

NASHUA CITY PLANNING BOARD  
September 8, 2016

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Nashua City Planning Board was held on Thursday, September 8, 2016 at 7:00 PM in the auditorium at City Hall.

Members Present:     Scott LeClair, Vice Chair  
                          Michael Pedersen, Mayor's Rep.  
                          Dan Kelly, Secretary  
                          Steve Dookran, City Eng.  
                          David Robbins  
                          Suneela Mistry

Also Present:         Roger Houston, Planning Director  
                          Linda Panny, Deputy Planning Manager  
                          Scott McPhie, Planner I

Mr. LeClair said Ms. Mistry would be participating and voting.

**Approval of Minutes**

August 4, 2016

**MOTION** by Mr. Robbins to approve the minutes of August 4, 2016.

**SECONDED** by Mr. Kelly

**MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Mr. Houston went over the following items that were received after the mailing went out:

- ) Case #3: stormwater management report, letter from senior staff engineer, site plan waiver request, communication from Fire Rescue and communication from School Department.
- ) Case #4: stormwater management report, site plan waiver request, communication from Amy Gill of Engineering, several letters of opposition and a petition from the residents of Tanglewood in opposition.
- ) Case #5: communication from Jeanne Walker of Engineering

**REPORT OF CHAIR, COMMITTEE & LIASON**

CIC: Mr. Kelly said the Capital Improvement Committee met on August 22<sup>nd</sup> to discuss the skateboard park and overwhelmingly approved the project.

**PROCEDURES OF THE MEETING**

Mr. LeClair went into the procedure of the meeting as follows: After the legal notice of each conditional, special use permit, site plan or subdivision plan is read by the Chair, the Board will determine if that the application is complete and ready for the Board to take jurisdiction. The public hearing will begin at which time the applicant or representative will be given time to present an overview and description of their project. The applicant shall speak to whether or not they agree with recommended staff stipulations. The Board will then have an opportunity to ask questions of the applicant or staff.

The Chair will then ask for testimony from the audience. First anyone wishing to speak in opposition or with concern to the plan may speak. Please come forward to the microphone, state their name and address for the record. This would be the time to ask questions they may have regarding the plan. Next public testimony will come from anyone wishing to speak in favor of the plan. The applicant will then be allowed a rebuttal period at which time they shall speak to any issues or concerns raised by prior public testimony.

One public member will then be granted an opportunity to speak to those issues brought by the applicant during their rebuttal period. The Board will then ask any relevant follow-up questions of the applicant if need be.

After this is completed the public hearing will end and the Board will resume the public meeting at which time the Board will deliberate and vote on the application before us. The Board asks that both sides keep their remarks to the subject at hand and try not to repeat what has already been said.

Above all, the Board wants to be fair to everyone and make the best possible decision based on the testimony presented and all applicable approval criteria established in the Nashua Revised Ordinances for conditional, special use permits, site plans and subdivisions. Thank you for your interest and courteous attention. Please turn off your cell phones and pagers at this time.

**OLD BUSINESS - CONDITIONAL/SPECIAL USE PERMITS**

None

**OLD BUSINESS - SUBDIVISION PLANS**

None

**OLD BUSINESS - SITE PLANS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS - CONDITIONAL/SPECIAL USE PERMITS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS - SUBDIVISION PLANS**

1. Million Dollar View, LLC (Owner) - Application and acceptance of proposed two lot subdivision. Property is located at 6-8 Girouard Avenue. Sheet 47 - Lot 198. Zoned "RA" Urban Residence. Ward 3.

**MOTION** by Mr. Robbins that the application is complete and the planning board is ready to take jurisdiction.

**SECONDED** by Mr. Kelly

**MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

Paul Chisholm, Keach-Nordstrom Associates

Mr. Chisholm introduced himself as representing the applicant. He gave an overview of the proposed subdivision. The applicant is proposing to build two new single family homes on lots that are about 9,500SF. A variance for lot width was granted on July 26, 2016. He received a communication from Jeanne Walker prior to the meeting which indicated she had no further questions or concerns.

Mr. Pedersen asked if the original sidewalk will be used.

Mr. Chisholm said yes, they are going to reuse as much of the sidewalk as possible. The applicant is unsure of the exact location of the new driveways but portions of the sidewalk will have to be reconstructed.

Mr. Pedersen said portions of the sidewalk may be damaged during the construction phase of the project, when vehicles are moving in and out of the site.

Mr. Chisholm said the applicant could agree to repair or replace any portion of the sidewalk that is damaged by construction activity.

Mr. Dookran asked for clarification on the lot width variance.

**SPEAKING IN OPPOSITION OR CONCERN**

None

**SPEAKING IN FAVOR**

None

Mr. Dookran said the applicant still needs to submit information in regards to stormwater calculations.

