



TOWN OF LEXINGTON
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To: Lexington Planning Board

Re: 475 Bedford Street – Preliminary Site Development and Use Plan: PD-7

Date: January 28, 2022 revised February 16, 2022

Comments February 16, 2022

Zoning

A few comments for the 475 Bedford continued public hearing on February 16, 2022

- Under the proposed zoning 6.1 (k) can this use be more specific? The intent is not clear.
 - k. Operating Standards
 - (i.) Operations, in part or whole, conducted outdoors during operating hours
 - (i.)(ii.) Storage of equipment and products outdoors during non-operating hours
- The comments from the January 28, 2022 comment memo which are pasted below have not been addressed.
 - Section 9.5.5 Signs. The proposed zoning suggests that new signs be subject to minor site plan review administered by the planning director. It is preferred that the review be conducted by the Design Advisory Committee and administered by the Zoning Administrator.
 - Section 9.5.5 Signs. The proposed zoning allows two 12-feet by 8-feet signs on each building which also includes the parking garage and two 100 sf free standing signs. The Board and Petitioner may want to consider instead one large and one small 6-feet by 4-feet sign per building and “one standing sign per driveway curb cut as reflected in the PSDUP that is no more than six feet in height and seventy-five square feet in area” as proposed in the 128 Spring Street PSDUP proposed zoning.
- The petition proposes an exemption from 6.11.3 “ Large-scale and small-scale solar energy systems shall not be located in the front, side, or rear required yard.” The Petitioner and the Board may want to reconsider this exemption for the front yard given its prominence in the corridor.
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Property Information	
Project Address	475 Bedford Street
Parcel ID	Map 84, Lot 85A
Applicant/Owner Name	Cresset Lexington, LLC
Type of Review	Preliminary Site Development and Use Plan

Important Dates/Timelines	
Sketch Plan Review	November 3 & 10 , 2021
Filed with Town Clerk and Select Board	December 23, 2021
Report to Town Meeting due	March 21, 2022
Town Meeting begins	March 28, 2022

Property Information	
Zoning District	RO - Single Family / TMO-1 Overlay District
Property Size	9 acres
Existing Conditions	The property is currently improved with an approximately 71,000 sf fitness facility housing an indoor pool and tennis courts, outdoor patio and pools and 240 surface parking spaces. Although zoned RO, this commercial fitness facility has been allowed to operate via special permits and a variance issued as far back as 1965. The site is bounded by Bedford Street to the south, Massachusetts Armory to the east, a utility transmission right-of-way and forested land to the north, and Drummer Boy Condominium development to the north and west. The property is constrained by a power line easement and a gas line easement.
Environmental Conditions	The project site is substantially surrounded by wetlands with little buffer to the buildings and parking area. Stormwater sheet flows into the wetlands. A forested buffer exists between the fitness facility and the Drummer Boy Condominiums toward the north and west.

Project Summary
<p>The proposed project includes a 5-story 225,500± sf research and development building with approximately 5,000 sf of ancillary retail space, a new 360-space 4.5-level 120,000 sf parking structure, and 157 surface parking spaces for a total of 517 spaces with an additional 22 spaces held in reserve.</p> <p>Environmental improvements proposed include an overall reduction of impervious area, restoration of the 25-ft wetland buffer zone in some places, and improved stormwater quality and stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs).</p> <p>The project proposes to fill some isolated wetlands and bordering vegetated wetlands. Replicated wetlands are proposed at a 2:1 ratio. The exact location of the proposed wetland replication will be coordinated with the Lexington Conservation Commission.</p>

Comments
<p>Zoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Petitioner has committed to meet the provisions of the Zoning Amendment adopted at 2021 STM Article - Sustainable Requirements. This commitment is memorialized in the proposed zoning. • Section 6.2 Accessory Uses. - “Parking, surface or garage” should be included as an allowed accessory uses.

