

**Approved As Written**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**September 2, 2015**  
**7:30 PM**  
**JamestownTown Hall**  
**93 Narragansett Ave.**

**I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. and the following members were present:

Michael Swistak – Chair	Duncan Pendlebury – Vice Chair
Rosemary Enright – Secretary	Mick Cochran
Michael Jacquard	Bernie Pfeiffer

Not present – Michael Smith

Also present:

Diane Williamson – AICP, Planning Consultant  
Wyatt Brochu – Town Solicitor  
Cinthia Reppe – Planning Assistant  
Andrew Nota – Town Administrator  
Michael Gray – Public Works Director/Town Engineer  
Chris Costa – Building Official and Zoning Officer  
John Murphy – Attorney  
Christian Infantalino – Attorney  
Mark Liberati – Attorney  
John Aharonian – Architect – Aharonian & Associates  
Alex Ziemba – Architect – Aharonian & Associates  
ShahinBarzin – Architect  
Jim Cronin – Crossman Engineering  
Kelly Baptista – Crossman Engineering  
Steve Tiexiera – Jamestown Fire Department Deputy Chief  
Howie Tighe - Jamestown Fire Department Deputy Chief  
Donald Richardson  
Gary Girard  
Blake Dickinson  
Dante Tita

**II. Citizen’s Non Agenda Item – nothing at this time**

### III. Reports

1. Town Planner's Report
2. Chairpersons report
3. Town Committees
4. Sub Committees

### IV. Old Business

#### **Master Plan/Preliminary** **PUBLIC HEARING**

Town of Jamestown and The Jamestown Fire Department, Co-Applicants, Subject Property: 50 Narragansett Avenue (Fire Station) and 50 Narragansett Avenue (Memorial Museum), Plat 8, Lots 476, 871, 161, and 479; Proposed improvements to the Jamestown Fire Station and reconfiguration of the lot line between Lots 479 and 161 – transferring 2,174 square feet of land from Lot 479 (Memorial Museum) to Lot 161 (Fire Station). Master Plan/Preliminary Review pursuant to the Subdivision and Development Review Regulations for the Major Land Development and Administrative Subdivision and pursuant to the Zoning Ordinance for Development Plan Review within the Jamestown Village Special Development District and for a Special Use Permit for the fire station use, shared parking, and for variances

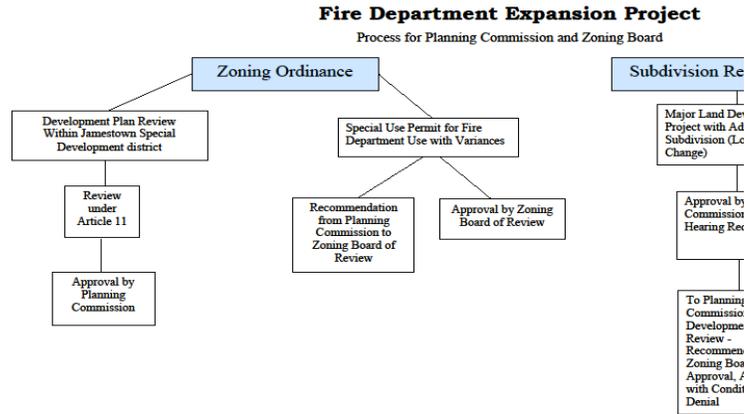
A motion to open the public hearing was made by Commissioner Enright and seconded by Commissioner Cochran. All in Favor.

Commissioner Swistak explained how the evening would work. Commissioner Swistak introduced all the applicants and consultants involved in this project.

Diane Williamson – AICP, Planning Consultant, Wyatt Brochu – Town Solicitor, Andrew Nota – Town Administrator, Michael Gray – Public Works Director/Town Engineer, Chris Costa – Building Official and Zoning Officer, John Murphy – Attorney for Fire Dept, Christian Infantalino – Attorney for Fire Dept., Mark Liberati – Attorney for the Town, John Aharonian – Architect – Aharonian & Associates, Alex Ziemba – Architect – Aharonian & Associates, ShahinBarzin – Architect – consultant for the Planning Commission, Jim Cronin – Crossman Engineering, Kelly Baptista – Crossman Engineering, Jim Bryer – Fire Chief, Steve Tiexiera – Jamestown Fire Department Deputy Chief, Howie Tighe - Jamestown Fire Department Deputy Chief

A motion to accept John Aharonian, Alex Ziemba, Michael Darveau, Jim Cronin, Kelly Baptista and ShahinBarzin as expert witnesses was made by Commissioner Pendlebury and seconded by Commissioner Cochran. All in favor.

