

Town of Ghent Planning Board Meeting, Wednesday, February 16, 2011

Board Members Present: French, Machiz, Nelson, Rosenstreich and Chair Walters

Other guests present: Carl Matuszek, Town Engineer; Ted Guterman, Town Attorney, Steve Gitto, Village of Chatham Planning Board Chairman.

Chair Walters explained to all guests that Price Chopper had been in to see the Planning Board in 2010 with a proposal to build a new store. Many important issues have already been covered. Price Chopper tried to get sewage from the Village of Chatham, but because of the existing DEC consent decree on the village's sewer plant that was not feasible and so the whole site has been realigned/redesigned to allow for on-site sewage treatment. Tonight's meeting is for informational purposes only.

Michael Tucker, Infinigy Engineering spoke on behalf of Price Chopper.

Showed original drawings and pointed out NYSDEC and Army Corps of Engineers wetlands in the area. Showed updated site plan. Building has been rotated on the property and moved further away from the wetland areas and their buffer zone. There will only be one entrance to the store. There will be a left-hand turn lane added to Route 66. Rail Trail connection will be maintained on the front of the property. Extensive landscaping and screening is planned. Stormwater plans meet new NYSDEC regulations. Extensive water and infiltration beds have been added to the site to hold water so it can be released slowly off the site.

Chair Walter asked about permit process with NYSDEC. Mr. Tucker answered that the waste water system is very extensive, and calculation and estimations have been worked out. The system has to be designed in accordance with all 2010 regulations and they expect their system will easily exceed all requirements.

Price Chopper is working closely with NYSDEC on all water issues. Lighting plan has been submitted. They plan to use 20' light poles in the parking lot. Screening and landscaping will be extensive. They have reduced the parking area from 248 to 210 spaces.

Board member Machiz asked if the old Price Chopper and the new Price Chopper lot could be connected in the future. Mr. Tucker answered yes and showed on the map where the access road could be.

Town Attorney Ted Guterman asked the size of the parcel for the new Price Chopper. Mr. Tucker answered that it is a 7 acre parcel that was subdivided from a 21 acre parcel.

Board member Rosenstreich asked what will be done to the old parcel to make it look more attractive, especially since the back of the new building will be facing the old property. She also wanted to know if they had plans for more green space. Mr. Tucker answered that a stockade fence will be put up between the two properties for now. The truck movements require quite a bit of blacktop space. There will be a delicate balance of roads and parking spaces to make all operations run smoothly.

Board member Machiz asked how much screening and landscaping would have to be removed if the access road is put in between the two properties. Mr. Tucker answered that they would like to maintain as much as possible. A 6' fence is proposed as screening for now.

Chair Walters asked if the fence would be for security or delineation between the two properties. Mr. Tucker answered the fence would just be for screening. Chair Walters commented that landscaping would be more attractive than a stockade fence.

Town Attorney Ted Guterman asked about setbacks from the property line to the proposed new building. Mr. Tucker answered about 42' to the back of the building, and about 35' to the driveway/parking area.

Trieste Savona, President of Price Chopper Design

Showed more drawings of proposed new building. Exteriors will be earth-tone colors and non-reflective glass will be used on all windows and doors. He also showed cultured stone samples.

Signage: all signs will be illuminated with downcast lighting. Building signs are 4" deep and are vinyl-polymer with an embossed wood finish.

Chair Walters asked where lights would be located. Mr. Savona pointed out lighting on drawings – front sign, pharmacy/drive-thru signs, and signs along the front of the building under the canopy. 36" letters will be used on the big sign on the front of the store.

Mr. Savona showed the traffic flow for the pharmacy drive thru. Traffic will not go through the loading dock area in the back of the building.

Board member Rosenstreich asked if the proposed placard signage is new. Mr. Savona answered no. The signs have a hand-carved and a wood-grain look. The placards do not identify any particular brands, just main categories meant to inform customers.

The 24 hour sign is a lit box under the canopy. The drawings indicated this sign as "externally illuminated."

Board member Nelson asked the overall height of the building. Mr. Savona answered that it will be between 23' and 25' at the peak. The rear of the building is approximately 21'. He then showed drawing of the sides of the building.

Board member Nelson asked if the drive-thru for the pharmacy will be just one lane. Mr. Savona answered yes. He then explained that there will be an LCD screen for the pharmacist and customer to see each other on. There will be a small canopy overhead to help protect vehicle/driver. There will be a bank-type drawer for dispensing medicine. A microphone will allow customer and pharmacist to converse.

Town engineer Carl Matuszek asked for more information about the loading dock. Mr. Savona showed drawings of loading dock area. The ramp will be 54" below floor level.

Fran Heaney, Secretary for the Village of Chatham Planning Board and reporter for the *Chatham Courier*, asked if the recycling center will be located outside. Mr. Savona responded no, it will just have a separate entrance. At the current store, there is unnecessary traffic clogging up the entrance area. The new building has moved the recycling area away from the entrance and put it in its own space.

Chair Walters asked Town Engineer Carl Matuszek if there were any specific issues he would like to see addressed at this meeting. Mr. Matuszek asked about depth of excavations and distances from property line. He stated that the proposed storm water plan is very good and is in compliance with 2010 standards set forth by NYSDEC.

Town attorney Ted Guterman asked if SEQR had been completed yet. An updated SEQR Part I has been completed. Mr. Guterman stated that the Town needs a copy. Michael Tucker will provide.

Chair Walters asked if there will be more detailed landscaping plans. Mr. Tucker answered that all proposed landscaping has been included in drawings, but he will provide color drawing so it is easier to decipher.

