



City of Auburn, Maine

Office Economic and Community Development
www.auburnmaine.gov | 60 Court Street
Auburn, Maine 04210
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PLANNING BOARD STAFF REPORT

To: Auburn Planning Board

From: Zach Mosher, City Planner

Re: Special Exception and Site Plan Review for the Construction of a new 60 Unit Assisted Living Facility Adjacent to Schooner Estates at 200 Stetson Rd

Date: April 10, 2018

- I. **PROPOSAL** – Will Conway of Sebago Technics LLC, agent for Auburn Memory Care, LLC is seeking approval of a Special Exception and Site Plan Review application to construct a new, 60 unit, 47,606 sf assisted living facility immediately adjacent to 200 Stetson Rd (PID: 291-009) pursuant to Chapter 60, section 60-45 (a) Projects requiring Site/Plan and Special Exception review and Chapter 60, Section 60-499 (b), (5) General Business use regulations. This assisted living unit facility is classified as a "care home" pursuant to Chapter 60, Sec. 60-2 Definitions which defines care homes as: "a rest, nursing, or convalescent home established to render domiciliary nursing care and board for chronically ill or convalescent patients, or persons who are infirm because of mental or physical conditions, but excluding a child care home or one for the care of mentally retarded patients, alcoholics, psychotics or drug addicts." Care homes are a special exception use in the General Business district, pursuant to Chapter 60, Sec 60-499 (b) 5 in the Auburn code of ordinances.

The proposed assisted living facility is immediately adjacent to Schooner Estates which is located at 200 Stetson Rd. The location of the new facility will be on a separate parcel, currently addressed as 190 Stetson Rd., immediately west and adjacent to Schooner Estates. The existing facility at Schooner Estates and this new facility, Schooner Memory Care, will operate on separate parcels as separate buildings. However, both facilities will share common access off of Stetson Rd and parking spaces as well as some functions. As such the existing building and the new proposed building will be referred to as the "Schooner Campus." The project is acquiring additional land from the parcel at 190 Stetson Rd and will create a new parcel of approx. 9.3 acres, zoned entirely within the General Business District.

The Planning Board is being asked to review and approve two separate items: 1) An amended site plan for Schooner Estates and 2) the proposed assisted living facility, called Schooner Memory. For the purposes of this staff report in Planning Board Actions and Planning Board Recommendations the Amended Site Plan will be addressed as PART A, and the new facility will be addressed as PART B.

The proposed building footprint for Schooner Memory Care (PART B) is approx. 47,606 sq. ft., while the proposed total sf for the project is at approx. 65,300 sq. ft. The building footprint consumes approx. 11.7% of the new lot. The applicant has met the ordinance's required parking spaces which is ½ parking space per bed by proposing 72 parking spaces on the new site which includes a total of 43 beds. There will be 30 employees present at the site at peak shift time.

THE SITE - Due to existing slopes in site topography, the building will be partially one story and partially two stories. A drop off area and parking area will be located at the front of the building and upper floor level, while the service area is located at the rear of the building at the lower floor level. In addition to a building designed specifically for memory care residents, the project will include landscaped areas, including three secure outdoor courtyards encouraging residents to enjoy the outdoors.

Access to the proposed development will be provided by the Schooner Estates primary access driveway at 200 Stetson Rd, and the new facility and Schooner Estates will be connected via a pedestrian walkway. A reciprocal parking easement will be created, ensuring that either building may use parking spaces on either site during special events. Since there are changes occurring at the existing site, both in terms of site layout and units, staff asked the applicant to submit a minor amendment to a site plan for the existing facility.

The amended site plan for the existing Schooner Estates (PART A) is to be reviewed in conjunction and in response to the new facility and the Planning Board is being asked to review and approve an amended site plan for the existing development. The changes at the Schooner Estates facility include changes to the function of some of the units (no change in overall number of units). More significantly, all of the residential care patients will be moved to the new facility. Also, while there is a net gain in parking spaces over both facilities, there are 18 parking spaces being removed on the existing Schooner facility. The total number of beds for both sites is 106 and total number of parking spaces proposed is 190 which amply meets the parking requirement of ½ per bed. There will also be an easement proposed for the new facility to share a segment of the existing access driveway.

Site Location of Development Review - Any project that proposes to create more than 3 new acres of impervious area is subject to Site Location of Development Review (SLODA) through MEDEP. For proposed new impervious area between 3 and 7 acres, the City of Auburn maintains delegated review authority from MEDEP. Projects that propose to create over 7 acres of new impervious are submitted directly to MEDEP. Schooner is currently under a Site Location of Development permit and DEP will view this new project as "common scheme" which means DEP views the impervious area of the existing facility and the new facility as one number even though they will occupy separate parcels and be separate buildings because of the shared access point and parking. The proposed impervious area of the new facility will be approx. 2.3 acres and existing impervious area of Schooner Estates is 3.6 acres, totaling approx. 5.9 acres. The city of Auburn has been granted delegated authority by MEDEP for this development. The project will also require a Maine DEP NRPA permit and US Army Corps permit for proposed wetland fill which is handled directly by the applicant.



