

**TOWN OF ELKTON  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MARCH 8, 2021  
VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES**

**Present:** Dave Wiseman; G. Edward Ginder; Rick Keane; Keith Thompson; Art Blount; William Muller; Lisa Blackson, Esquire; Jeanne Minner, Director of Planning, Nick Cannistraci, Planner

**Absent:** None

Mr. Wiseman called the meeting to order. He stated the first item on the agenda was approval of the minutes from the February 8, 2021 meeting. He called for a motion.

**MOTION:** Motion was made by Mr. Keane to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2021 Planning Commission meeting as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Thompson and unanimously approved by the remaining Commission members.

**BOHLER ENGINEERING REPRESENTING DOUGLAS DEVELOPMENT, CONCEPT SITE PLAN, 300 EAST PULASKI HIGHWAY, ELKTON, MARYLAND, TAX MAP 033B, PARCEL 2377, ZONED C-2 (HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL)**

Mr. Joseph Ucciferro, Principle and Engineer for Bohler Engineering was in attendance to address this submittal. Also in attendance were Annie Casertano, Director of Development for Douglas Development Corporation (Owner/Developer); Emily Pate, Assistant Project Manager for Bohler Engineering and Rebekah Brown, Partner and Lead Architect for BWD Architects.

They are before the Board to request Concept Site Plan for a property located at 300 E. Pulaski Highway. It is located at the intersection of Whitehall Road and Pulaski Highway. It had previously been a Walmart and currently located on the property is the Olive Garden Restaurant and the Express Care/Urgent Care. The former Ruby Tuesday building is also located on the property. This building is currently occupied as the Alpha Medical Center.

Their intention for the main building is to reconfigure the east and west sides of the parking lot and to retain the core and shell in order to fit out an indoor self-storage facility. No additional building square footage is proposed.

He noted there are two existing exit points off of Whitehall Road on the west side of the building. The idea is that customers would come off of the northern access on Whitehall Road and make an immediate right turn to access the building. There would be a gated entrance at the building with key fob access which would allow entry to the building. The second entrance to the south would also be gated but would provide fire department access as necessary. There are larger parking spaces to the east and west sides of the building which will be available for storage of trailers, RV's, and the like. He mentioned access to the units would be through the center of the building by way of a drive aisle.

Mr. Ucciferro stated they intend to place two larger landscape islands near the main entrance. They felt additional green space was needed.

He provided a layout of the interior of the building showing the different size storage units. The units provided will be both air conditioned and non-air conditioned. There will be a one way flow into and out of the building. He noted a comment from the Town which stated the drive aisle needs to be at least 30 feet. Mr. Ucciferro stated it would be at least 30 feet, possibly up to 35 feet. He stated both ends will be open

and there would be adequate ventilation throughout the building to alleviate fumes from idling vehicles. Mr. Wiseman asked if the building will be sprinklered. Mr. Ucciferro confirmed that it would be. Mr. Ucciferro acknowledged that they have received comments from the Town, KCI and the Singerly Fire Company and feel they are able to comply with all the comments. He pointed out they do not anticipate any comments from State Highway since they are not making any modifications to the access roads or doing any work within the State Highway right of way. He said they have submitted plans to Cecil Soil but have not received their comments as yet.

Mr. Wiseman opened the floor to Commission member comments or questions. He asked if there will be access control at the property line behind the Urgent Care facility. Ms. Brown informed the Commission that at this time they are not proposing any access. The intention is for vehicles to move through the building and exit to the rear building and back through the gate where they initially entered the facility. Mr. Wiseman voiced his concern with respect to preventing people from accessing the building in order to vandalize the units. Ms. Brown noted there are proposing fencing at the rear of the property that runs parallel to the medical office building.

Mr. Ginder asked if there are any restrictions with regard to vehicle size. Ms. Brown stated that normally a 35 foot truck is the limit of the size of vehicle that can be rented by the average person. A CDL license would be required for a truck larger than 35 feet. She stated they don't normally see vehicles the size of tractor trailers in a facility of this size but they would need to access the units from outside the building. She noted there are loading zones outside where they could access the units.

