

DATE: May 22, 2018
TO: Anne McClung
FROM: Lori Lester, Water Resources Manager
TITLE: Water and Sewer Comments for RZN17-0006 Old Blacksburg Middle School

Water Comments:

- The rezoning application does not contain sufficient information to confirm the water line design will meet all of the Town standards. Additional water infrastructure may be required to meet Town Standards for fire hydrant spacing and to eliminate dead end lines.

Sewer Comments:

- At the flow rate given in the submittal (79,915 gpd) and at the original flow rate provided to the Town for use in the Draper Capacity Study (127,500 gpd), there are 1,211 LF of 12" pipe that do not have capacity for this development. The Town has a fully funded capital improvement project to upgrade the sewer lines and address the capacity issues for development in this area.
- It is unclear from Sheet Z4 where the sewer connections for the hotel and multi-use structures on Main Street will be located. The capacity analysis discussed above was completed assuming all site flows will be directed to the manhole at the intersection of Church Street and Clay Street. If other connection points are desired, the capacity evaluation will need to be updated. This can be evaluated at the site plan stage, but the applicant/owner should complete due diligence to ensure that all proposed structures have adequate sewer connections.
- The rezoning application does not contain sufficient information to confirm that the sewer line design will meet all of the Town standards. There are no significant concerns based on what is shown, other than those listed above. The details of the sewer design can be handled at the site plan stage; however, the applicant should complete due diligence to ensure that the Town's standards can be met without requiring substantive changes to the binding aspects of the application materials. Substantive changes to the site to meet sewer standards and specifications may require going through the public hearing process again.

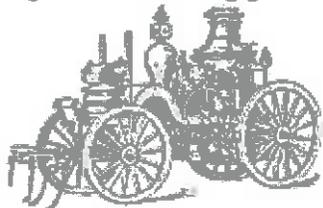
Anne McClung

From: Wayne Garst
Sent: Friday, June 8, 2018 11:34 AM
To: Anne McClung
Subject: Old Blacksburg Middle School Fire Comments

There are concerns about fire apparatus access on 3 sides of the building in parcel 3 in the planned residential district.

In parcel 6 there is concern about dead end streets in this planned residential district.

J. Wayne Garst
Fire Code Official/PIO
Blacksburg Fire Department
407 Hubbard Street
Blacksburg, VA 24060
O- 540-961-1175
C- 540-951-3030
wgarst@blacksburg.gov



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Memo

To: Anne McClung
From: Tom Fox
Date: June 25, 2018
Re: Transit Comments on Midtown Development Partners Rezoning Application - OBMS

BT's comments on the referenced development proposal are as follows:

1. **Bus stops.** The existing northbound stop (Main/Clay Nbd, #1626) on the project site should remain; the existing southbound stop on the far side of the Main/Eheart (#1602) intersection also serves the project well. The existing crosswalk, and potential new traffic signal, provide a pedestrian crossing of Main Street; however, this expanded intersection will potentially require the southbound stop to be moved further south. BT normally places bus stops at least 100-150' past a signal-controlled intersection. There are southbound on-street parking spaces that may need to be removed to accommodate this relocated bus stop.
2. **Transit Ridership.** Existing transit ridership is relatively low at the stop on the project site (northbound). BT predicts that there should not be a large increase in ridership, given the proximity to campus and downtown, as long as the residential use is not oriented to students.
3. **Pedestrian access to bus stops.** There needs to be reasonably direct and accessible paths to and from bus stops from within the project site. As shown on the documents, the Gateway building that fronts on Main Street appears to create a barrier to access to the northbound stop. If there is a cut-through/breezeway in the building connecting directly to the Old School Common area, or if the area on the north side of the building is a pedestrian path, that would address the concern for the northbound stop. A ramp at the plaza, as noted on the application, would address the concern for the southbound stop. Reasonably direct pedestrian access to other bus stops that are not adjacent to the site should be accommodated with shared use paths and/or sidewalks, such as along Clay Street.
4. **Bus shelter.** BT supports a bus shelter at the northbound stop (#1626), as noted on the application.
5. **On-site bus circulation.** It is unlikely that BT would operate fixed route service through the site, but the internal street system should be designed to accommodate smaller (Body-on-Chassis) vehicles, which are used for BT's ADA accessible service, with adequate locations to turn vehicles around.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Anne McClung, Director, Planning and Building Department

FROM: Randy Formica, Director, Engineering and GIS Department
Joshua Middleton, Town Engineer

DATE: June 25, 2018

SUBJECT: Old Blacksburg Middle School Site – Transportation Comments

Traffic Study

The Town and the applicant participated in preparing a joint traffic study with the Town hiring the engineering consultant to prepare the study. The Town felt it was appropriate to participate in the traffic study since the traffic generated by this proposed development could potentially impact several intersections located in the Main Street transportation corridor including what is considered the Downtown Blacksburg area. Level of Service analyses were performed at the major signalized intersections within the corridor including the intersections of South Main Street and Washington Street, South Main Street and Clay Street, and South Main Street and Airport Road/Graves Avenue. In addition, the intersection of South Main Street and Eheart Street was analyzed as this is the intersection in closest proximity to the proposed development.