Diane Williamson introduced herself and did a presentation on the screen explaining the process that the applicants have gone through:



There have been Technical Review Committee meetings and this is being reviewed under Article 11.

Attorney John Murphy represents the Fire Dept. along with Christian Infantolino. It seems unduly complicated for an expansion that has been used as a fire dept. for the last 75-100 years. There has been an extraordinary growth of the population of Jamestown since the 2<sup>nd</sup> story was added to the fire station. At the last financial town meeting the citizens recognized that that growth needed an expansion for the safety of Jamestown. There has been a merger of EMS with the fire dept. and a need to consolidate the personnel. It is more difficult today to round up the volunteers. The fact that Jamestown has a volunteer fire dept. needs to be recognized and having them well trained and well equipped and up to date saves us as citizens a lot of money. This project has been reviewed on several occasions by the TRC. With the team that has been introduced and all the input from all the professionals it is a very good project.

He turned it over to John Aharonian and Alex Ziemba who gave a power point presentation of the plan to the audience. He showed the existing structure and pointed out the new addition to the plan. The addition is for EMS and the new structure will be able to accommodate regular vehicles instead of the fire dept. and ems having to order special vehicles to fit into the station like in the past. The intent is we have an existing component that we are attaching an addition to they used the existing for the same entrance and now will have an entry way through the same entrance. They have maintained the existing 4 bay trucks in the same area and have added an area at the addition to accommodate 3 trucks and 2 utility trucks that will exit on Grinnell but only on occasion are they needed and not in emergency situations. Restrooms have been upgraded. Working with the TRC, Fire Dept and EMS it has come together very well in his opinion.

He presented the site plan that showed formalized parking and gave an accurate count of the required parking spaces and it is in alignment with the zoning ordinance. He showed the audience where all the parking places are located.

He introduced James Cronin from Crossman Engineers, he specializes in traffic studies. Originally he showed the trucks coming out on Grinnell but that has changed now and all trucks will exit on Narragansett Ave. He gave a description of the personnel and their hours which he observed to give his report. He gave averages of the traffic coming out per day and the average will increase possibly by 1-3 ½ per day. He says as an expert it will not have a detriment on traffic on Narragansett Ave.

Kelly Baptista, Engineer for Crossman came up to discuss the drainage. She is showing a preliminary plan on the screen. She explained the drainage plan that she handed out to the planning commission. She explained the cisterns and catch basins shown on the plan.

Onsite drainage will tie into the catch basin on Grinnell St.

She was asked if with the cisterns will there be an overflow, most likely at the roofdrain so when it does back up there will be a slash pump. Commissioner Swistak asked if the cisterns are definitely in the plan, yes there is one on Grinnell St. side and the plan shows an optional one. If we do not have a second cistern it does not make the condition worse. The cisterns only help with small storm events. Commissioner Cochran asked if there will be a bit of an increase over the house that is there now. So small that it is negligible she answered.

Mr. Ziemba went through the exterior elevations starting with the view of Narragansett Ave. and explained the materials that will be used. The largest doors will be of glass on the Narragansett Ave. side. Maintaining the existing stone and working with the committees they have scaled the stone down and it takes into consideration the history of the structure. Working around the corner to Grinnell they leaned more towards a residential look scaling down the windows and doors and allowing for space for storage of the equipment and apparatus. 2nd floor allows for space within the floor plan increased by the dormers. He showed the back elevation of both the existing building and the addition.

Commissioner Enright asked about replacing the fencing and asked what kind of fencing are you proposing? It will mimic what is currently there on the corner of Coronado and Narragansett Ave. where the museum is which is about 4 ft. high. On Grinnell they will add to the fence that is currently there. This plan was developed to aid in the parking requirements, to show how they came up with the parking calculations of 24 spaces.

Mr. Ziemba asked if the board had any questions related to his presentation at this point.