**MOTION** by Mr. Kelly to approve New Business - Subdivision Plan #1. It conforms to § 190-138(G) with the following stipulations and waivers:

1. Prior to recording the plan, all comments in a letter from Jeanne Walker, PE dated August 30, 2016 shall be addressed to the satisfaction of the Engineering Department.
2. Prior to the Chair signing the plan, minor drafting corrections will be made.
3. All ZBA conditions of approval from the July 26, 2016 hearing are incorporated herein.
4. Any work within the right-of-way shall require a financial guarantee.
5. Prior to any work being conducted, a pre-construction conference shall be set up with the Planning Department
6. Any damage to the sidewalk will be repaired.

**SECONDED** by Mr. Robbins

**MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

**NEW BUSINESS - SITE PLANS**

2. City of Nashua (Owner) YMCA of Greater Nashua (Applicant) - Application and acceptance of proposed site plan amendment to NR 1992 to add a 5,627 square feet, 2nd floor addition. Property is located at 24 Stadium Drive. Sheet E, Lots 2224 & 1359. Zoned PI-Park Industrial and R9-C- Suburban Residence. Ward 5.

**MOTION** by Mr. Robbins that the application is complete and the planning board is ready to take jurisdiction.

**SECONDED** by Mr. Pedersen

**MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

Jim Petropulos, Hayner/Swanson, Inc.

Mr. Petropulos introduced himself as representing the applicant. He gave a brief overview of the site and the proposed minor site amendment. The applicant is requesting a waiver for parking, as the new addition would require 9 new parking spaces. Currently there are about 680 parking spaces with future land that could support another 192 spaces. They are not creating any new employees or memberships. There is plenty of existing parking on site, and they also have an agreement with 505 West Hollis Street and Nashua High School South to allow for parking overflow during Thanksgiving football games and other events.

Mr. Kelly said it is difficult to believe the new expansion will not attract new members.

Mr. Petropulos explained the expansion is only about an 11% increase. It will not provide new capabilities.

**SPEAKING IN OPPOSITION OR CONCERN**

Paula Johnson, 15 Westborn Dr

Ms. Johnson said she has concerns with this proposal as well as the skateboard park project. Her issue is with the potential increase in traffic entering and exiting the site. She finds it hard to believe there will be no new members or employees at the YMCA after the addition is completed. She said she is also upset that she and her neighbors were not notified of the hearing since they are not direct abutters.

**SPEAKING IN FAVOR**

None

**SPEAKING IN OPPOSITION OR CONCERN - REBUTTAL**

Mr. Petropulos confirmed with Mr. Powers of the YMCA that there will not be any new employees. The addition is simply to relieve pressure of the current facility. Ms. Johnson has been a vocal opponent of the development of this property dating back to Stellos Stadium. He does not believe this proposal would adversely impact her property or create more traffic.

Ms. Johnson said the traffic issue is horrendous. There have not been any traffic studies done in the area.

Mr. Kelly said the facility is time-sensitive. There are various things happening throughout the day and on weekends that are not conflicting. There is a lot of traffic but much of the time it's scheduled. There are many reasons to support this project, though Ms. Johnson does have valid concerns regarding traffic.

Mr. Dookran said this application did not meet the anticipated trip count threshold that would warrant a traffic study.

**MOTION** by Mr. Robbins to approve New Business - Site Plan #2. It conforms to § 190-146(D) with the following stipulations or waivers:

1. The request for a waiver of NRO § 190-198, which establishes minimum parking standards, is granted, finding that the waiver will not be contrary to the spirit and intent of the regulation.
2. All prior conditions of approval are incorporated herein and made a part of this plan, unless otherwise determined by the planning board.

**SECONDED** by Mr. Kelly

**MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

3. City of Nashua (Owner) - Application and acceptance of proposed site plan amendment to NR 1992 to add a skateboard park with associated site improvements. Property is located at 9 Stadium Drive. Sheet E - Lot 1359. Zoned "PI" Park Industrial and R9-Suburban Residence. Ward 5.

**MOTION** by Mr. Robbins that the application is complete and the planning board is ready to take jurisdiction.

**SECONDED** by Mr. Kelly

**MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

Alderman David Deane, City of Nashua

Ald. Deane said the City spent a number of years looking at different sites to relocate the park. He gave an overview of the proposed site area, explaining that they are proposing to install a fence around the park as well as new lighting. He said they are requesting a waiver from parking.

Amy Gill, Senior Staff Engineer, Public Works Department, City of Nashua

Ms. Gill said the use requires 20 parking spaces for the skateboard park itself. They are constructing the park over 16 existing spaces and will be replacing those, as well as creating 23 additional spaces for a total of 59 spaces. The waiver is for parking required based on the overall parcel.

Mr. Kelly asked how many people use the park.

Ald. Deane said it depends. There are about 20 kids at the park at a time, sometimes more if there are events. He said a traffic study was conducted for the existing park. Between 2:15pm and 3:15pm, two vehicles entered the site and one exited. From 5pm to 6pm, six vehicles entered the site and one exited. There is not a lot of traffic at the site; most of the kids using the facility ride their bike, board or take the bus to get to the park.

