

April 16, 2020

Planning Board  
Town of Lexington  
1625 Massachusetts Avenue  
Lexington MA 02420

Via: email

Reference: Site Plan Review Planning Board Questions  
91 Hartwell Avenue  
Lexington, Massachusetts  
PFA Project No. 201-1004.00

Dear Board Members,

At the virtual public hearing of the Lexington Planning Board on March 26, 2020 the Board members asked several questions regarding the above referenced Site Plan Review and request for Special Permits. We would like to issue the following responses to these questions.

**Mr. Canale:**

1. **Comment:** Investigate provisions for improved pedestrian and bike circulation on Hartwell Place by adding a bike lane and sidewalks.

*Response: We have contacted the Town Engineer and Public Works Director and will report back to the Planning Board either prior to or at our next hearing on April 22, 2020*

2. **Comment:** How will traffic on the emergency access way be controlled/prohibited?

*Response: In response to this question, the design team has reprogrammed the circulation to limit the use of this pathway for Emergency Access Only. Deliveries to Truck Dock 1 will be from Hartwell Place only and deliveries to Truck Dock 2 will be from Hartwell Avenue. A short section of the driveway used for emergency access will be changed to pervious pavement in lieu of the stabilized turf to provide adequate turning movements for box trucks to back into Truck Dock #2. The emergency access pathway is also narrower than the other access aisles so that it will also be perceived as a pedestrian walkway rather than a drive aisle.*

3. **Comment:** Need to do more in promoting use of public transportation, i.e., Transit Pass program

*Response: As documented in the updated Parking and Transportation Demand Management (PTDM) plan for the Project, the applicant will require as a lease condition that all tenants in the new research and development building and the existing 91 Hartwell Avenue building will become members of the 128 Business Council. Additionally, the proponent is committed to providing a*

*partial 50 percent subsidy towards monthly transit passes for qualified employees under the conditions outlined in the PTDM plan.*

**Mr. Honig:**

4. **Comment:** Need to review and clarify the zoning section we are seeking Special Permit/waiver regarding landscaping along front of property, is it 5.3.14 or 5.3.4?

*Response: After a review of Zoning Bylaws it is our opinion that; Section 5.3.4 The subject parcel (zone designation CM (Manufacturing)) north eastern boundary when extended across Hartwell Avenue does in fact intersect with the Town's parcel which is zoned GC. The parcel also abuts a GC district on the south west side. While section 5.3.4 is applicable, the Required Depth of Landscape and Transition Area noted in the table is N/A. However, table 5.3.5 does require a transition from the street line of 25 feet.*

*The proximity of the wetlands along Hartwell Avenue limits our ability to comply with the landscape and screening requirements. It is our opinion that the wetlands provide a substantial transition area that addresses the intent of this requirement*

**Ms. Johnson:**

5. **Comment:** Coordinate with the Town regarding their proposed improvements to Hartwell Ave, and possibility of further enhancing sidewalk along Hartwell Ave (e.g. can it be made into a wider trail if Town is narrowing road?)

*Response: Due to the proximity of the wetlands along Hartwell Avenue we are limited to the area available for installation of a sidewalk. However, as the Town's plans advance to narrowing Hartwell Avenue a wider trail/sidewalk can be installed.*

6. **Comment:** Review the drive/loading/ HC parking area and revise, if possible, to further enhance the campus feel of the pedestrian circulation from the drive to the entry plaza/walkway between the buildings

- Reduce number of bays, or width of bays or both, have all trucks enter from Hartwell Ave.;
- Relocate HC parking area if possible
- Create a one-way loop so that pedestrians not at risk from vehicles which are backing up

*Response: The primary vehicular entrance to the site will be from Hartwell Place and directly to the garage. Further redesign of the space between the two buildings will enhance this area to reinforce it as a pedestrian corridor. We propose to model this space as a **woonerf** which is a living street, as originally implemented in the Netherlands and in Flanders, the Dutch-speaking northern portion of Belgium. Techniques include shared space, traffic calming, and low speed limits. The Dutch traffic code, motorized traffic in a woonerf or "recreation area" is restricted to a walking pace. Local examples of this urban space would be Downtown Crossing where pedestrians, lite traffic, bicycles and delivery trucks share the same space.*

Deliveries would be restricted to early morning hours. Pavement width, patterns and texture would provide traffic calming measures. It is not anticipated that there will be significant trips generated by the handicap parking so this space will function as a pedestrian corridor.