Mr. Darveau will present the administrative subdivision plan. They were asked to survey the property that is currently 4 parcels. The museum is currently on lot 479. He explained the plan to the audience with the square footage of all lots involved. He explained the current encroachments and by redoing the lot lines that will eliminate it. By doing this though they will be needing some variances, 3 of them for lot 479 (museum lot), the side setback is reduced, the area of the lot is reduced, and lot width. The variances for the fire

station lot are 2, side setback of 7.5 feet where the requirement is 35 feet, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> is regarding lot area, which is still less than 40,000 feet.

Mr. Mark Liberati has been retained by the town to represent them with regard to the zoning variances and special use permits. He listed all the Special Use Permits and Variances as follows:

SU permit for Article 3, table 3.1 and Article 11,82-1109 for fire station in public zone

SU Permit Article 7- Sec 82-704 non conforming use

SU Permit Article 12 82-1205 for shared parking or variance.

Setback variance Article 3 Table 3.2, 20 ft from the side relating to Fire Station and 30 ft for Museum need relief for both. Neither lot has the minimum 40,000 sq. ft.

Variance for minimum lot size and frontage 150 feet does it have to be in single line, debatable.

Variance from loading space requirement. 82-1206

Variance for Shared parking for that requirement, and for use of on-street parking spaces in a public zone number of parking spaces

Variance 30% clear glazing on the Grinnell Street side

Variance for parking locations and standards and vehicular entrances to garages in Village Overlay  
Mr. Liberati erred on being cautious.

Commissioner Swistak stated that all these variances and special use permits being requested are very important and will need to be cross referenced for the motion. Ms. Williamson went through the list to double check and verified that all of the Variances and Special Use permits are listed on the plan. Mr. Murphy said this concludes the presentation.

Commissioner Swistak asked if Mr. Shahin Barzin architect was asked to review the plan submitted by Aharonian Architects, he noted after preliminary review there were a few things that were not compatible with the Village guidelines so he reviewed and sent the applicants a list which they made changes to satisfy most of the concerns.

Mr. Gray agrees with the traffic report and the drainage and site plan.

Commissioner Enright asked about the utility trucks will and if they have to be dispatched. They do not leave during an emergency Deputy Chief Tighe said, they do have emergency lights on them the trucks are for basements being emptied, non emergency calls. Commissioner Swistak asked how often do they leave the building, last year 6 or 7 times he said.

Commissioner Swistak asked Chris Costa about the 2 spaces in front of the garage bays on Grinnell St. that house the trucks for non emergencies. Should they ask for more relief? Cochran said standard practice is to leave keys in car if those trucks go out they will be moved. A large volume of responders go on their own and do not park at the station they meet on site.

This was expressed at TRC and the parking of the vehicles in front of the doors they leave the keys in the car and they are not going on emergency basis so there is time to move them and they are acceptable there. Pendlbury said.

Ms Williamson had commented at TRC regarding the angled parking suggesting to make them employee parking. Commissioner Swistak asked if the Planning Commission should insist on it or if it was just a recommendation. The Fire Dept agreed to mark them and it

could be a condition if they want signage. Very infrequent that you see people park there. 2 compact spaces between the 2 buildings they are reachable from Coronado.

Commissioner Swistak said we are going to open up to public comment. The Planning Commission is reviewing the town's application so it is important for the commission to review this as strenuously as another application. Attorney Murphy's comment he has not seen an application go through this much scrutiny before and Commissioner Swistak agrees with his comment. He also stated for the members of the public this has been a very well done plan.

Gary Girard – Seaside Dr.– he thinks this project is very important to the public, he added up the number of variances. As a former planning commissioner he said this is a big project and make sure that they have all been vetted. With all the rain recently what size storm drains are these designed for? What you see there today is what you will see when the addition is done.

Mike Gray said the site generates run off today it is impervious they treat gravel as a pervious surface the site generates runoff to the street both have collection systems that go down to the bay, they looked to see what they could do. They looked at the cistern and there will be a garden as well they are trying to mitigate the collection with the cistern and then they can put the second one in if needed.

Don Richardson – of the parking spaces mentioned are they of legal size? Yes they meet the parking criteria with the distance and our design standards. Is there a legal design for a size for a parking space. How many parking spaces are we required for the fire station and how many for ems? They are based on the useable area of the building, he was answered. Sometimes there are 110-120 volunteers there if they come to a training will there be enough parking? He thinks they should leave the EMS where it is. It is going to cost more money to move it.