Mr. Pedersen asked if they anticipated greater usage of the new park since it will have closer proximity to the high school.

Ald. Deane said he did not know, but it's possible. He said the park will continue to provide a source of recreation for the City.

**SPEAKING IN OPPOSITION OR CONCERN**

Paula Johnson, 15 Westbourne Dr

Ms. Johnson passed around photographs for Board members to review. She said the photos show the congestion on this site due to traffic for Stellos Stadium, YMCA and Mines Falls. The addition of the skate board park will add to this congestion, especially if current users of the park will now need to drive to get there. She asks that the project not be approved and that another site is considered the relocate the park.

**SPEAKING IN FAVOR**

David Breen, 5 Yarmouth Dr

Mr. Breen said he has been going to the current skate park on Bridge St to use his BMX bike since the park was built. There is a core group of kids that go to the skate park on a regular basis. The skate park provides entertainment for the teen-aged residents of the City. He said he think it's more important to consider the impact that losing the skate park would have on the City's teen-aged population, rather than the potential increase in traffic at the new site. He said the new site is a great location for the park.

Dan Sloan, 8 Westfield St

Mr. Sloan said he is also in favor of the proposed location. Kids who want to use the skate park can access the site through Mines Falls from various parts of the City; many of the kids do not have vehicles. The proximity of the Police Station and High School also make it an ideal location.

Jeff Hannigan, 32 Houde St

Mr. Hannigan said skateboarding is an ideal sport for urban youth. The skate park is already planned to be removed; to not replace it would be a shame. Regarding concerns about vandalism, he has not seen any statistics regarding crime that has taken place at the existing skate park. Users of the park are a very self-policing group of individuals. He said the new location of the skate park and new parking area may actually relieve some of the congestion often seen there.

Cathy Lui, 17 Tanglewood Dr

Ms. Lui said her son and his friends are skateboarders and they've been waiting for this project to happen. She is looking forward to a park that will be more user-friendly and

accessible, as well as the fact that it will be near the Police Station and High School.

Nick Caggiano, Superintendent, Parks and Recreation, City of Nashua

Mr. Caggiano said the park serves as a very valuable place for people interested in individual sports. Regarding vandalism, the City cares for the park and often receives help from the kids at the park in cleaning the site up. He was part of the committee tasked with finding a new location for the park and this is the best option that they have.

Heath Gaffney, 27 Cathedral Cir

Mr. Gaffney said the park is being relocated due to a great development opportunity for the City. The new location will be more accessible to his children and other people in the community.

**SPEAKING IN OPPOSITION OR CONCERN - REBUTTAL**

Ald. Deane said parking will increase from 16 to 59 dedicated spaces. Those who utilize that area as an entrance to Mines Falls will now have an area to park their vehicles. He appeared before the Board of Public works twice and received a 5-0 approval after the new resolution was submitted by the Board of Alderman. The project was also approved unanimously by the Board of Education. The Committee of Infrastructure approved the project 5-0, and the Board of Aldermen approved the project 14-1 and with the support of Mayor Donchess. All meetings were publicly posted.

Ms. Johnson reiterated her concerns with congestion on the site. She said she understands the need for a skate park in the City but this site is already too crowded.

The Board went into the public meeting.

Mr. Dookran said, in regards to traffic congestion, the project traffic engineer submitted evidence of very few cars observed during rush hour at the existing park. The conclusion was that there is not expected to be an increase in traffic at the new proposed skate park. If there are traffic issues in this area, they will need to be addressed at some point in time by the City. Additional parking proposed by this project is an improvement to the site.

**MOTION** by Mr. Kelly to approve New Business - Site Plan #3. It conforms to § 190-146(D) with the following stipulations or waivers:

1. The request for a waiver of NRO § 190-198, which establishes minimum parking standards, is granted, finding that the waiver will not be contrary to the spirit and intent of the regulation.
2. The request for a waiver of NRO § 190-279 (I)(J)(K)(EE), which requires submittal of proposed and existing utilities, is granted, finding that the waiver will not be contrary to the spirit and intent of the regulation.
3. The request for a waiver of NRO § 190-275, which establishes lighting standards, is granted, finding that the waiver will not be contrary to the spirit and intent of the regulation.
4. All prior conditions of approval are incorporated herein and made a part of this plan, unless otherwise determined by the planning board.
5. Prior to the Chair signing the plan, minor drafting corrections will be made.

**SECONDED** by Mr. Robbins

**MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

4. City of Nashua (Owner) - Application and acceptance of proposed site plan to construct two soccer fields, gravel parking area, and access road. Property is located at "L" Gilson Road. Sheet D - Lot 522. Zoned "R40" Rural Residence and "R30" Suburban Residence. Ward 5.

