

Junet 22, 2022

Mr. Peter Matchak, Town Planner/Director
Town of Ashland
101 Main Street
Ashland, MA 01721

RE: Site Plan Review & Special Permit, Mixed Use Development Community
501 Pond Streer (Assessor's Map 29, Lot 151, and the Converse Private Way)

Dear Mr. Matchak:

GCG Associates, Inc. has reviewed the following information for the Mixed Use Development Community Site Plan at 501 Pond Street in Ashland, MA.

Documents:

1. Storm Water Management Report, Proposed 4 Story Apartment Building, 501 Pond Street, Ashland, MA., prepared by Bruce Saluk & Associates., Inc. (BSA) dated 11-15-2021, last revised 05-18-2022.
2. Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) Memorandum, prepared by MDM Transportation Consultants, Inc. (MDM), dated October 25, 2021. And updated TIA dated May 5, 2022.

Plan References:

"Site Plan, 501 Pond Street, Ashland, MA." (12 Sheets) prepared by Bruce Saluk & Associates., Inc. (BSA) dated 11-24-2021, last revised 05-22-2022.

"Site Plan (Architecture), 501 Pond Street, Trask Development", prepared by Icon Architecture, dated 10-26-2021, last revised 04-07-2022.

"Schematic Site Plan" (Landscape), prepared by Copley Wolff Design Group, (1 sheet), dated 05-09-2022.

This Site Plan application requires a Stormwater Management Permit (SMP) per Chapter 247-6 A and B with Ashland Conservation Commission, and compliance with Chapter 343 Stormwater Management. The proposed site area and limit of work exceeds 1-acre threshold and requires NPDES General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Construction Activity. A NPDES filing and SWPPP should be filed 14 days prior to start of construction. There are no wetland resource areas identified on the property. A letter was generated by Oxbow Associates, Inc., dated 09-21-202, stated that there is no wetland resource area within the property. However, the Application for Planning Board Approval/Permit in the additional information section the applicant had stated 'Yes' is the parcel within 100 feet of a wetland or 200 feet of a river.

Furthermore, there appears to be some off-site wetland area and drainage ditch at the abutting properties along the Hopkinton Town Line. The resource area(s) and associated buffer zone should be determined by the Ashland Conservation Commission and shown on the plan if applicable.

Based upon our review of the above information, we offer the following comments with respect to compliance with Town of Ashland Zoning Bylaw, Stormwater Management requirements and Massachusetts Stormwater Handbook (MSH). The numerical section of the regulations is referenced at the beginning of each comment unless it is a general comment.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

This is a new mixed use development in the “Highway Commercial” (CH) and “Pond Street Mixed Use Overlay District” (PSMUOD). This development consists of the 3.63+/- acres parcel 151 Map 20 and the Converse Way (Private Way) 0.51+/- acres with combined total area of 4.14 acres (180,369 s.f.). Based on the property Quitclaim Deed, book 48742, page 540’s Exhibit “A”, paragraph 3, which stated that “Said parcel is conveyed with the right to use Converse Way as shown on said plan, in common with others lawfully entitled thereto, for the purposes as streets, roads and ways are commonly used in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.” GCG recommends obtaining legal opinions for the applicant’s right to use the private Converse Way to be part of the site development plan as proposed.

The proposed mixed uses (8.8.5.1 - residential dwelling units and 8.8.5.2 - non-residential uses) are by right per Section 8.8.5 of the zoning Bylaw.

SITE PLAN

1 - Cover Sheet

1. No comments.

2 – Existing Conditions Preliminary, C0.1

1. Zoning districts boundary should be shown on the plan.
2. Oxbow Associates letter dated 09-21-202, stated that there is no wetland resource area within the property. However, there appears to be potential wetland resource area(s) in the adjacent properties along the Hopkinton Town Line, which may affect this development. Resource areas should be approved by the Ashland Conservation Commission. Any wetland buffer should be shown on the plan set as applicable.
3. Provide Converse Way right-of-way distance at the Meeting House Path and Pond Street intersections.
4. Provide legal opinion for the applicant’s right to include the private road “Converse Way” in the development.