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Traffic Movement Review - The new facility by itself is expected to generate 17 peak hour trips. Schooner Estates generates 42. The total for the new facility and existing Schooner Estates will be 59 peak hour trips. None of the proposed residents at the new facility will have cars, so traffic will mainly be comprised of employees, visitors, and deliveries. Therefore, the new facility will not require a traffic movement permit from MaineDOT because the peak hour trips does not exceed 100.

II. **DEPARTMENT REVIEW**

Police Department:

A. No comment.

Fire Department:

A. The Fire Department was happy with the inclusion of a hammerhead turnaround for the back of the building, and also mentioned that a hydrant in front and a hydrant in back of the property would be required. Fire also wondered if there would be two stairwells serving the extended wing of new facility and the applicant responded that there would be.

Water and Sewer District:

A. AWSD commented that the applicant has two options for water and sewer service:

- 1) Run new water and sewer service lines from Stetson Rd to the new development.
- 2) Install new Mains per the District's specifications within the access rd to Schooner Estates, provide an easement and inspection access to the District. Once the District has accepted this new main, multiple connections can be made.

The applicant has chosen option 1 and AWSD has reviewed their plans and given their approval. For sewer, the applicant will be installing a private pump station.

Engineering Department:

A. Engineering asked about the overall impervious area and whether there was an existing Site Location of Development permit for Schooner Estates. The applicant responded by indicating they were not certain if there was an existing SLODA permit. Engineering mentioned if the overall impervious exceeded 7 acres, then Auburn no longer possesses delegated review.

Planning Department:

- A. The Planning Department asked the applicant about the private access point to Schooner and whether, as constructed, it could handle the increased traffic generated by both facilities. The applicant determined the width of the access drive to be 24' and constructed to public standards. Planning also mentioned that DEP was likely to regard this as a "common scheme of development" and therefore would view the proposed development and Schooner Estates as one development when calculating impervious area.

It was also mentioned that there is not enough parking at the existing Schooner Estates development especially during special events or peak visiting times and therefore some cars end up parking on Stetson Rd. The applicant mentioned that there would be a change in the staff level at the Schooner Estates with 37 heavier care residents currently located at Schooner would be moved to this new facility including the staff associated with those patients. Overall then there would be a decrease in the need for staff parking at the existing facility as the units left behind would be renovated for people that would not need the same staffing needs. The applicant also mentioned that the new facility would create 12 more parking spaces than previously proposed and overall the number of parking spaces would increase from 130 to 190 spaces.

- III. **PLANNING BOARD ACTION**- The Planning Board is also being asked to approve the amended site plan for the existing Schooner Estates facility, pursuant to Chapter 60, Sec. 60-1277 Site Plan Review.

PART A. The applicant has submitted an amended site plan that addresses the minor changes at the existing facility. The Planning Board needs to make its decision on approval based on the Site Plan Law, Sec. 60-1277. Objective- "In considering a site plan, the planning board shall make findings that the development has made provisions for:"

(1) Does your site plan protect adjacent areas against detrimental or offensive uses on the site by provision of adequate surface water drainage, buffers against artificial and reflected light, sight, sound, dust and vibration; and preservation of light and air?

(Yes, the site plan protects adjacent areas from these elements.)

(2) Is the convenience and safety of vehicular and pedestrian movement within the site and in relation to adjacent areas adequately addressed?

(Yes. Pedestrian movements are properly separated using curbing and signage.)

(3) Are the proposed methods of disposal for wastes adequately addressed?

(N/A)

(4) Does your site plan provide adequate protection of environment features on the site and in adjacent areas?

(Yes, the site plan provides adequate protection of environmental features.)



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PART B. The proposed assisted living facility is classified as a care home in the General Business (GB) district, pursuant to Chapter 60, Sec. 60-499 (b) 5 use regulations. This use is a Special Exception and therefore requires Special Exception & Site Plan Review, pursuant to Chapter 60, Sec. 60-45 (a). The project must meet the requirements of Sec. 60-1336 Special Exception and Sec. 60-1277 Site Plan Review of the Auburn Code of Ordinances.