**MOTION** by Mr. Kelly that the application is complete and the planning board is ready to take jurisdiction.

**SECONDED** by Mr. Robbins

**MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

Nick Caggiano, Superintendent, Parks and Recreation, City of Nashua

Mr. Caggiano introduced himself and gave an overview of the proposed site plan for Southwest Park. The applicant is requesting a waiver for parking; the site will have 114 parking spaces where 133 are required. They are also requesting a waiver

of underground utilities. The need for additional rectangular fields in the City is very evident. The Mayor and Board of Aldermen approved funding through the Capital Improvements Program to allow for development of fields at this site. Approximately 12.7 acres of the 127 acres will be affected. A study was conducted in which site distance was proven adequate for cars pulling out of the site onto Gilson Rd. There will be a cul-de-sac at the end of the parking lot for emergency vehicles to turn around. There are wetlands on either side of the property; development on the site will not occur closer than 40 feet to the wetlands. The installation of the fields will affect some of the existing trails on site. However, most of the trails were granted by the Board of Public Works with the understanding that they may need to be removed or relocated due to future development of the site. The acquisition of the Terrell Homestead has provided additional trails for recreation.

Ms. Mistry asked why lighting has not been proposed for the fields and the parking lot. Soccer is typically played in the evenings.

Mr. Caggiano said they are not proposing lighting because it is a sensitive area. There's a lot of beautiful trails and hiking and they do not see the need to have the fields lit. There are also nearby homes on Gilson Rd and in the Tanglewood development.

Mr. Robbins asked how they determined the number of required parking spaces. The number seems low.

Mr. Caggiano said it is based on the number of players and referees, the overlap of games and other calculations. 114 spaces are what the Engineering staff came up with.

Sonia Shahnaj, Senior Staff Engineer, Public Works Department, City of Nashua

Ms. Shahnaj said the parking requirements are based off of use #212 as listed in the City's Land Use Code, which requires 1 space per 650SF; this totals 133 spaces. The site will provide 114 spaces based on the estimation of there being 22 players for each field, or 55 vehicles. Two fields would bring in approximately 110 vehicles. The calculations are also based on what is occurring at existing fields in Nashua.

Mr. Dookran asked if the applicant knew how many vehicles were typically parked on Whipple St to access the Mines Falls fields.

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Mr. Caggiano said there are six rectangular fields and a softball field at Mines Falls. There are probably 40 spaces along Whipple St. The City also had a lease with UPS to utilize part of their parking lot on weekends through the spring and fall periods. UPS is going through an expansion so the parking has been temporarily suspended, but will be renegotiated.

Mr. LeClair asked if additional parking spaces could be added to the site.

Ms. Shahnaj said yes, there is room to expand if they need to.

Mr. LeClair asked the size comparison of the Terrell property to this site.

Mr. Houston said the Terrell property is 85 acres.

Mr. Caggiano said the Southwest Park parcel is 127 acres, but the portion being developed is 12.7 acres.

Mr. LeClair asked what the current discussions have been beyond this proposal. There is more to the Master Plan.

Mr. Caggiano said there haven't been discussions regarding further continuance of the Master Plan. They've been focused on trying to find funding to expand the fields for several years.

Mr. Robbins said a letter from City Traffic Engineer Wayne Husband dated August 16<sup>th</sup> indicates that the projected traffic onto Gilson Rd should be minimal. Does the City have any plans to adjust or add sidewalks to Gilson Rd at the time this project would be built?

Mr. Caggiano said there are currently no plans.

#### **SPEAKING IN OPPOSITION OR CONCERN**

Dan Sloan, 8 Westfield St

Mr. Sloan introduced himself and said he is a Conservation Commissioner for the City. He asked if his petition was received, as well as a copy of a 2006 conservation plan, as he had forwarded these items to the Board and Mayor but did not receive a response. The petition contains 649 signatures from mountain bikers in opposition of the project. He said that most of the site in question is wetlands and the conservation plan indicates that this is the second most important property in

Nashua as far as wetlands and wildlife. He has seen cottontail rabbits and many other rare species here. Bulldozing the fields and woods would remove valuable natural resources that filter the water and provide habitat for animals and plants. The groundwater is already very high and development of the site would create additional runoff. There are 15 different user groups that use this property year-round including mountain bikers, hikers, bird-watchers, geocaching, etc. There is also a cellar hole of the Gilson Ancestral Home that will be in the path of this development. He said he is not anti-soccer, there are just better places in the City where soccer fields could be installed.

Mr. Dookran asked if the referenced conservation study recommended that this site be conserved.

Mr. Sloan said yes, in perpetuity. In 2006, the Conservation Commission asked for the property to be removed from a conservation database, but there is no reason given.

Mr. Houston said the Planning Department did not receive the petition submitted by Mr. Sloan.

Mr. Sloan explained he submitted the petition to the Planning Board this morning.

Mr. Houston said they will need a copy of the document for the public record.

Mr. Sloan submitted a photograph of the Gilson Homestead cellar hole.