Board member Rosenstreich commented on barn-type doors on the building. Mr. Savona stated that they were trying to give the store a more country look.

Town attorney Ted Guterman asked if the new building could be seen from the road. Mr. Tucker is not sure because of the proposed landscaping. The monument sign at the entrance will be visible from the road.

Board member Machiz asked if the monument sign has been used at any other Price Chopper locations in case anyone wants to see one in person. Mr. Savona answered that monument signs use LED lights and have a gable roof on top. They are non-internally lit signs. The Price Chopper store in Shrewsbury MA has this type of sign.

Steve Duffy, Vice President of Design for Price Chopper

This proposed new building is a brand new design for Price Chopper. It is similar to three other stores: one in Middletown NY, and stores in Shrewsbury MA and Lenox MA.

Board member Machiz asked if the monument sign was new. Mr. Duffy answered that the sign for the proposed new store in Chatham is smaller than one used before and is a brand new design. It is more toned-down than usual and is not internally lit. The new sign should be pleasing to eye because it will not glare. The sign appears to be wood, but will not ship or peel.

Chair Walter asked for more details of island lights in the parking area. Mr. Tucker stated that they propose to use 20' poles. They have not been included in drawings as of yet but will comply with LEED standards.

Board member Machiz asked if the parking lot will meet dark-sky certification. Mr. Tucker answered that the LEED certificate has various levels that can be achieved. Price Chopper is just starting to go through the standards with their engineering team. The parking lot will be LEED certified and they are trying to earn as many points as possible to attain a high standard. They would like to get the darkest sky standards as they can.

Town engineer Carl Matuszek asked about the retaining wall on the east side of the property; specifically its height and facing. Mr. Tucker answered that the wall varies from 4' to 6' in height. It is a modular retaining wall made of blocks and will be tan in color to match the building.

Price Chopper will get all issues complete and return to the Planning Board as soon as possible. All future meetings will be held with the Town of Ghent and Village of Chatham Planning Boards.

Price Chopper needs to provide Planning Board with copy of SEQR Part I and address issues brought up by Town engineer Carl Matuszek.

Board member Nelson would rather see natural screening, not stockade fencing. All other board members present agreed.

Board member Machiz would like to see drawings that show access road between old and new property.

Chair Walters introduced Ian Law, Director of Landscape Architecture for Synthesis. Synthesis is based out of Schenectady NY and is involved with architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, site/environmental planning, interior design and graphic design. Mr. Law has experience working with other towns helping to design a Master Plan that will meet their requirements.

Mr. Law suggested geotechnical testing to the new Price Chopper site to show infiltration rates. This would help with any possible arguments from the old building regarding flooding concerns.

Town engineer Carl Matuszek said he has considered this. It can not be done close to the building or at this time of year. In 2009, he requested Price Chopper have geotechnical testing done; he has not seen any results as of yet. He then explained that the detention basin is large enough even if the infiltration system does not work.

Mr. Law stated that the retaining wall is a good one. It would be nicer if it had a mosaic pattern and matched the colors of the building. He also commented on the landscaping, frontage and rail trail to be maintained at the front of the property. He suggested trying to funnel the view to show the nicest part of the front of the building. Adding a berm and landscaping would possibly take away a small portion of the parking area.

Board member Machiz asked how the number of parking spots are calculated for a building. The industry standard for a parking space is 9' x 18'. Price Chopper has proposed their spots be 10' x 20'.

Discussion turn to that portion of Route 66 between Ghent and Chatham. This portion of the road seems to lack an identity. It is currently mixed-use – some residential, some commercial. Board member French does not want residential values to suffer because of too much commercial use in the area. It is anticipated that this stretch of road will one day be entirely commercial. Chair Walters would like to see a cohesive plan for this portion of the road for future use.

Mr. Law asked the board what they thought of isolated sites along this portion of Route 66. It is currently necessary to get on Route 66 in order to get from place to place. Chair Walters stated that he would like to see all properties tied together by a service road to the rear, parallel to Rt. 66 eventually. Easy access and mobility between all properties would be nice. Mr. Law stated a vehicular

driven commercial corridor that is pedestrian friendly would help bring all businesses closer together. Access roads and walking trails to connect all properties is a possibility. He will e-mail samples of this to board members.

Town attorney Ted Guterman suggested Chair Walters write a letter to Town Supervisor Larry Andrews requesting permission to hire Synthesis/Ian Law work for the Town. Board member Machiz stressed the need as urgent and should be completed before new Price Chopper proposal is completed. Board member Rosenstreich stresses the need for required design standards. Board member Nelson stated that Price Chopper has been very good about doing what the Planning Board has asked for so far.

Mr. Law described a one day intensive workshop that his company designs for towns. He would work with the Planning Board to set up a Master Plan/design for the Town. It will be streamlined and affordable.

Ted Guterman asked what portion of Route 66 is the Planning Board concerned with. Planning Board is concerned with the portion between Price Chopper and Camphill Village.

Town engineer asked if the Town has the means to incorporate what Mr. Law would provide the Planning Board with. Mr. Guterman answered that it would have to be coordinated into the Zoning Laws.

Board member Nelson would like to see the portion of Route 66 between ACP and the Town Hall to be done as well. Mr. Law stated that a nice sample plan can easily be expanded to include other areas as the Planning Board may see in the future.

Board member Nelson said if this is done right it can provide the Town with many options. Mr. Law stated that his company can provide portion in 3D in order to have a realistic look at how things can be. He will e-mail samples to the Board.

Chair Walters asked about cost for a one-day seminar. Mr. Law stated it would probably cost between five and six thousand dollars.

Previous Minutes: January and February 9 minutes were approved with changes as mentioned by Board members.

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