Mr. Wiseman stated the facility is one level and Ms. Brown confirmed he was correct. He asked how wide the interior aisles are if someone is storing larger furniture. Ms. Brown stated the industry standard for interior corridors is five feet. Mr. Wiseman wondered why all the units are not air conditioned. Ms. Brown stated that some people want immediate access to their units from their vehicles and in that case the units cannot be air conditioned and therefore they want to provide variety for their customers. Mr. Wiseman asked if they would be heated as well as air conditioned and Ms. Brown confirmed that they would be.

Mr. Keane questioned whether the units would be able to be accessed from Pulaski Highway near the old Ruby Tuesday and asked if they would be restricting access to that entrance. Mr. Ucciferro noted that users of the storage facility will have to come to the office to rent a unit and at that time they would be requested to access the facility from Whitehall Road. Mr. Keane asked who owned that access road off of Pulaski Highway. Mr. Ucciferro stated it is owned by Douglas Development Company. Ms. Minner pointed out that there are cross access easements for the other facilities on the property and recommended that they look into where those are located on the property.

Ms. Broomell asked if there are any plans for the large parking area on the property. Mr. Ucciferro stated he was not aware of any plans and deferred the question to Ms. Brown. She stated there are no current plans but that may be possible in the future. Ms. Casertano confirmed there are no plans presently.

Mr. Thompson asked about proposed fees for the units. Ms. Brown stated she would suppose they would be anywhere from \$50/unit and up, but she felt they would be similar to other facilities in the area. Mr. Thompson mentioned that there is a large homeless population in the Elkton area and questioned how they would avoid the building being accessed by transient persons. Mr. Wiseman asked if there would be an onsite manager. Ms. Brown noted there will not be an apartment for a site manager but they will have security inside and outside the building which is wired to central systems, recordings, etc.

Mr. Ginder asked if State Highway would need to address or give approval for access from Pulaski Highway. Ms. Minner asked Mr. Ucciferro if he had contacted SHA. He said they stated they didn't need to provide comments. Ms. Minner pointed out that ordinarily SHA will comment only if the facility is being accessed by more than 50 trips per hour. She stated that the access off of Pulaski Highway is more than adequate to accommodate this type of use. Mr. Ucciferro mentioned that this use will be accessed much less than the previous retail use. Mr. Wiseman also noted that the restaurants would have had a great deal of traffic as well.

Mr. Keane asked whether the interior units were enclosed to the ceiling. Ms. Brown stated there will be divider walls up to 8 feet tall with security mesh above, which is the industry standard. Mr. Wiseman mentioned that this was necessary so the sprinkler system can access the units in case of a fire.

Mr. Blount questioned whether there would be a privacy fence on the Whitehall Road side to block the view of what is in the outdoor storage area. Ms. Brown said she would look into that but believed there is an existing privacy fence and a significant berm in that area. Mr. Ucciferro pointed out an existing storm water pond which has a fence and that fence will remain. Mr. Blount asked if they would be maintaining the fence. Ms. Minner stated maintenance of the fence is required.

Ms. Broomell asked if any design improvements are being proposed other than the landscape islands. Ms. Brown stated repairs would be done where there are openings or damage. They will be placing signage but they have no plans to update the property other than some cosmetic paint in order to freshen it up where it is needed.

Mr. Wiseman entertained questions from the audience. There were no questions from the audience.

**MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Ginder to approve the Concept Site Plan for Douglas Development Company contingent upon addressing all outstanding comments. The motion was seconded by Mr. Thompson and approved unanimously by the remaining Commission members.**

**Old Business:** Ms. Minner mentioned that Hertrich has withdrawn their request for the rezoning but noted they said they would complete the promised work on the storm drain pipe. Mr. Wiseman commented on the legal opinion being completed for the specimen tree removal for the 7-Eleven at Maloney and Pulaski Highway.

**New Business:** Ms. Minner stated it is likely the April agenda will be busy.

Mr. Blount asked about the condition of the intersection where vehicles turn off of Pulaski Highway onto Bridge Street. Commissioner Broomell stated the Mayor & Commissioners have addressed that with SHA. It was suggested that Ms. Minner or someone in Administration follow up regarding this issue.

There being no further business to discuss Mr. Wiseman adjourned the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brie Humphreys