Laura Salujah, 30 Tanglewood Dr

Ms. Salujah introduced herself and thanked Mr. Caggiano for his presentation. She said she is speaking on behalf of residents of the Tanglewood neighborhood, many of whom are recreational users of the site. She explained her background and that she has a degree in environmental studies. Sports are very important to her family but she has concerns about placing soccer fields at this location, some of which have already been mentioned by Mr. Sloan. The 2006 conservation plan was not considered when these plans were made. There has been a lot of development along the southwest portion of Main Dunstable Rd and there is a lot more traffic along the road since the master plan was written. She said she would like to see data regarding accidents in this area. Tanglewood residents are also concerned with noise and

litter that would come from the site. The planned number of parking spaces for the site seems inadequate to support tournaments. There is also no public transportation to the site, and the fields would be at quite a distance from the City center. Other neighbors have concerns about the potential diversion of tax dollars for this project, especially since these fields might be used for regional tournaments and not just local play. There are concerns about decreasing property values. Another concern is the planned entrance to the site. It is a dangerous location. Residents are confused as to why other sites, such as the Superfund site, are not being considered. She reiterated Mr. Sloan's argument that the site is an important wildlife habitat that needs to be preserved.

Andrew Cooper, 24 Forsythia Dr

Mr. Cooper said he lives about a mile-and-a-half from the proposed site. He said there are many people who use the trails on this site year-round that would be impacted by the soccer fields. This is one of the only areas in Nashua for serious mountain bikers. There are over 30 rectangular fields in the Nashua area. He is all in favor of team sports but there are people who do not participate in such sports and they need to be accommodated. He said he wants to understand why it is ok to develop this site when the Southwest quadrant was designated as the second-most important conservation area in the City.

Daniel Lougee, sophomore at Nashua High School South

Mr. Lougee said he does a lot of maintenance work at Yudicky and has built many of the trails, including Inchworm Trail, which is being threatened by this proposal. Barbwire Trail is also being threatened. Losing these two trails would cripple the Yudicky trail system for mountain biking. There are many sports and activities people can do at this site. It would be a shame to lose this forested area because it is an escape from the City and suburbia surrounding it.

Michael Penn, 65 Flint Pond Dr, Hollis, NH

Mr. Penn said he concurs with all that has been said by the previous speakers. He added that he is a soccer player as well as a user of this site for mountain biking, trail running and snowshoeing. The Superintendent's comments about users of the skate park maintaining the park is reflective of how the mountain bikers maintain the trails on this site. He said he too shares concerns regarding pedestrian safety. Regarding impact to

the wetlands, the project's stormwater report indicates that runoff from the fields and parking area will drain into the wetlands.

Mo Berube, 31 Brackenwood Dr

Mr. Berube said he is a lifelong Nashua resident and has coached youth soccer in the City. He loves using the trails on this site for mountain biking. The trail system is one of a kind; you cannot overstate the unique beauty of the site. There are currently several underutilized soccer fields in the City. Funds could be redirected to rehabilitate some of the fields around the elementary schools (Broad Street, Birch Hill.)

Christine Sheridan, 61A Caldwell Rd

Ms. Sheridan said she lives in a very congested neighborhood and Southwest Park/Yudicky is one of her favorite places to go to. She said she has a degree in environmental biology and has documented some of the endangered and threatened species that exist in the park. She presented a list of over 130 species of wild birds that frequent the site, some of which are State or federally endangered. Some of these species use this area for nesting. There is a diversity of habitats on the site.

Santosh Angadi, 48 Tanglewood Dr

Mr. Angadi said his concern is with the number of proposed parking spaces. There would need to be well over 200 parking spaces to accommodate cricket games. Players would be forced to park along Gilson Rd, which is only 24ft. wide. Furthermore, soccer fields are not ideal for cricket; the game is typically played on baseball fields. He said he echoes the same arguments as the previous speakers regarding conservation of the site.

Christopher Gaudet, 28 April Dr

Mr. Gaudet said he echoes a lot of the points that have already been made. He is also a user of the park for various activities. He also utilizes Yudicky Farm to keep his personal health goals in check. Mines Falls is another multi-use park in the City but it is very overused and crowded. As a member of the Board of Directors for the Southern NH chapter of the New England Mountain Bike Association, and as a novice biker, there is a variety of terrain at Yudicky that allows for users of all levels to participate.

Jeanne-Marie Mahr, 7 Columbia Ave

Ms. Mahr said she grew up in New England moved to Nashua about 10 years ago and was very impressed with the green spaces and parks in the City. As a physician, she feels it is critical to have places that people can go to be well and take care of themselves, not necessarily participating in team sports. She said she is a mountain biker and avid bird watcher. She said she is also a member of the Nashua Auduban Society and, on their behalf, is asking the Board to reconsider the use of this space because it is prime habitat for a lot of wildlife.

Paula Johnson, 15 Westborn Dr

Ms. Johnson said the people speaking tonight are fighting for their neighborhood. She recommends that the Board vote against this project and preserve the site.

Paul Martin, 8 Piermont St

Mr. Martin said the site provides many recreational opportunities for himself and his family.

