

A regular meeting of the Bath Planning Board was called on Tuesday, August 6, 2024, for the purpose of conducting regular business.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

James Hopkinson, Vice Chair  
Phyllis Bailey  
Greg Johnson  
Andy Omo  
Cal Stilphen

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Bob Oxtan, Chair

**STAFF PRESENT**

Jenn Curtis, City Planner  
Karly Perry, Recording Secretary

Planning Board Vice Chair, James Hopkinson, called the meeting to order in the third-floor Council Chambers at 6:00 pm on Tuesday, August 6, 2024.

**Minutes: July 2, 2024, meeting.**

**MR. OMO, SECONDED BY MS. BAILEY, MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF JULY 2, 2024, AS PRESENTED.**

**PLANNING BOARD UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

**Old Business****Item 1**

**Public Hearing – Request for Land Use Code Map Amendment** – for: 580 Washington St (Map 32, Lot 94 & 94-001) 606 Washington St (Map 32, Lot 94-003); Bath Iron Works applicant. (Continued from July 2, 2024, meeting)

**Item 2**

**Public Hearing – Request for Land Use Code Map Amendment** – for: 10 Bath Street (Map 32, Lot 95), 607 Middle Street (Map 32, Lot 94-002), 601 Middle Street (Map 32, Lot 96), 595 Middle Street (Map 32, Lot 97), 580 Middle Street (Map 32, Lot 98); SERE, LLC, applicant. (Continued from July 2, 2024, meeting)

Mr. Hopkinson announced that the applicants for items 1 and 2 are withdrawing their requests at this time.

**New Business****Item 1**

**Request for Pre-Application Workshop** – 150 Congress Avenue, (Map 24, Lot 1); Developers Collaborative Predevelopment, LLC., applicant.

Ms. Curtis introduced the request for pre-application workshop, the purpose for which is to allow an understanding of the project and to identify any issues to be addressed, as well as potential waivers.

Mr. Hopkinson reiterated Ms. Curtis' comments, explaining that the Board will not be voting on this project at this time, rather the duty of the Board is to provide feedback to the applicant.

Steve Bushey of Gorrill Palmer introduced himself, then explained that he will be presenting Phase II of a three-phase project previously presented to the Planning Board with Bath Housing. Mr. Bushey introduced Developers Collaborative, who is a housing developer primarily for southern Maine. Developers Collaborative is working in partnership with Bath Iron Works, as this development is primarily intended as workforce housing for BIW.

Mr. Bushey went on to review the 17-acre area for the full project being developed, identifying Phase I previously presented to the Planning Board in July. He then continued to identify the location of Phase II, which has previously been the location of a church and then a daycare. The current structure will be demolished and much of the land behind the church will be placed in conservation to be used for walking trails. Mr. Bushey explained that contract rezoning will be utilized primarily to address density restrictions of the current zoning.

Mr. Bushey introduced the project team, which includes Mike Lyne of Developers Collaborative, Brian Salter and Jaime Carter of Bath Iron Works, and Ryan Senator, Architect.

Mr. Bushey presented the properties as shown on the tax map, noting existing easements put in place by the Tedford Shelter which will remain. He then presented the master plan for the full project, adding that Phase II will propose an 84-unit housing complex. Contract rezoning will be modeled after that utilized by Bath Housing for Phase II and will include a coverage provision, however unlike the Bath Housing project, Phase II will not require a height provision as it will not be necessary for the three-story structures proposed.

Mature forests surrounding the current building towards Congress Avenue will be preserved, with the exception of some trees located to the north of the property. Mr. Bushey noted that the Tedford Shelter easement allows for recreation, which will likely be utilized by developing walking trails or bike paths.

Mr. Bushey presented the preliminary design for the building layout, emphasizing that the design is preliminary and not yet finalized. The design includes one 24-unit building to the west, with two 30-unit, L-shaped buildings to the east. Mr. Bushey identified potential courtyard areas and other greenspace, as well as parking and sidewalks. Currently the plan proposes approximately 125 spaces for a ratio of roughly 1.5 spaces per unit, which

Mr. Bushey identified issues regarding emergency access for fire trucks, adding that the project will not be accessible from Edgett Street.

Mr. Bushey went on to describe the topography of the property, noting that ledge may not be as much of an issue as previously suspected and should minimize necessary blasting.

He noted that the goal of the project design is to be as budget friendly as possible, in order to make the project as affordable as possible to tenants. He then noted that the property currently has 3-phase power, sewer access, a private water line, and fire hydrants, noting that stormwater will need to be addressed.

Mr. Bushey presented preliminary architectural plans for the buildings which will be a mix of studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom apartments, the majority of which will be one-bedroom apartments. He then presented renderings of the façade to include pitched roofs and potential colors. Mr. Bushey added that the building will not integrate elevators.

Mr. Bushey identified potential challenges for the project, including the timing for occupancy which is projected for fall or winter of 2024. He noted technical challenges to include demolition of potentially hazardous material, possible blasting, and the potential for clay on site. He recalled the difficulty with access for first responders, noting that the buildings will be fully sprinkled. Mr. Bushey then acknowledged the challenges of development costs and pedestrian connectivity, adding that a shuttle service for the complex and traffic issues will need to be addressed during the planning process.