Entrance/s Design Layout

The proposed development would include construction of a new road section which connects at Clay Street and Eheart Street. In addition to these new intersections, there are numerous entrances proposed to provide internal connectivity. One external entrance is also proposed onto Clay Street. This entrance location has been placed in close proximity to the proposed intersection with new Church Street /Clay Street. The proposed use for Parcel Number 1, for which the entrance serves, is indicated to be a parking garage which would be expected to generate a significant number of vehicle trips. Based on the anticipated volumes for this usage as well as large volumes along the proposed new Church Street, the proposed entrance and intersection would benefit from additional separation. A more practical location for the proposed entrance would be across from Church Street to the southwest.

VDOT Road Design Standards Appendix F - Access Management Design Guidelines is the standard document utilized to review entrance locations. Other aspects of the proposed entrance designs seem to generally meet the criteria outlined in Appendix F. An in-depth review of the entrances will be performed with the site plan submittal.

Bicyclist Connectivity

The submitted master plan provides additional bicycle connectivity considerations along the east side of Eheart St. with the addition of a 5-ft bike lane and crosswalk staging area adjacent to new Church Street. Considerations for bicycle connectivity along the west side of Eheart Street and new Church Street are not evident, however. Connectivity along these routes would be highly beneficial, particularly when evaluating movements to and from the

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Huckleberry Trail and as an alternative to travel along South Main Street. Limitations for safe bike travel within the proposed roadway sections are due to the application of on-street parking and sidewalk sections of 5-ft width.

The Town would request that bicycle connectivity be given additional consideration within the design. Innovative potential solutions seem feasible that could include a two-way cycle track or grade separated trail sections along Eheart Street and new Church Street. Applications of this nature could have an impact on the right-of-way layout, and application of on-street parking, which would need to be incorporated into the master plan layout. Additional right-of-way could be required depending on the roadway features desired within the section.

Intersection of Eheart Street /South Main Street

The proposed development will warrant the installation of a new traffic signal at the intersection of Eheart Street / South Main Street. The final design and layout of the new signal has not been completed, however, some considerations should be made regarding the following:

- 1) The placement of the signal arms has been depicted in plan view at the northern and southern corners of the intersection. Many of the site visuals, however, do not show the visual impact of the signal post and arms as it pertains to the plaza corner. The visual impacts as well as the spatial requirements of the post, arms, walk signs and traffic cabinets should be considered in the layout to ensure the look as well as the space needed is achievable.
- 2) The proposed intersection radius at the plaza corner (northern corner) could not be definitely determined due to the scale of the master plan. However, it appears to be at or under 25-ft, which would seem insufficient for large vehicle movements. Per VDOT Road Design Standards Appendix F - Access Management Design Guidelines, the radius should be evaluated by the governing design standards and auto-turn movement evaluation of the anticipated large vehicle/s through this leg of the signal.
- 3) The proposed layout of the signal arms utilizes a design common in the town but which could be tweaked to provide a more pedestrian friendly intersection. Currently the posts are located at the southern and northern corners providing for signals at the far side of each leg of the intersection. If switch to the eastern and western corners the signal arms would move to the nearside of the legs. This would have the effect of slowing / stopping and storing traffic further from the proposed crosswalks. This would tend to keep the intersection clearer during queueing periods and reduce the overall speed of vehicles approaching the crosswalks. Considerations should be given utilizing this type of layout if feasible.
- 4) The intersection design provides for all existing movements as well as the additional turn lane, on Eheart Street, adjacent to the plaza corner. Consideration is being given to the possibility of revising the configuration of traffic along Eheart St. to the south of Main Street. If bicycle connectivity to the Huckleberry Trail is to be improved, design applications similar to those be requested within this development would need to be implemented here as well. Currently there is an at grade connection at the far end of Eheart Street to the Huckleberry Trail. The configuration of Eheart Street from this point

to South Main could be revised to improve connectivity. Possible reconfigurations could include:

- a. One-way with on-street, permitted, parking on one side with a 2-way cycle track.
- b. One-way with no on-street parking and a 2-way cycle track.
- c. Two-way with no on-street parking and cycle track (if wide enough) or Sharrow's.