Cathy Lui, 17 Tanglewood Dr

Ms. Lui said her concern is with the safety of players and potential users of the fields. There have been arrests for use of automatic weaponry at this site, as well as drinking, bonfires, and use of motor vehicles. There is a lack of enforcement in this area. Development of the site would provide ready access to illicit users. There should be a penalty for improper use of park lands. Developing the site would put additional people at risk.

Chris Hyler, Londonderry, NH

Mr. Hyler said he comes to Yudicky to mountain bike. On social media, there are videos and photos that show a large number of people enjoying the park. The park attracts people from outside of the City. He said he also researched this site on the Strava app and it showed 300 different riders making 2,000 different rides on just one trail.

John Longan, 43 Cathedral Cir

Mr. Longan said he concurs with all of the points that have been made tonight. The most desirable towns in this region are the

ones with undeveloped space. Continuing to whittle away the open space will reduce desirability and property values in Nashua. He said he also challenges the idea that there is a need for additional soccer fields.

Bryan Caron, 30 Countryside Dr

Mr. Caron said his property abuts the rail trail. On weekends and nice days, there are well over 70 cars parked there even though the parking lot can only accommodate 50 vehicles. A parking lot should be added to this site for the mountain bikers. It would be a shame to clear cut the site.

John Patenaude, 87 Conant Rd

Mr. Patenaude said he is an avid mountain biker. His two children play soccer, and he is also an assistant coach for Nashua Blast youth lacrosse. There needs to be more studies done before packing in more fields. In going through the recreation soccer program, there was never a problem finding a field to play, the only problem was weather. Nashua Blast has also only ever had issues due to weather. As a resident of this area, it has become very congested with accidents occurring at the Captain Corner intersection. Gilson Rd is dangerous and he now avoids cycling on it.

#### **SPEAKING IN FAVOR**

Jared Barbosa, 77 Lawrence Rd, Merrimack, NH

Mr. Barbosa introduced himself and said he was raised in Nashua and considers himself a Nashuan. He said he appreciated the fact that those speaking in opposition of the project still considered soccer to be a staple in the community and important for our youth. He said he is an elementary school guidance counselor, coach and director of a local soccer club. He is also President of the Soccer Council, which consists of three soccer leagues and two soccer clubs. The Nashua Youth Soccer League itself serves over 2,000 youth on 90 teams in the City. Not only are the leagues and clubs using fields but also schools such as Nashua Christian Academy, Nashua Catholic, Bishop Guertin, World Academy, and Academy of Science and Design. The Soccer Council utilizes about 14 fields in Nashua, and typically they have to close one or two due to poor conditions. They do not have permission to use the high school fields, and the fields at the elementary schools have been deemed unplayable. There are 150 teams, or 3,000-4,000 Nashua-based players, administrators and

coaches that are utilizing the 14 fields. There is a definite need for more fields in Nashua. The fields at Mines Falls are heavily damaged and a safety concern. Regarding revenue, the Columbus Day Tournament brings in 187 registered teams from all over the region, and these teams are spending money in Nashua.

Mr. Robbins asked if Mr. Barbosa would prefer to have the new fields at the Southwest Park site or another location in the City.

Mr. Barbosa said ultimately there is a need for fields, whether it's at this location or another location.

Mr. Robbins asked how much the Council pays for use of the fields.

Mr. Barbosa said the Council charges a field usage fee of about \$3 for an hour-long game, or \$200 for the season.

Mr. Robbins asked if the City gets paid for use of the field.

Mr. Barbosa said the City does not charge for use of the field. The money collected goes into purchasing supplies for the games, such as nets, flags, chalk, etc.

Alderman Tom Lopez, Ward 4

Ald. Lopez said his constituents reached out to him very early in his term as alderman and expressed a need for more positive youth and family-friendly activities. The importance of soccer is well-known in Ward 4 and for the families that make it a part of their lives. When he organized a library trail cleanup, a soccer team volunteered to help him. The team showed up early because their field wasn't available for their game. There is an urgent need for more field space. The existing fields are heavily overused and not given a chance to recover. Two additional fields will address the overflow need and also create an opportunity to decommission at least one field to recover. The current conditions of the fields are a safety hazard. Parks and Recreation studied many locations for the fields. Charging for use of the fields is potentially a double charge. He has confidence that the Parks and Recreation Department has the ability to manage land in an environmentally and ecologically appropriate way. Nashua is a growing City with diverse needs. He thanked everyone who turned out for public comment.

Jason Gendreau, 21 Baltimore Rd

Mr. Gendreau said he is Chairman of the Nashua Youth Soccer League and also serves as Vice President of the Soccer Council. NYSL serves children ages 5 to 18. They average about 2,200 registrations every year, with a 50% turnover into the next season. The league does not have access to the fields at the schools. Over the years, the League has lost complexes without gaining more field space. They are at the point where they will have to cap registration, which means not all kids who want to play soccer will get a chance.