John Murphy said Jamestown made a decision that they cannot accommodate even parking for tall ships or other major events so the issue of whether or not to use the parking at the current ems site is not relevant. The decision was made at the financial town meeting to go forward with this project.

Commissioner Swistak said he appreciates Mr. Richardsons comments but they are not within the purview of the Planning Commission. This discussion was approved by the voters and the town council and administration already decided this.

The fire dept has a written agreement with Tim Baker for the extra parking needed for training.

Mr. Nota responded to Mr. Richardson's comment and said as the chairman stated tonight on any given night for training they are still under the required spaces of 1 space per 5 people 20 spaces. We are proposing 28 spaces. The whole team shared his concern and the standard has been met and the fire dept went to Bakers to get a shared parking agreement. With regards to the lot on Knowles Ct. those spaces are for the ems volunteers and when the public uses those spaces which they should not do in case there is a call and the volunteers have to park there. The traffic committee was going to have to address this

issue if we did not have this plan. Location and sizing we went through an exhausting project and made the decision to consolidate. They will decide eventually what will be done with that lot.

Blake Dickinson – 18 Arnold Ave. – how you evaluate the project with regards to the parking spaces. The project itself is only specific if relief is given. The spaces on the museum lot can you use those? Mr. Liberati said the fire dept and the town will have a shared parking agreement. So the total number of spaces include relief from their neighbor the museum and yes they have to seek relief and it will be a requirement.

Jerry Scott – Walcott Ave. – he is not sure if this is the right forum but what happens to 4 Grinnell St. that was used for affordable housing?

Dante Tita- 26 Columbia – the plan is excellent and the volunteers are too. They have asked for a certain amount of money budgeted for the project that the citizens have approved. He has never seen a budget without a contingency plan so his point is he hopes the budget will not increase. Commissioner Swistak said the planning commission is not in charge of the town budget.

Town Administrator Andy Nota said relative to the project there is a 5% estimate contingency built into the budget. All the utilities are there already and that will drive down the cost.

Commissioner Pendlebury represented the Planning Commission for the TRC process. It was long and very detailed they made every effort to cover all the bases and nothing was slipping through the cracks. Very complete process and he thinks the architects for the applicants were very responsive and the fire dept very responsive to all the suggestions made, we are at a point where the issues were addressed from the village design handbook and it all being done in conformance. As far as the variances yes it is a long list but when you look at what is being asked for and to take care of this in a cautionary way made sense. The design guidelines are really for a retail building so you can look at each one of the things like the setbacks we are improving a non conforming condition as best we can and it is an improvement over what we currently have there, almost everyone of these variances can be counted all over the village.

Commissioner Swistak said we have a draft motion in front of us does anyone have any changes to the motion? A few minor changes were made and conditions of approval added.

Commissioner Pendlebury made a motion seconded by Commissioner Swistak that the Planning Commission finds:

1. The subject property consists of 4 lots that are improved with the following: a single-family residential dwelling, a parking area, Jamestown Fire Station and the Fire Department Museum.

2. The application consists of a Major Land Development and an Administrative Subdivision under the Subdivision and Development Plan Review Regulations and a Development Plan under the Jamestown Special Village Development Overlay Zoning.
3. Lots 476,161, and 871 are owned by the Town of Jamestown, and Lot 479 is owned by The Jamestown Fire Department, which is a separate non-profit corporate entity.
4. The development proposal is to demolish the single family dwelling, remove the parking lot, and to construct a 2-story addition on the west side of the existing Fire Station. The addition has 7,544 square feet of useable interior space on two floors, and a footprint of 3,935 square feet.
5. An earlier addition to the east side of Jamestown Fire Station was built straddling the lot line between Lots 161 and 479. The Administrative Subdivision will remedy this non-conformity by moving the lot line to the east and conveying 2,174 square feet of land (shown as Parcel A) from Lot 479 to Lot 16. Parcel A will be combined together with the 3 Town-owned parcels into one lot.
6. A utility easement is provided over Lot 479 to accommodate the existing underground electric service for the Fire Station.
7. The subject property is zoned Public. The property is also within the Jamestown Special Village Development Overlay.
8. An application is pending with the Zoning Board of Review for a special use permit for the expansion of the Fire Station which is a Special Use in the Public Zone and for the shared parking agreement.
9. The total parking space requirement for the Fire Station is 24 spaces, as determined by the Zoning Officer, based on the calculation of 1 space per 400 square feet of livable floor area. The total parking spaces required for the museum are 4 spaces. The proposal includes 26 parking spaces on the subject properties with 2 on-street parking spaces. A variance is being sought for using the 2 on-street parking spaces in a Public Zone.
10. A traffic study has been submitted by Crossman Engineering dated July 13, 2015. The Public Works Director reviewed this study and provided a memorandum dated July 21, 2015 to the Technical Review Committee in concurrence with the findings of the traffic study that the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the adjacent streets.
11. A drainage analysis has been submitted by Crossman Engineering dated July 15, 2015. The Public Works Director reviewed this analysis and provided a memorandum dated July 21, 2015 to the Technical Review Committee in concurrence with the findings of the drainage analysis that the proposal will result in negligible alteration of the stormwater runoff.