3 – Layout Plan, C1

1. 8.8.6.3, 8.8.6.7.2, and 8.8.7.1.b. - Proposed 120 residential dwelling units are based on 8.8.6.3 Density - 90 units at one residential dwelling unit per 2,000 sf. of “buildable lot area” and additional 30 bonus units under 8.8.6.7.2 or 8.8.7.1.b. The Converse Way’s

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- 22,286 sf. as “buildable lot area” should be clarified by legal opinion(s). Common Open Land area should be calculated and defined on the plan, if used for density bonus. Density Bonus units require SPGA approval.
2. 5.2.1 – Loading area for nonresidential building or use is required. Loading area should comply with Sections 5.2.6 and 5.2.7. Unless approved by the SPGA through Section 5.2.8.
 3. The proposed standard and compact parking stalls dimensions are 9’ x 18’ with 24’ wide driving aisle and 8.5’ x 16’ with 22’ wide driving aisle, respectively which do not meet the standard parking space dimensions requirements. Ashland Zoning By-laws currently do not have a compact parking space policy. Section 10 - Parking Space definition requires minimum 9’ x 20’ parking stall dimensions. Parallel parking space as shown scaled between 17’ to 20’ length by 8’ wide, also not complying with the parking space definition. In addition, GCG recommends parallel parking space should have a minimum length of 22’.
 4. Converse Way is a private way with rights granted to the abutting parcels. It appears to be the only obtainable frontage for the Ronald A. Golz property, Map 30 Lot 0001. The proposed parking layout and retaining wall is within the Converse Way right-of-way will affect Map 30 Lot 0001. The right to develop the proposed parking spaces in front of the Meeting House Path edge of pavement and within the Converse Way right-of-way should be clarified by legal opinion(s). Layout, building setback and parking space setback to street (Converse Way) requirements should be determined by the legal interpretations. Legal process of discontinuance of Converse Way and owner should be determined.
 5. 5.4.4. (1) & (3). – Interior Landscaping in Parking Areas. Parking areas shall be broken into 25 spaces cells, landscape island and buffer shall have a minimum area of 150 sf. and minimum width of 8’ and contain 1 tree per 100 sf.
 6. The proposed retaining walls (North and south) are up to 5’ in height and should be equipped with safety fence.
 7. Driveway aprons at sidewalk crossing should be constructed with ADA compliant continuous sidewalk to match the proposed 8’ wide sidewalk along Pond Street.
 8. Handicap parking spaces should be equipped MUTCD compliant R7-8 and R7-8P signs and pavement marking.
 9. EV charging spaces may be used by anyone and must not be reserved for persons with disabilities. Therefore, do not install markings or signage restricting the space to ADA accessibility only. Per “MassEVIP Direct Current Fast Charging (DCFC) Program Requirements” Accessibility section. The two HC/EV spaces would not qualify for the required 6 handicap accessible spaces. Two additional HC spaces should be provided.
 10. Stop sign and stop line at curb opening are recommended by the MDM traffic report.
 11. Bicycle parking is recommended by the MDM Traffic Report.

4 – Grading Plan, C2

1. Silt sacks should be installed at the existing downstream catch basins on Pond Street.
2. Proposed curb openings require a MassDOT State Highway Access Permit. Additional drainage improvements may be required by MassDOT.
3. The 260 contour should be provided at the easterly parking area (in front of proposed building).
4. The 258 contour should be provided near WQI #3. Applicant may consider to show one foot contour to clarify the intent of the grading especially at the northerly parking lot.