James Graham-Eagle, 18 Salmon Brook Dr

Mr. Graham-Eagle said he plays for the OTH "Over the Hill" adult soccer league. He is not advocating for these particular fields but rather the fact that the City needs more fields. The current condition of existing fields is deplorable. His hope is to see more fields in Nashua before he is no longer able to play in his league.

**SPEAKING IN OPPOSITION OR CONCERN - REBUTTAL**

Ms. Shahnaj said they have had conversations with the Natural Heritage Bureau regarding this project. The Bureau is advised the City on how to move forward with the project without affecting the wildlife/natural habitat. They will provide assistance with relocation wildlife if necessary. Regarding stormwater concerns, they are trying to limit runoff in designing this site. A majority of the water will be infiltrated by sandy soils. Runoff will drain into the wetland through a grass swale and catch basins will aid in run off from the impervious gravel surface. Regarding sight distance, the curvature of the area of concern is approximately 245ft. from the entrance of the site. The entrance is about 60ft. wide and has a 30ft. radius. The National Highway Standard for sight distance is 170ft, which is less than the curve of Gilson Rd. They may have to clear some of the trees in the sight triangle. Regarding parking, more parking spaces can be added if needed.

Mr. Dookran asked how much of the site will be cleared.

Ms. Shahnaj said all 12.7 acres are to be cleared; 3 acres have already been cleared.

Mr. Kelly asked how many soccer fields exist in the City now.

Mr. Caggiano said there are currently 14 recreational fields plus Stellos Stadium; 15 total.

Mr. Kelly asked if they have scheduling conflicts with 15 fields.

Mr. Caggiano said yes. Annual studies are conducted on field usage to keep up with the trends, and the studies indicated that the fields are overused. A 2010 report submitted to the Board of Aldermen showed the fields being used at a rate of 3x the national standard. In 2014, a third party report was generated depicting a similar trend and indicated that the City was 4-6 fields short. In regards to questions about fertilizers being used on site, they do fertilize the fields but this is based on soil tests and they use very little pesticides. He said he is appreciative of all of the feedback they've received this evening.

Mr. Kelly asked if there were alternative sites that could be used for soccer fields.

Mr. Caggiano said no, there is very little land in Nashua for fields. They want to have a minimum of two fields for scheduling purposes. A soccer field is about 60,000SF; to find a 4-acre parcel in the City that does not have any outstanding issues is very hard to do. They've looked at converting some of the existing fields to artificial turf, but this is very costly, and these types of fields only last 12-15 years.

Mr. Kelly said his understanding of the situation is that it is not a matter of there not being enough fields, but that the existing fields are in poor condition. Could the City use the schools' soccer fields during the summer?

Mr. Caggiano said the leagues are over by summertime.

Mr. LeClair asked if the Brownfield site across Gilson Rd had been researched as a potential site for the fields.

Mr. Caggiano said he believes that is a State-owner Superfund site.

Mr. Dookran asked how many miles/feet of trails will be eliminated by the addition of the soccer fields.

Mr. Caggiano said he would have to go out and measure to come up with an accurate number. If they move forward with the project, they would work to modify and re-route the trails so that the

space can be shared by everyone. Developing this area may reduce the prevalence of illegal activities that occur at this site, such as ATV riding, target shooting, bonfires, etc.

Mr. Dookran asked how the soccer leagues would be affected if these two fields were not built.

Mr. Caggiano said they might potentially have to cancel the Columbus Day Tournament, as there are much better complexes in surrounding towns. They also may have to make soccer a one-season sport.

Mr. Pedersen said Gilson Rd is dangerous for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic. How can they safely accommodate the number of vehicles coming out of the site onto Gilson Rd?

Ms. Shahnaj reiterated the findings of the sight distance study, and the recommendations from the City Traffic Engineer.

Mr. Dookran asked if there would be a pedestrian draw to the fields from the surrounding neighborhood.

Mr. Caggiano said he did not think it would be a big draw. Most players are going to drive to the fields. They do not see a lot of people walking or biking to soccer events.

Mr. Sloan, in response to the applicant's rebuttal, expressed concerns with the relocation of species; where would they go? Once the habitat is eliminated, species will no longer exist there. There is land between the cemetery and Middle Dunstable School that could be used instead of this site. Most people agree that the City is in need of more soccer fields, but the fields should not be placed on this site. The site cannot accommodate heavy traffic, especially during tournaments. About 8-10 miles of trails would be lost. It is still unclear as to why the City's Conservation Commission removed this site from protective status in 2006. He asked how often the Master Plan was revised.

Mr. Houston said the Master Plan being referred to at this meeting is not the same as the Citywide Master Plan. Public Works created their own Master Plan for this site but it was never adopted by the Planning Board.

Mr. Pedersen said he did not think the plan met the requirements for traffic safety. He said the plan did not meet requirements (4) and (6) under 190-46(D) Approval Criteria.

Mr. Dookran said City Traffic Engineer Wayne Husband indicated that the additional traffic will not be significant. The Board has been consistent in relying on his expert opinion.