The existing right-of-way and existing parking demands would influence the final reconfiguration of the roadway and possibly the intersection. Options a) and b) in particular could have a significant impact as the application of a one-way street changes the intersection layout. The most logical application would be to allow traffic from South Main onto Eheart Street, providing movement from north to south, which would eliminate the need for a signal arm on this leg as there would be no outward movement. If one-way traffic is reversed then the dedicated left turn that existing on South Main Street would no longer be needed and this right-of-way could be re-allocated within the roadway section.

Though alternations to the proposed signal may not be warranted until the design is finalized, focus should be given to the layout as it impacts the spatial requirements needed, ensuring that the signal implementation can be achieved in substantial compliance with the master plan.

Wednesday, June 27, 2018

Balzer and Associates
Attn: Steve Semones
448 Peppers Ferry Road, NW
Christiansburg, VA 24073

RE: RZN17-0006 Old Blacksburg Middle School (OBMS) Rezoning Application

Dear Mr. Steve Semones:

The Engineering Department has completed the review of the Old Blacksburg Middle School Redevelopment Stormwater Concept Plan. The Concept Plan is **approved** at this time. This concept plan addresses the current stormwater requirements, it has limited provisions for existing flood-prone areas and there are some remaining details remaining to be resolved with the Town of Blacksburg regarding management of the system.

Stormwater Management Requirements:

This 22.96-acre site is located on South Main Street and is bordered by Eheart St and Clay Street. This project was the previous location of the Old Blacksburg Middle School which was demolished in 2011. The Town has an agreement with the developers that any re-development would consider the footprint of the Old Blacksburg Middle School as the existing condition since it resided in this location for so long, as shown on sheet SW3 of the concept plan. Subsequently, this design meets all of the local and state stormwater requirements under these conditions.

Flood-Prone Area Mitigation:

There are numerous points downstream of this site where flooding currently occurs during routine stormwater events. The most notable are at Penn and Washington Streets and at the Main Street Inn on South Main Street. This stormwater concept plan clearly puts efforts into diverting their stormwater discharge from adding to the Penn/Washington Street problem area. Unfortunately, the discharge will not bypass the South Main Street areas known to have flooding problems.

Performance Agreement:

While this concept plan does meet the stormwater management requirements, there are additional items that will need to be negotiated with the Town of Blacksburg as part of the Performance Agreement:

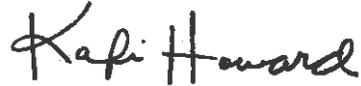
- The plan loosely mentions that the area where stormwater management will be provided is to be dedicated to the Town. Clarifications of whether this will occur, or how the responsibility of maintenance will be divided will need to be identified.
- The proposed facility identified in the concept plan cannot be inspected by staff or maintained by Public Works due to its design and inaccessibility. Additionally, the Town-Owned facilities would carry a higher inspection frequency than a privately-owned facility, as directed by State Code.

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- Ultimately, the proprietary stormwater facility that is proposed is below the standards for what the Town would allow for public acceptance. The Town would prefer a system that may have a higher installation cost, but would have a lower lifetime maintenance cost.

Please contact Kafi Howard with the Engineering Department at (540) 443-4354 or via email khoward@blacksburg.gov if you have questions or concern regarding this review. If you would like to schedule a post review meeting please also contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kafi Howard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "K" and "H".

Kafi Howard, Town Engineer – Stormwater, (540) 443-1354

TO: Planning Commission
Town Council

FROM: Historic or Design Review Board (HDRB)

SUBJECT: 501 South Main Street – OBMS Rezoning #17-0006

DATE: June 25, 2018

The Historic or Design Review Board has reviewed the Midtown project and has comments for the Planning Commission and Town Council to consider in evaluating this rezoning request. This project is adjacent to the Historic District and the original Sixteen Squares. Below are HDRB observations regarding the rezone application dated April 13, 2018.

HDRB finds that Midtown contains some site design elements that are positive and believes the proposed development could help add to the vibrancy of Downtown, which includes much of the Town's Historic District. Recognizing that the Town desires to have a variety of housing choices in a downtown location, the applicant has included different housing options on the site to help meet these needs. However, the Midtown applicant is requesting very significant changes in zoning to this ~20 acre site that will greatly impact the Historic District, the downtown, and adjacent neighborhoods. There are specific project elements that concern HDRB that may have negative impacts on the adjacent historic district and, particularly, the adjacent original Sixteen Squares of Blacksburg.

