Memo

Date: December 16, 2020

To: Public Works Commission

From: Susan Molzon, Senior Public Works Engineer

Subject: Burton Redevelopment at 180 and 266 Queen City Park Rd

As requested by the Public Works Commissioners, DPW Technical Services staff is providing this update to inform the Commission of DPW’s involvement in the development process for the Burton Hub facility and the recent infrastructure work we have undertaken nearby. The South End is growing and dynamic and we are pleased to share this snapshot of some of our recent work.

BACKGROUND

The City of Burlington’s Development Review Board (DRB) approved the Conditional Use application to create an 11,560 SF Performing Arts Center use within an existing 85,000+ SF structure and proposed façade improvements to existing building exterior as well as a permit for stormwater enhancements and parking layout revisions. Both decisions have been appealed to the Vermont Superior Court Environmental Division and are pending judgement.

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT AND TRAFFIC IMPACTS

Burton submitted a conditional use application for a performing arts center within an existing mixed use commercial building to convert 11,560 SF of vacant interior commercial space to a performing arts center. The maximum capacity for the performing arts center is 1,500. There is an additional 2,380 SF outdoor plaza associated with the proposed performing arts center. Burton’s primary industrial use of the building will remain. Additional non-industrial uses are contemplated but were not included in this application. This application was initially reviewed by the DRB on July 7, 2020. The public hearing was continued to August 4, 2020 and then again to August 18, 2020 and the DRB issued their Findings of Fact on September 1, 2020.
During the development review process, DPW Technical Services staff reviews traffic studies and provides comments or recommendations for consideration by the Development Review Board. However, DPW does not have a decision-making role in the development review process. A traffic impact study was developed by the Applicant and reviewed by DPW Technical Services staff. Traffic conditions in the vicinity of the site were analyzed and compared with and without the performing arts center, and with and without the Champlain Parkway for current traffic conditions and projected traffic in 2028.

For reference, DPW’s June 26, 2020 Memo providing comments and recommendations on the submitted traffic impact study is attached to this Memo. Based on the traffic study, the primary areas of concern are the traffic volumes at the intersection of Home Avenue and Pine Street during the evening peak prior to construction of the Champlain Parkway, and traffic operations at the intersection of Home Avenue and the Champlain Parkway during the evening peak.

As mitigation for these traffic impacts, and to ensure the successful monitoring and implementation of the Operational Management Plan, the DRB approved the following permit conditions in concurrence with DPW recommendations:

- Within the first 6 months of operation, the applicant shall perform a traffic assessment of how the Operational Management Plan is addressing traffic impacts and return to the Development Review Board, including opportunity for public comment, to determine if traffic conditions require modification.
- Daytime use of the performing arts center shall be limited to 300 attendees. Doors shall not open for daytime uses of the performing arts center before 9:00AM, and exiting times shall not occur between 4:00PM and 6:00 PM. Evening use of the performing arts center shall be limited to 1,500 attendees. Doors shall not open for weekday evening uses of the performing arts center before 6:30 PM (6:00 PM for weekends and holidays). In no case shall any use of the performing arts center have an exiting time past 2:00 AM.
- This zoning permit requires consistent implementation of the Burton Hub-Performing Arts Center (PAC) Operational Management Plan dated April 23, 2020. The Operational Management Plan must include provision for event traffic control at the intersection of Home Avenue and Pine Street, Central Avenue, and the nearby 1-lane bridge. The Operational Management Plan may otherwise be altered only upon review and approval by the Development Review Board following a public hearing.
- The Applicant will complete a post-construction traffic analysis of neighborhood traffic impacts along Home Avenue after the Burton Hub redevelopment project is completed. Traffic calming measures will be warranted if the results of this analysis demonstrate the predicted values for traffic volume and intersection operation have been exceeded, and the street qualifies for traffic calming under DPW’s guidelines. Costs for implementation of warranted traffic calming measures will be shared equally between the City and the Applicant.
- The Applicant will perform a traffic study analysis of the Champlain Parkway/Home Avenue intersection after the Champlain Parkway is opened to vehicle traffic to determine if mitigation of increased traffic related to the Burton Hub site is necessary for the intersection to function as designed.
STORMWATER ENHANCEMENTS

Burton submitted applications for stormwater enhancements and changes to the parking lot configuration to better manage stormwater on the 180 and 266 Queen City Park Road parcels. DPW Water Resources and Permitting & Inspections staff reviewed the submitted plans for conformance to the Ordinances and Zoning regulations and recommended approval of the submitted site plans by the DRB. The proposed improvements meet all Chapter 26 stormwater permitting needs and the proposed stormwater system is a net improvement compared to the existing conditions.

DPW INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

In Fall 2020, DPW repaved Queen City Park Road between Home Ave/Austin Dr and the one-lane bridge. This work included full-depth reclamation of the street which improves the strength of the subbase and extends its lifespan. After the paving was completed, a new striping pattern was installed which uses advisory lanes for pedestrians and cyclists. Advisory lanes are marked with a dashed white line, indicating that people can drive over the advisory lane when needing to yield to oncoming motor vehicle traffic. These markings may be used on streets that have a higher volume of traffic than neighborhood streets, but less traffic than major roadways. These lanes give people biking and walking a space to do so, while leaving space available for motorists to pass oncoming traffic. PlanBTV WalkBike master plan identifies Queen City Park Road (formerly Industrial Parkway) as a corridor for shared use lane markings and improved connectivity as a slow corridor. The City is still evaluating the feasibility and costs associated with separated pedestrian facilities on this street and is unable to install a sidewalk at this time. The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC), in partnership with South Burlington and Burlington, completed a scoping study in 2008 for improvements to the one-lane bridge on Queen City Park Road. The City’s 5-year capital plan has identified the recommended 2-lane bridge as a potential project, but funding has not yet been confirmed. The CCRPC, South Burlington, and Burlington are also discussing the breadth of a new scoping study to connect shared use paths and fill sidewalk gaps between the two communities. The schedule for that study has not been determined while the overall scope of work and funding availability is under review at the CCRPC.

We hope this memo is responsive to the Commission’s request for additional information on Queen City Park Road. I can be reached at smolzon@burlingtonvt.gov should you have any follow up questions.

ATTACHMENTS

DPW Memo Re: Burton Hub DPW Comments on Traffic Impact Study, dated June 26, 2020