Mr. Kelly said there are other areas to place soccer fields, but this site cannot be replaced. The site is useful to a lot of people and is a natural resource to the City.

Mr. Robbins said it could be argued that requirement (6) is not being met, as well as requirement (8), in accordance with 190-174B(1). The cellar hole is potentially a historic feature. Requirement (11) is also not being met.

Mr. LeClair asked as whether (6) or (11) are more appropriate. Indicating that the plan does not meet requirement (6) is saying that the Board is discounting the Traffic Engineer's report. He said the volume of traffic is not so much an issue as the danger of the road itself.

**MOTION** by Mr. Kelly to disapprove New Business - Site Plan #4 based on section 190-146(D) #4, #6, #8 and #11 of the Nashua Revised Ordinances and the following findings of fact.

- ) Approval Criteria #4 - The proposed use shall be able to coexist with the surrounding uses, and the proposed use shall not have significant impact on the surrounding uses. **The site plan did not comply or was not consistent with surrounding uses.**
- ) Approval Criteria #6 - The proposed use shall not generate excessive traffic or demands or parking as determined in accordance with Article XXIII... *[full excerpt per Nashua City Land Use Code 190-146(D)(6)]* **The site plan did not adequately address traffic concerns.**
- ) Approval Criteria #8 - The site plan attempts to balance with the allowed use the preservation of sensitive site features as described in § 190-174B(1). **The site plan did not attempt to balance with the allowed use the preservation of sensitive site features as described in § 190-174B(1).**
- ) Approval Criteria #11 - The site plan provides adequate means of handling on-site vehicular ingress and egress movements in relation to traffic movements along the abutting streets. **The site plan did not provide adequate means of handling on-site vehicular ingress and egress movements in relation to traffic movements along the abutting streets.**

**SECONDED** by Mr. Robbins

Mr. Dookran expressed concern that the Board was not following the process as set forth by the City bylaws and ordinances State statute.

Mr. Kelly said they have justified reasoning for denying the proposal.

Mr. LeClair said although he is not in favor of the plan, the motion as presented is overreaching. He cannot support the motion with the four items as stated.

**MOTION FAILED 3-3 (LeClair, Dookran and Mistry voted against)**

**MOTION** by Mr. Kelly to disapprove New Business - Site Plan #4 based on section 190-146(D) #8 & #11 of the Nashua Revised Ordinances and the following findings of fact.

- ) Approval Criteria #8 - The site plan attempts to balance with the allowed use the preservation of sensitive site features as described in § 190-174B(1). **The site plan did not attempt to balance with the allowed use the preservation of sensitive site features as described in § 190-174B(1).**
- ) Approval Criteria #11 - The site plan provides adequate means of handling on-site vehicular ingress and egress movements in relation to traffic movements along the abutting streets. **The site plan did not provide adequate means of handling on-site vehicular ingress and egress movements in relation to traffic movements along the abutting streets.**

**SECONDED** by Mr. Robbins

**MOTION CARRIED 4-2 (Mistry and Dookran voted against)**

5. Hindu Temple of New Hampshire, Inc. (Owner) - Application and acceptance of proposed site plan amendment to NR 2056 to construct a 1,066 sf addition. Property is located at 523-525 Broad Street. Sheet F - Lot 21. Zoned "R9" Suburban Residence. Ward 1.

**MOTION** by Mr. Robbins that the application is complete and the planning board is ready to take jurisdiction.

**SECONDED** by Mr. Pedersen

**MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

Richard Maynard, Maynard and Paquette Engineering

Mr. Maynard introduced himself as representing the applicant. He gave a brief overview of the proposal. He said they are requesting a waiver for providing an existing conditions plan.

**SPEAKING IN OPPOSITION OR CONCERN**

None

**SPEAKING IN FAVOR**

None

**MOTION** by Mr. Robbins to approve New Business - Site Plan #5. It conforms to § 190-146(D) with the following stipulations or waivers:

1. The request for a waiver of § 190-279(EE), which requires an existing conditions plan, is granted, finding that the waiver will not be contrary to the spirit and intent of the regulation.
2. Any work within the right-of-way shall require a financial guarantee.
3. Prior to the Chair signing the plan, minor drafting corrections will be made.

**SECONDED** by Mr. Pedersen

**MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Review of tentative agenda to determine proposals of regional impact.

**MOTION** by Mr. Robbins that there are no items of regional impact.

**SECONDED** by Mr. Kelly

**MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

2. Amendment to the FY 2017 Capital Improvement Program, adding one new project.

**MOTION** by Mr. Robbins to add the new project to the FY 2017 Capital Improvement Program.

**SECONDED** by Mr. Pedersen

**MOTION CARRIED 6-0**

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

None

**MOTION** to adjourn by Mr. Kelly. Meeting adjourned at 12:26pm.

APPROVED:

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Adam Varley, Chair, Nashua Planning Board

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Prepared by: Mindy Lloyd

Taped Meeting