots at the intersection with Village Street to give more room for turning out on that section of the Village Street. Linda Painter noted that she had worked with Mr. Fitzgerald on improving the issues around the intersection.

Mr. Fitzgerald said the intersection will include textured asphalt. The curbs are only 4 inches tall to make it easier for pedestrians to walk. The intersection has been raised to the level of the sidewalk – it is a table top intersection.

Mr. Millman expressed concern about the difficulty driving through this area with pedestrians. He thought that signage will be key to alerting drivers to the high area of pedestrians.

Mr. McNabb asked if the crosswalk will be lighted at street level. Mr. Fitzgerald said it would not be lighted at this time.

Mr. Fitzgerald said the area will not be intended as a fast moving commuter area. He noted that if the area does become slow to move around, it means it is a success.

He said there is a concern about not over signing the entire Storrs Center. He is working with Ms. Painter and Director of Public Works Lon Hultgren on signage.

Mr. Millman asked about signage in the middle of the intersection. Lou Marquet said the street lights and buildings will be a natural site line to direct people. Mr. Fitzgerald expressed concern about signage distracting drivers if it is in the middle of the intersection.

Mr. Bacon noted that there will be no reason for cars to go by the intermodal center from Storrs Road unless they are going to the garage.

Mr. Fitzgerald said that short-term parking spaces were added in front of the intermodal center to allow cars to drop off bikes if the intermodal center includes a bike repair area, as bikes will not fit on top of a car going into the garage.

He said that the current thinking is that parking will be free on the streets.

Mr. Fitzgerald said he received feedback on planting a variety of trees but placing similar trees in the same area. The trees will be deciduous.

Mr. Fitzgerald also showed on the maps where there are nodes where kiosks, art features, etc. can be included.

Mr. Haidous asked if plantings will go in now or later. Mr. Marquet said the main goal for the Village Street is to put in the infrastructure necessary to provide accessibility to the south. The permanent pavement and trees cannot be put in until the buildings along the Village Street are included. The tree wells need to be put in now for the storm drainage system. Mr. Marquet noted that there is a lot of interest in the commercial opportunities in Phase 2. The Leyland team is working on preliminary design of the buildings for Phase 2.

Mr. Fitzgerald said the team is looking into landscaping along the boundary between the Greek Center property and the road behind the garage. Tall evergreen or cypress trees are being considered. He said that he and Macon Toledano from Leyland have been in discussions with Ilias Tomazos from the Greek Center.

Mr. Fitzgerald showed a map of the stormwater drainage system and noted that it is consistent with the CT Department of Environmental Protection and US Army Corps of Engineers permits received a few years ago.

Mr. Fitzgerald reiterated that one of the concerns raised was about the view from Village Street to the back of the Post Office. To address this issue, more trees will be included on the Village Street in this particular area. An ornamental fence will also be included.

Mr. Bacon asked about the effect of the lights from southbound traffic on the Village Street on the Courtyard Condominiums. Mr. Fitzgerald said he will talk to Mr. Hultgren and Ms. Painter about a solution that may include some screening with shrubbery, possibly evergreens. Mr. Marquet suggested re-evaluating this after the road goes in.

Betsy Paterson made the following motion: “In accordance with its charge, the Planning and Design Committee of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Inc. has met during the last several months with representatives of the Town of Mansfield (and its consultant team from BL Companies), whose application for a zoning permit for plans to design the Storrs Center Village Street from Post Office Road to Dog Lane and Storrs Road has been submitted to the Director of Planning for the Town of Mansfield. The Committee conducted meetings on June 21, 2011 and September 20, 2011 to review initial plans for the Village Street, make recommendations for changes to the plans, and review revised plans. Based on its review, the Committee is recommending to the Partnership Board of Directors that the zoning permit for the Storrs Center Village Street meets the design guidelines adopted by the Mansfield Downtown Partnership and incorporated into the Special Design District regulations.” Karin Randolph seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **5. Topics for Next Meeting and Next Meeting Date**

Ms. van Zelm said that BL Companies is planning to come back to the Committee at its October 18 meeting to update its work on the Storrs Center Sustainability Guidelines checklist (*since changed to November 16*).

Mr. Marquet noted that many of the materials have been bought and mainly CT subcontractors are being used on Phase 1A. Mr. Marquet said the development team may ask for approval on some changes to what is prescribed in the Sustainability Guidelines.

Mr. Bacon asked if there was a decision made on the color of the roof. Mr. Marquet said that they decided to use a dark roof as it gives more protection in the winter. This is an example of the way the LEED standards have evolved which now acknowledge regional issues.

## **6. Adjourn**

Ms. Paterson made a motion to adjourn at 6:45 pm. Mr. McNabb seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

*Minutes prepared by Cynthia van Zelm*