



## **TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY**

*Planning & Zoning Commission  
1212 Whittemore Road  
Middlebury, Connecticut 06762  
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### **February 4, 2021 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**Via Zoom Meeting #848-8185-5835**

#### **REGULAR MEMBERS PRESENT**

Terry Smith, Chairman  
William Stowell, Vice Chairman  
Erika Carrington  
Joseph Drauss

#### **REGULAR MEMBERS ABSENT**

Matthew Robison

#### **ALTERNATE MEMBERS PRESENT**

#### **ALTERNATE MEMBERS ABSENT**

Jeffrey Grosberg

#### **ALSO PRESENT**

John Calabrese, P.E.  
Curtis Bosco, Z.E.O.

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Smith called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

#### **ROLL CALL AND DESIGNATION OF ALTERNATES**

Chairman Smith announced Regular Members Smith, Stowell, Carrington and Drauss as present. Regular Member Robison and Alternate Member Grosberg were absent.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

### **1. The Metro Realty Group, Ltd./1685 Straits Turnpike-Application for a Special Exception pursuant to Sections 31.1 & 52 (Application #2020-12-1)**

Kyle Richards with The Metro Realty Group stated that their application consists of site and building approval including a Special Exception Permit for two (2) single-story 21,000 square foot single-story medical office buildings. They received approval from the Conservation Commission on November 24, 2020 and on December 22, 2020 the Architectural Design Review Committee of the EDC also issued a positive referral to this Commission. They are a Farmington, CT fully integrated land development company was founded approximately 30 years ago. Metro Construction is their affiliate construction company and the management, maintenance, HVAC and leasing all happens internally through their staff. Their portfolio has grown to 35 assets, currently exclusively in central Connecticut (Berlin, West Hartford, Farmington, South Windsor, Avon), and consists of multi-family housing and medical office development.

Thomas Daly, P.E. of Milone & McBroom, which is now part of SLR Consulting Ltd., reviewed the site plan with the Commission. The parcel is 12.3 acres in size on the northwest corner of Straits Turnpike and Park Road Ext. with the back 40%-50% of the site consisting of wetlands. The main entrance drive will be off of Straits Turnpike with robust landscaping and wayfinding signage. The front doors of each building are slightly offset so as to avoid cue creation. The buildings will share a heavily landscaped area between the two buildings that will have benches. In the rear of the buildings, there will be two (2) stormwater basins along with complimentary landscaping. He pointed out at the top of the map that there is a line which indicates Metro Realty is committed to putting the rear portion of the property into a conservation restriction and plan to have conversations with the town or Middlebury Land Trust about the final condition of said land. Each 21,000 square foot single-story building is approximately 210 feet long. The parking lot is well balanced allowing patients to park in the front while employees will park on the 2 sides. The secondary entrance further down Straits Turnpike will provide an additional option for fire trucks and loading vehicles. There is an 8% building coverage and the total imperious coverage is 25%. They are proposing a full stormwater system consisting of two (2) basins, both designed for the 2-100 year storm. They also have the DEEP recommended water quality volume in them, providing both water quality and quantity. Before each basin there is a stormwater quality vault which will allow Metro to do quick maintenance. The lighting plan consists of 4000K LED full cutoff lights. The building is set below grade and they plan to minimize the amount of imported material. He acknowledged Hiram Peck's suggestion for a berm across the front, however, he stated that it is not a possibility due to room limitation. They anticipate

a net import of 11,500 cubic yards of material. Some has already been brought in by nearby project, therefore, an additional 4,500 cubic yards of local native source material is expected. Once the source is determined, they will notify the town and John Calabrese, P.E. He confirmed receipt of the staff report from John Calabrese, P.E. dated February 1, 2021 and plan to comply with said recommendations. They also received the report from Hiram Peck dated January 31, 2021 and as previously mentioned, the grading of the berm up and then back down into the site is not feasible. And, while it can be discussed with the FD, the suggested additional emergency access drive from Park Road Ext. is questionable since there is an approximate 3 foot rise in a 15-20 feet span would result in 20% grade driveway.

Kwesi Brown, P.E. of Milone & McBroom, which is now part of SLR Consulting Ltd. reviewed the traffic study. The study area included the intersections of Straits Turnpike & Park Road Ext. as well as Straits Turnpike and the shopping center driveway to the south. They obtained 2017-2020 crash data which consisted of 30 accidents, with 50% being rear end collisions, no fatalities, 63% involved property damage and 37% injuries occurred. While they performed traffic counts in September 2020, volumes were lower than normal due to COVID-19, so they reached out CT DOT which provided them with 2021 volumes that were more typical of a weekday and a Saturday midday peak period. Based on the entire analysis, it is his professional opinion that that the proposed development will not lead to any deterioration in overall levels of service within the study area and the volumes coming out of the development will be able to be accommodated on the roadway system. They plan to submit an application to the Office of the State Traffic Administration due to the size of the development and will work with the accordingly.