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5. Even though the parking areas are relatively flat. GCG recommends calling out the handicap accessible parking space and access path should have a maximum 2% slope at any direction requirements.
6. The proposed walkway at the southeasterly building corner toward south has a 6.7% slope in front of a wheelchair ramp and should be addressed.
7. Verify the southerly access to the Ronald A Golz parcel (Map 30, Lot 0001), the spot grade as shown creates a 9+/- percent slope driveway connection. Provide transitional curve to avoid abrupt grade changes.
8. Provide top of curb and bottom of curb spot grades to indicate wheelchair ramp locations.

5 – Drainage Plan, C3

1. MassDEP – Standard Design Guidelines for Shallow UIC Class V Injection Wells. – proposed subsurface structures (chambers) system is classified as Shallow UIC Class V Injection Wells and should be registered to MassDEP prior to construction.
2. The proposed subsurface chambers system does not meet the minimum 10 feet separation to the existing and proposed water supply lines.
3. The proposed retaining wall should be equipped with impervious barrier to prevent infiltration chambers break out.
4. Determine off-site wetland resource areas. Infiltration chambers/UIC Class V injection well should be located with a minimum 50' setback.
5. Label the number number of Cultech FC-24 Feed Connector units per each system according to the HydroCAD calculations.

6 – Water, Sewer, and Utilities, C4

1. Provide minimum 10' horizontal separation between subsurface drainage chambers system to water supply line.
2. Provide minimum 10' horizontal separation between water and sewer line (relocate SMH #1).
3. Label sewer pipe length and slope between SMH #2 and building sewer service.

7 – Truck Access Plan, C5

1. Show sight distances for both curb openings. MDM Traffic Memo stated that the sight distance at the Converse Way location meets the safety sight distance requirements. Analysis for the north access required.

8 – Details, C6

1. Verify the Standpipe Filter detail applicable to this project. This detail shows a discharge to a forebay.

9 – Details, C7

1. The storm drain manhole should be equipped with 4,000 psi cement concrete inverts and table, similar to MassDOT construction standards.

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2. Chapter 334-57, Trench Section for Water, note #2, minimum pipe cover should be 5½ feet.
3. Chapter 326-14B, requires a minimum depth of 24" select gravel borrow (no stones larger than 3") above the top of pipe. Placed in 12" layers and compacted by hand tamping.
4. Chapter 326-14D, requires 18" of bank gravel backfill for trench within roadways.
5. Parking Dimensions – parking spaces should be 20' x9', Zoning - Section 10 – Definitions.
6. Signage – should comply with MUTCD standards, use R7-8 and R7-8P signs.
7. Type 2 berm detail, hot mix asphalt curb/berm should be set on top of the binder course.

10 – Details, C8

1. Hydrant and water system should comply with Chapter 334.

11 – Details, C9

1. Missing Stormceptor STC 450i details, drawing layer appeared to be turned off, majority of the details within the concrete structure are missing.

12 – Details, C10

1. Recharger (R150XLHD & R180HD) Chamber System - Plan View, calls for Cultech HVLV FC-24 Feed Connector where specified. The FC-24 chambers were utilized in the HydroCAD report for storage. Plan should show the number of FC-24 unit for each system.

Additional utility requirements - 326-11. A – Provide plans and profiles of the proposed sewer work.

Architectural and Landscape Plan

The landscape plan shown on the Architectural plan set and the Schematic Landscape Plan by Copley Wolff Design Group, were without plant and tree counts and species specifications and should be updated.

Lighting Plan

9.4.4.8. Lighting Plan (Photometric) is required. The lighting plan should include the pole and lighting fixture details, mounting height and style. An outdated lighting plan by Grady Consulting, LLC. dated October 26, 2021, was filed. However, the parking layout has been changed and that plan shown proposed lighting on Ronald A Golz's property.

TRAFFIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT (TIA) MEMORANDUM

1. The report was based on August 2021 traffic volume count, during school summer break. Adjustment should be provided for the school traffic impacts during the weekday morning and evening peak hours
2. The commercial use trip generation was based on “Land Use Code (LUC) 712 – Small Office Building” use. Any uses by right in the Highway Commercial (CH) zoning district is permitted for the commercial portion (6,800 sf.) of this development. Hence, the actual commercial uses of this site may affect the total trip generation.
3. The “MEMO: Demographics report from Ashland Woods – requested by members of public at 4/28/22 Planning Board hearing” in file, estimated 0.167 school aged children per unit based on the Ashland Woods October 2021 leasing report which translates to 20.04 school aged children from the proposed 120 dwelling units.
4. Currently the Town of Ashland schools does not have any buses route through this part of Pond Street. New routes will be required to serve this development.
5. The proposed two curb opening access would be subject to MassDOT State Highway Access Permit approval.

STORMWATER MITIGATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Pre-development/Existing Conditions HydroCAD calculations - Based on the soil logs, all 7 test pits found medium sand and coarse sand below the topsoil and/or fill layers. Furthermore, the post-development exfiltration rate for the infiltration chamber systems were based on sand soil, Hydrologic Soil Group (HSG) ‘A’. GCG recommends using the HSG ‘A’ for both Pre-development and Post-development HydroCAD calculations.
2. Chapters 247.4.C. & 343 - Stormwater Management requires no increases of stormwater runoff volume for the post-development in comparison with the pre-development conditions. A summary of the pre-development and post-development runoff volume comparison should be provided for all four study storm events. Based on the HydroCAD reports, there were increased post-development runoff volumes during the 10-year, 25-year, and 100-year storm events, net increase of 0.131 acre-feet (AF.), 0.145 AF., and 1.035 AF., respectively.
3. 343-8.1.6. (a.) – Requires BMPs must be designed to remove 80% of the average annual post-development total suspended solid (TSS) and 40% for total phosphorus (TP), and 30% for total nitrogen (TN). The proposed subsurface structures (Chambers with WQI unit pre-treatments) do not have sufficient data for MassDEP to determine nutrients (TP, TN) removal rate. Therefore, the subsurface structures should be sized to capture the prescribed water quality volume (1-inch times the total impervious area for rapid soil site).
4. The proposed 13 inlets with catch basin open grate meet the required 44% TSS removal prior to discharge to infiltration structures with rapid exfiltration rate.
5. The applicant should provide a drainage study to demonstrate compliance with Chapter 247 and 343. Which requires project to meet current MSH requirements and control the post-development runoff volume not to exceed the pre-development conditions. There was a predetermined discharge flow allowance to the drainage parcel Map 14 Lot 21 for detention. The applicant should provide calculations showing this project meeting the predetermined runoff allowance.
6. 343-7.06.17 requires an Operation and Maintenance plan for this project.

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7. Sub-catchment and pipe capacity analysis and WQU sizing calculations should be provided.
8. Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Plan, Long Term. – Water Quality Structures/Inlet, (WQI) Structures. There should be a total of 13 units, (9A and 9B) should be counted as two units. O&P plan referenced the WQI units be CDS units manufactured by Contech, but the plan detail and calculations were based on Stormceptor STC450i unit. Both Stormceptor and CDS units are currently under Contech Engineered Solutions, both units are rated with 50% TSS removal with proper maintenance by NJDEP. Since the inflow sub-catchment to each inlet unit is relatively small. The smaller CDS unit would meet the 50% TSS rating as well. However, O&M maintenance references should match with the WQI unit proposed on the plan set and calculations.
9. Catch basins maintenance should be merged with WQI units. Inspect and clean the inlet grates four times per year. WQI units sump should be inspected and cleaned per manufacturer's recommendation.
10. Pavement should be swept at a minimum twice per year, early spring, and late fall.
11. Dog park O&M should be specified.
12. Update inspection log accordingly.

Summary

The Converse Way right-of-way ownership and abutters' legal right to develop should be address by legal counsel. Parking space dimensions do not meet current Zoning standards Additional storm water storage is required to control the runoff volume and comply with the Stormwater Management Permit requirements.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact our office.

Respectfully submitted,
GCG ASSOCIATES, INC.

Michael J. Carter

Michael J. Carter, P.E.
Project Manager

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