- Section 9.1 Landscaping, Transition and Screening. The bylaw section that pertains to Special Permits for Landscaping, Transition and Screening is 5.3.14, not 5.3.15.
- Section 9.2 Traffic Standards - Similar to projects in the TMO-1 Overlay District, the petitioner has proposed to opt out of compliance with the traffic standards outlined in the zoning and has instead proposed a Traffic Impact and Assessment Study and a Parking and Transportation Demand Management Plan. This acceptable as we rely on similar plans for traffic management in the TMO-1 District. The zoning language should specifically allow these two plans to be amended at site plan review as conditions/technologies may change.
- Section 9.3 Off- Street Parking and Loading - The petitioner has not included Section 5.1.13 Design standards in the zoning. The Planning Board and Petitioner may want to include the (1) Dimensions (aisle width and parking space sizes). The Board and Petitioner may want to also include the (6) Snow Storage standard which says that snow storage cannot be in required parking spaces. The petitioner is proposing to use 19 parking spaces for snow storage. * Please see note under Conservation. Snow may need to be removed off-site.
- Section 9.4.1 Additional Parking Provisions. The maximum allowed parking does not include the 22 parking spaces held in reserve. To add these reserve spaces as written would require a special permit.
- Section 9.4.3 Additional Parking Provisions. This proposed section may not be necessary as it is more relevant during site plan review. If this section is to remain, consider revising to clarify that temporary off-site construction parking is not allowed on public and unaccepted streets and that explicit permission must be provided to park in private drives and parking lots.
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- Section 10.1 - The Petitioner cites the Traffic Mitigation and Traffic Demand Management Plan as a condition in the zoning. The phrase “*as amended during site plan review*” should be added to the language to incorporate any changes in traffic counts if the project is built several years later and the Plan becomes dated.

Conservation

- The Project team has discussed wetland alteration and replication with the Conservation Commission on three occasions for feed back as they developed the design. The Commission wanted a restored wetland buffer zone without any retaining walls. Since the Fire Department is amenable to a hammer head turn-a-round, there is room for a restored buffer next to the wetlands surrounding the garage.
- *Proposed snow storage occupies 19 parking spots. The proposed snow storage abuts wetlands and is likely not allowed by Conservation Commission. It is preferable if snow is stored within the paved areas where the runoff will enter the drainage system and be treated by the systems. If proposed in an unpaved area, it should be in a landscaped area away from wetlands where runoff will not flow untreated directly to the wetland resources. The Commission will also like to see signage displayed along the environmentally sensitive areas regarding no snow storage, or chloride use.
- The proposed 22 reserve parking spaces are in the wetland buffer zone. It is not clear that the Conservation Commission would allow these spaces to be built if needed.
- The Petition has agreed in the MOU is provide a trail easement through the project site connecting the existing trail to Bedford Street.

Other Comments

- The Planning Board and Petitioner may consider adding murals as allowed signs.
- The Planning Board and Petitioner may want to consider broadening the allowed uses and consider adding the following uses:
 - Repair of household appliances, small tools or equipment, rental of equipment or tools for use in a home

- Instruction in music or the arts, not to exceed 3,500 square feet of floor space per establishment
- Museum, art gallery, private library
- Brewery Pub
- Fast food
- Take out

Site Plan Review – The items listed below should be addresses during site plan review.

- In the letter “Response to Planning Board and Public Comments on Sketch Plan” the Petitioner explains that new access drive is designed to prevent left turns OUT however until the time that Bedford Street is reconstructed the entry allows left turns IN. Public safety prefers left turns be prohibited. This issue can be further addressed during site plan review.
- The proposed 30-foot front set back provides enough space should an easement or taking be needed for improvements on Bedford Street. However, the location of the proposed waterline and basin may need to be adjusted during site plan review.
- The Petitioner should provide information regarding size, species and number of trees being removed and being replaced in accordance to Lexington’s Tree Bylaw.
- As mentioned above limits or prohibit temporary off-site construction parking on public on the public, and unaccepted streets should be a condition of site plan approval Explicit permission must be provided to park in private drives and parking lots.
- A noise construction plan should be reviewed during the site plan review phase. Equipment such as generators and heaters running at night will need noise control.
- The location, size and general design of the proposed signs should be provided on the site plans submitted for site plan review.
- Traffic and drainage and stormwater will be further reviewed during site plan review and conservation permitting with the Planning Board, the Conservation Commission, and the Engineering Division.