Kyle Richards went on to review the composition of materials which is predominantly red brick with precast and EIFS banding. The front entrance is popped out for the purposes of visual interest and design layout for the interior spaces and contains two precast columns with banding on top. The roof is flat but pitches from front to back and at the top of the roof there will be a decorative copper mansard. The distance from the ground at the front entrance to the eave is just under 25' in order to create a presence. With respect to Chairman Smith's suggestion for a covered landing, he stated that they can jam up the front entrance unnecessarily and unless they have a surgical tenant, their preference would be to construct the buildings with more of an unfettered area for drop off. The rear portion of the sides and back of the building, it returns to the EIFS material which is painted to mimic the front precast.

Chairman Smith read the Legal Notice published in Voices on 1-20-2021 & 1-27-2021 for the record.

Joseph Drauss questioned the number and location of handicap spaces.

Thomas Daly verified that there are 4 handicap spaces for each building and are adjacent to each front entry. He did note that while that it is in compliance, he understands that the number is subject to the approval of the building department.

Joseph Drauss indicated that he feels the number is not adequate. He then went on to question the vehicle flow of within the parking lot.

Thomas Daly stated that it is not meant to be a full turnaround circle but a vehicle could perform a K Turn but the intention is for drivers to drop off the patient at the entrance and go park or drive down and turn around.

Chairman Smith questioned if the copper mansard roof is actual copper or a copper colored paint.

Kyle Richards responded that it is an aluminum material with a copper automotive grade paint.

Chairman Smith then went on to ask if there is a vestibule or waiting area inside.

Kyle Richards stated that there is an internal airlock in the building and from there is dependent upon the tenant base. If it is a multitenant building, a lobby would be constructed with a common bathroom, mailbox kiosk, benches and then entrances into the various suites. However, if it is a single tenant building, after you proceed through the airlock, you enter into a waiting room.

Chairman Smith expressed his concern for people being dropped off, especially those in wheelchairs, or those waiting for their ride, as they would be exposed to the elements. He again requested that the applicant reconsider constructing an awning over the sidewalk for these reasons. Additionally, he stated that he wanted to keep the Public Hearing open to allow the FD the opportunity to submit their comments, the applicant to make any necessary changes to the December 8, 2020 plans and to run the continued hearing simultaneously with the expected Public Hearing for the Excavation & Grading Permit.

**Motion:** to continue the Public Hearing to March 4, 2021. Made by William Stowell, seconded by Joseph Drauss. Unanimous Approval.

## **MINUTE APPROVAL**

### **2. Discussion of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on January 7, 2021**

Erika Carrington was not present at this time due to technical difficulties.

**Motion:** to approve the minutes as submitted. Made by William Stowell, seconded by Joseph Drauss. Unanimous Approval.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

3. **The Metro Realty Group, Ltd./1685 Straits Turnpike-Application for a Special Exception pursuant to Sections 31.1 & 52 (Application #2020-12-1)**

Discussion was tabled.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

4. **The Metro Realty Group, Ltd./1685 Straits Turnpike-Application for a Special Exception for an Excavation & Grading Permit pursuant to Section 64 (Application #2021-1-1)**

Erika Carrington returned to the meeting at this point in time.

**Motion:** to accept the application and schedule a Public Hearing for March 4, 2021. Made by Joseph Drauss, seconded by William Stowell. Unanimous Approval.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

5. **Any other business added to the agenda by a 2/3 vote of the Commission**

None

6. **Enforcement Report**

Chairman Smith requested that Curtis Bosco, Z.E.O. address the traffic control sign which has a big Subway sign with an arrow on the back of it, heading down Route 64 at the intersection of Route 63.

7. **Adjournment**

**Motion:** to adjourn the meeting at 7:53 p.m. Made by Joseph Drauss seconded by William Stowell. Unanimous Approval.

Filed Subject to Approval,

Respectfully Submitted,

Rachelle Behuniak, Clerk

Original to Brigitte Bessette, Town Clerk

cc: P&Z Commission Members  
Paul Bowler, Chairman, Conservation Commission  
Ollie LeDuc, Building Official  
Curtis Bosco, Z.E.O.  
Ken Long, Chairman, Z.B.A.  
Attorney Dana D'Angelo  
Rob Rubbo, Director of Health