12. Mr. ShahinBarzin, the Peer- Review Architect for the Planning Commission, has reviewed the proposal and has determined that it is in compliance with the Special Village Development Overlay.
13. The Technical Review Committee met on July 23, 2015 and again on August 25, 2015 and recommends approval of the applications.
14. The Planning Commission held a pre-application and concept review meeting on August 5, 2015.
15. The proposed development is consistent with the general purposes stated in Article 1 of the Planning Commission's subdivision and development review regulations. Specifically, paragraph A. Purpose, which states that the purpose of the regulations is to "1. Protect the public health and welfare of the community" and "5. Promote subdivision and land development designs that are well-integrated into surrounding neighborhoods, and concentrate development in areas that can best support intensive use because of natural characteristics and existing infrastructure".
16. The proposed development is consistent with the Comprehensive Community Plan because it promotes the overriding goal as stated in the preamble that "Jamestown should live within its means, both fiscally and environmentally." and "Government should be small, responsive and largely dependent on volunteers" The design is compatible with the character of the neighborhood in which it is located, and it consolidates the Emergency Medical Services functions adjacent to the fire station. (Policy #1 and Action g from Public Services and Facilities).
17. The application is not in compliance with the zoning ordinance. An application is also pending with the Zoning Board for the needed variances.
18. There will be no significant negative environmental impacts from the proposal with the conditions of approval.
19. A shared parking agreement has been submitted for shared parking and access between the museum and fire station property.

Combined Master Plan and Preliminary Approval is therefore granted for the Major Land Development with the Administrative Subdivision and Preliminary Approval is granted for the Development Plan Review for the proposal to demolish the existing dwelling, eliminate the parking area and construct an addition on the west side of the existing fire station as shown on the Existing Condition and Subdivision plans prepared by Michael R. Darveau, Professional Land Surveyor; dated as revised August 18, 2015 by Site Plan, and Elevation Plans by John Aharonian of Aharonian Architects dated as revised August 26, 2015 and Soil Erosion Plan by Crossman Engineering dated June 2015 subject to the following conditions:

1. Special Use Permits and Variances from the Zoning Board of Review

2. Receipt of the Physical Alteration Permit from the Rhode Island Department of Transportation prior to final approval.
3. Any proposed changes to the façade, parking, site plan, or any other element governed by Development Plan Review or Special Village Development Overlay Zone; as a result of the contract bidding and/or construction process, will be initially reviewed by the Technical Review Committee, and may be submitted to the Planning Commission for approval if proposed changes are significant.

AND FURTHER, the Planning Commission recommends approval of the Special Use Permit for the use and recommends approval of the variances.

AND, FURTHER, the Planning Commission authorizes final approval to be Administrative.

So voted:

Michael Swistak – Aye  
Rosemary Enright – Aye  
Michael Jacquard - Aye

Duncan Pendlebury – Aye  
Mick Cochran - Aye  
Bernie Pfeiffer - Aye

Motion carries 6-0

A motion was made by Commissioner Enright and seconded by Commissioner Pendlebury to close the public hearing. All in Favor.

#### V. New Business

#### VI. Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner Enright and seconded by Commissioner Jacquard to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m. All in favor.

Attest:

  
Cynthia L. Reppe

This meeting was recorded