Mr. Bushey concluded his presentation by explaining the process moving forward, which includes presentation of a sketch plan, followed by the application with Public Hearings to be held by October, with contract rezoning to be handled through City Council pending Planning Board approval.

Mike Lyne of Developers Collaborative introduced himself as the Project Manager, noting that the project is still in the development phase. He clarified that the property will be owned by Developers Collaborative and that Bath Iron Works will be participating as an investor to the project. He then identified Brian Salter, Jaime Carter, and Julie Rabinowitz on behalf of Bath Iron Works project management team.

Mr. Lyne noted that the goal is to provide housing that meets 60% of the area median income in order to keep the project affordable to potential tenants. He then discussed the possibility of a shuttle service, intended to relieve the pressure of traffic on the area as well as parking.

Mr. Hopkinson asked the Planning Board for their comments, reminding members that they will not be taking any action on the project this event.

Mr. Stilphen asked if the project is exclusive to employees of Bath Iron Works.

Mr. Lyne explained that BIW employees would receive priority, with the next priority being RSU1 employees, then open to the general public.

Mr. Stilphen expressed concern with the impact the addition housing would have on traffic, stating that this issue will need to be addressed.

Ms. Bailey surmised that this housing would be targeting singles or couples and would not be family housing.

Mr. Lyne stated that he was not ruling out the possibility that families will be living on site, adding that the public will determine who utilizes housing. He agreed that this project would not be suited to larger families.

Ms. Bailey asked for clarification on the financing, which will be 100% private with Developers Collaborative as owners and Bath Iron Works as investment partners.

Mr. Omo complimented the applicant on retaining the trees along Congress Avenue and suggested an additional buffer would be created between the project and the current site of The Anchorage, as well as along Edgett Street which may benefit from fencing as well.

Mr. Omo agreed with previous concerns regarding traffic, recommending that the applicant consider storage for bikes, including electric bikes. He then confirmed that there will be ADA complaint units, which the applicant confirmed will be first floor units.

Mr. Hopkinson opened the floor to public comment.

Roo Dunn of City Council Ward 4 asked Ms. Curtis to provide a letter from Tedford Housing to members of the Planning Board. He then expressed concerns from constituents as well as encouragement that the large trees along Congress Avenue will be retained. Mr. Dunn then expressed constituent concern regarding Edgett Street and the flow of pedestrian traffic. Mr. Dunn encouraged the use of public transportation, adding concern that shift changes current align with school start and end times. Mr. Dunn also recommended additional walkability around buildings.

John Kmetz of Front Street expressed concern with the lack of elevators, then pondered whether housing will be utilized only during the week for commuters.

Mr. Lyne stated that the intent is to provide housing that will be utilized both during the week and on weekends and not for those commuting into the city.

Mr. Hopkinson closed Public Comment.

Mr. Stilphen asked how the project will be managed. Mr. Lyne confirmed that Developers Collaborative has in-house property management services as well as property maintenance.

Ms. Rabinowitz introduced herself as Director of Communications for Bath Iron Works. She explained that the goal of the project would be to target newer employees, as well as those relocating to Maine (primarily veterans). She reiterated that the project is not intended to be used as weekday only housing for commuters.

Mr. Johnson expressed concern with the site design for perimeter parking, and the need for a turnaround for buses. He stated that it is unfortunate that the buildings look out onto parking and not to the beautiful tree line, suggesting that the overall site plan can be improved upon.

Ms. Curtis suggested that the applicant could utilize Section 10.06.A.3 for performance standards in order to reduce the number of parking spaces.

Mr. Hopkinson suggested that internal vegetation and recreation be considered such as picnic tables or benches, as well as external recreation such as basketball courts. He noted traffic concerns may be alleviated by van pooling and shuttles.

Mr. Hopkinson then added concern that there be no additional impact on drainage for Edgett Street neighbors.

Ms. Curtis asked if the Board had any comments regarding the design, to which there were none.

Mr. Stilphen complimented the applicant on the sloped roofs.

Mr. Johnson complimented the individual exits from the apartments.

Ms. Bailey suggested that the buildings be broken up using color or siding.

Mr. Hopkinson suggested that the applicant pay close attention to the lighting design and its impact on neighbors. He also reminded the applicant to address refuse and snow storage.

Ms. Curtis expressed appreciation to the applicant for their acknowledgement of stormwater management, which is important to the City, and for the intention to keep the existing trees along Congress Ave.

Mr. Hopkinson spoke to the benefits of locating workforce housing within the city. He then spoke to the skill and knowledge of City Staff, noting that the Board will pay close attention to staff comments.

### **Other Business**

None

**MR. OMO, SECONDED BY MS. BAILYE, MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**MEETING ADJOURNED BY UNANIMOUS ACCLAMATION AT 7:15 PM.**

Minutes prepared by Karly Perry, Recording Secretary