T- Intersection

HDRB places a high value on the historic T-intersections that exist within the Historic District, including Church Street/Clay Street, Penn Street/Clay Street and Wharton Street/Clay Street. These intersections mark one edge of the original Sixteen Squares of the Town. The development that occurs along the Clay Street edge of the Midtown development will affect the historical character of these intersections. HDRB is concerned about the proposed mass and scale of the buildings proposed along Clay Street, particularly at the Clay/Church intersection. One negative impact is the proposed parking garage with a location directly on this intersection that effectively insulates Midtown from its historic neighboring district. The intersection is also the terminus of the vista along Church Street from Old Town Hall. In the current proposal, the parking garage will dominate Clay Street. The T-intersection of Clay and Church should terminate in a structure of quality, scale and character to enhance the Historic District and not detract from it.

Project Orientation

In general, HDRB notes that the project is internally oriented with little or no interaction with the Historic District. The overall design does not appear to provide sensitive transitions to the Historic District. Specifically, the height of the buildings proposed on DC Parcel #5 and PR

Parcel #1 where they meet Clay Street is out of scale with the Historic District and afford no relationship or transition to the Sixteen Squares.

HDRB recommends investigating more appropriate ways for Midtown to interact with the neighboring Sixteen Squares to enhance the Clay Street streetscape. The Board understands that the existing grade along Clay Street creates challenges, but the project is a complete redevelopment of the 20 acre OBMS site and this is the opportunity to effect positive change along Clay Street.

Building Design and Materiality

HDRB thinks more specificity on the architectural design of the buildings is necessary in order to understand the relationship of the proposed design to Town character and the character of the Historic District. The illustrations provided are not binding. Without knowing what the buildings actually look like, it is difficult to evaluate how they relate to the Historic District. Also of concern is the potential repetition of architectural styles within the development, potentially resulting in a homogeneous architectural style within the commercial and/or residential portions of the development. A commitment to architectural diversity would be beneficial. More information is also needed on the materials to be used in construction to ensure the building materials proposed are durable. For example, if the stucco product proposed is EIFS, this is not a durable material. EIFS and synthetic stone are not quality, durable materials and HDRB does not consider these materials of appropriate character for new development in the downtown. Screening is referenced in the application but more detail on the nature of the proposed screening of parking areas, refuse areas, etc. is important.

Walkability

Walkability is an inherent element of the Historic District. Much of the district was developed prior to the prevalence of the automobile. The block and lot structure of the Historic District is narrow and pedestrian in scale. Clay Street is a narrow, winding and hilly street which lacks safe, convenient pedestrian walkways. A sidewalk at the street level on Clay Street should be included in the Midtown project consistent with sidewalks in the District. Though this project fronts only a portion of Clay Street, the Town should consider improving sidewalks along the full length of Clay Street.

Traffic and Parking

HDRB is concerned about the impacts of traffic generated by the development. The increase in traffic will result in increased cut-through traffic in the adjacent neighborhoods and the adjacent Sixteen Squares. This increase in cut-through traffic will have a significant negative impact on the narrow residential streets within the Historic District. Traffic impacts on the sensitive Sixteen Squares should be carefully investigated and ways to mitigate potential deleterious effects implemented. In addition, there is a significant amount of surface parking proposed in the project. HDRB does not support viewsheds in neighborhoods surrounding the development, such as the Sixteen Squares, that include views of surface parking lots. The required lighting of parking lots also will negatively impact adjacent residential neighborhoods, such as the Sixteen Squares.

Project Implementation

The Board supports ensuring compliance with the pattern book and professional reviews to support high quality design and construction. Implementation of the pattern book must have

broader input on decision making than from only those entities involved in the project. Consideration should be given to inclusion of non-affiliated reviewers, which could include representation from the Historic or Design Review Board or a group appointed by Town Council that can render binding decisions, rather than final design decisions coming from a developer-selected review committee.

Opportunities

The Town owns a historic property on Clay Street where Spout Spring is located. The Board believes that Midtown, in cooperation with the Town, should investigate improvements to the park to highlight the historic nature of the spring and create an inviting and high quality public space. A connection across Clay Street to Midtown or to the development proposed at 402 Clay Street should be considered. The Town and Midtown must ensure that design and construction activities on the Midtown site do not have negative impacts on the spring.

The applicant is requesting very significant zoning changes that have the potential to harm or enhance the most sensitive and historic parts of Blacksburg. This site has a rich history and is part of the memories of many Town residents. Educational signage, kiosks, displays, etc. should be developed as an integral part of this very impactful project; the Blacksburg Museum and Cultural Foundation and the HDRB would be excellent resources to help accomplish this end.

cc: Address Files
Historic or Design Review Board File
Historic or Design Review Board members
Kali Casper, Town Comprehensive Planner
Anne McClung, Planning and Building Director
Cathy Cook, Building Official
Steve Semones, Balzer and Associates
Jim Cowan, Midtown Development Partners LLC