We will present our redesign of this space for our hearing on April 22, 2020

7. **Comment:** Coordinate with Conservation Commission regarding possibility of providing boardwalk/overlook within the wetland area

*Response: As discussed at our hearing, the project includes a walking path throughout the developed portion of the parcel. After further evaluation, we recognize that there are additional opportunities to extend these walking paths between adjacent parcels. We are proposing to extend a pervious pavement walking path along the north side of the parcel to the bridge that crosses a wetland to 81/83 Hartwell Avenue. On the northwest side of 81/83 Hartwell Ave. there is a pathway that crosses and links to the 20 Maguire Property. In addition, the Kiln Brook Spur parcel also links with this pathway providing an extensive pedestrian pathway system. The proponent will agree to work with the Town of Lexington Planning Department and Conservation Commission to assist in a study of additional opportunities to expand this network to adjacent sites.*

**Mr. Peters:**

8. **Comment:** Will the garage be built first so that tenants of existing building have continuous parking available?

*Response: As discussed at our hearing it is early in the construction management plans regarding tenant parking plans. It is our intent to provide satellite parking options for our tenants. However, if not available the construction sequence will involve erection of the parking structure first.*

9. **Comment:** Can you consider solar panels on the roof?

*Response: We share the board's desire for using solar panels wherever possible. As discussed at the hearing, due to the avigation easement which controls the height of the structure and mechanical projections above the roof and the floodplain which controls the first-floor elevations there is limited opportunity to install solar on the structures. However, upon further review, the roof of the penthouse will have limited mechanical equipment. We can commit to placing solar panels flat on this roof area and still be under the Avigation easement.*

10. **Comment:** Free parking is a significant benefit so in order to encourage people to use public transportation you must provide financial incentives, subsidies.

*Response: As documented in the updated Parking and Transportation Demand Management (PTDM) plan for the Project, the applicant will require as a lease condition that all new tenants in the new research and development building and the existing 91 Hartwell Avenue building will become members of the 128 Business Council. Additionally, the proponent is committed to providing a partial 50 percent subsidy towards monthly transit passes for qualified employees under the conditions outlined in the PTDM plan.*

**Mr. Canale:**

11. **Comment:** Need to revise the PTDM Plan and provide additional information to bring it into conformance with the Town's requirements for Special Permit (i.e., performance standards)

*Response:* An updated PTDM plan is provided with this document that provides additional commitments by the proponent to meet the Town's 85% SOV goal, as well as a commitment to conducting annual monitoring reports in accordance with Town Zoning By-Law requirements.

12. **Comment:** Suggested a survey of the users of the existing building with respect to how many commute alone or carpool.

*Response:* As part of the annual monitoring report outlined in the updated PTDM plan, annual reporting of the effectiveness of the TDM plan will be provided to the Town, including surveys of employees of the existing and proposed building to document existing commuter patterns.

**Chairman Creech:**

13. **Comment:** Coordinate with the appropriate Town Departments on all improvements within the Town property along Hartwell Place and Hartwell Ave to ensure compliance and their approval

*Response: Refer to response #1*

14. **Comment:** Investigate further the possibility of providing opportunities for solar facilities on the property, "Don't give up"

*Response: Refer to response #9.*

Thank You for your consideration of our responses to the Board Member comments.

Very truly yours,  
PAUL FINGER ASSOCIATES



Paul Finger, RLA  
President

Enclosures: Revised PTDM  
Woonerf Articles

cc: Amanda Loomis, Lexington Planning Director  
File