SPECIAL EXCEPTION - A Special Exception is defined as follows: "**Special exception** means a use that would not be appropriate generally or without restriction throughout the district, but which, if controlled as to number, area, location or relation to the neighborhood, would promote the public health, safety, welfare, order, comfort, convenience, appearance, prosperity, or general welfare. Such a use may be permitted in such district as a special exception, if specific provision for such special exception is made in this zoning chapter and reasonable restrictions imposed by the planning board are complied with."

The zoning ordinance describes the conditions needed for approval in:

Sec. 60-1336. Conditions-*As conditions prerequisite to the granting of any special exceptions, the board shall require evidence of the following:*

(1) *Will your special exception application fulfill the specific requirements, of the zone the property is located in relative to such exception?*

(Yes, the proposed site plan meets all of the dimensional standards of the General Business District, including minimum lot size, building lot coverage and setbacks for commercial uses within the General Business district. The Assessing Dep't says they will classify this development as commercial, not residential.)

(2) *Will the special exception application neither create nor aggravate a traffic hazard, a fire hazard or any other safety hazard? (The residents of the facility do not drive, therefore there will be very little traffic impact, outside of employee shifts. The building will be sprinkled, and a new fire hydrant and fire lanes will be provided. There will also be a hammerhead at the rear of the building for turnaround. Fire turning radii requirements have been met. No other safety hazards are anticipated.)*

(3) *Will the special exception application block or hamper the recommendations of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan regarding the pattern of highway circulation or of planned major public or semipublic land acquisition? (No, the site is not located in an area where these public improvements are planned).*

(4) *Will the special exception alter the essential characteristics of the neighborhood and/or depreciate the value of property adjoining and neighboring the property under application?*

(No, existing vegetation will be retained and supplemented and the building construction will use quality materials. No impacts on adjacent properties are anticipated.)

(5) Have reasonable provisions have been made for adequate land space, lot width, lot area, stormwater management in accordance with the requirements of a Site Plan (Section 60-1301) such as, green space, driveway layout, road access, off-street parking, landscaping, building separation, sewage disposal, water supply, fire safety, and where applicable, a plan or contract for perpetual maintenance of all the common green space and clustered off-street parking areas to ensure all such areas will be maintained in a satisfactory manner?

(Yes, adequate provisions for all of these elements have been made.)

(6) Are the standards imposed in the special exception, at least as stringent as those elsewhere imposed by the city building code and by the provisions of this chapter?

(Yes, the standards imposed are at least as stringent.)

(7) Are essential city services which will be required for the project are presently available or can be made available without disrupting the city's master development plan?

(Yes, the applicant has met with the Plan Review Committee and all essential services are available or will be constructed to necessary specifications.)

SITE PLAN REVIEW- A Site Plan Review is required as part of a Special Exception review. The applicant has met the requirements of the Site Plan Law in their application. The Planning Board needs to make its decision based on the Site Plan Law, **Sec. 60-1277. Objective-** "In considering a site plan, the planning board shall make findings that the development has made provisions for:"

(1) Does your site plan protect adjacent areas against detrimental or offensive uses on the site by provision of adequate surface water drainage, buffers against artificial and reflected light, sight, sound, dust and vibration; and preservation of light and air?

(Yes. The applicant has provided an adequate stormwater management plan, lighting plan, landscape plan and erosion control plan to protect the adjacent areas from the above detrimental and offensive uses.)

(2) Is the convenience and safety of vehicular and pedestrian movement within the site and in relation to adjacent areas adequately addressed?

(Yes. Vehicular and pedestrian movements are properly separated using curbing and pavement markings.)

(3) Are the proposed methods of disposal for wastes adequately addressed?

(Yes, the site will be served by proper sanitary sewer infrastructure and solid waste disposal facilities.)

(4) Does your site plan provide adequate protection of environment features on the site and in adjacent areas?

(Yes. Existing undisturbed areas will be protected by adequate erosion control measures.)



IV. **STAFF RECOMMENDATION –**

PART A – The staff has reviewed the amended site plan for the existing facility and recommends **APPROVAL** with the findings that it meets the 4 conditions of Chapter 60, Sec. 60-1277 Site Plan Review.

PART B - The staff has reviewed the application for the construction of a new 60 unit, assisted living facility called Schooner Memory Care located immediately adjacent to 200 Stetson Rd and recommends **APPROVAL** with the findings that it meets the 7 conditions of Special Exception review, pursuant to Chapter 60, Sec.60-1366 Special Exception and the 4 conditions of Chapter 60, Sec. 60-1277 – Site Plan Review of the Auburn Code of Ordinances.

V. **CONDITIONS -**

Should the Planning Board approve the application, the approval is subject to the following conditions.

1. No development activity until any bonding or inspection fees is determined and received by the Auburn Engineering Department.
2. The Engineering Department shall approve the stormwater management plan prior to any construction.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Zach Mosher".

Zach Mosher
City Planner