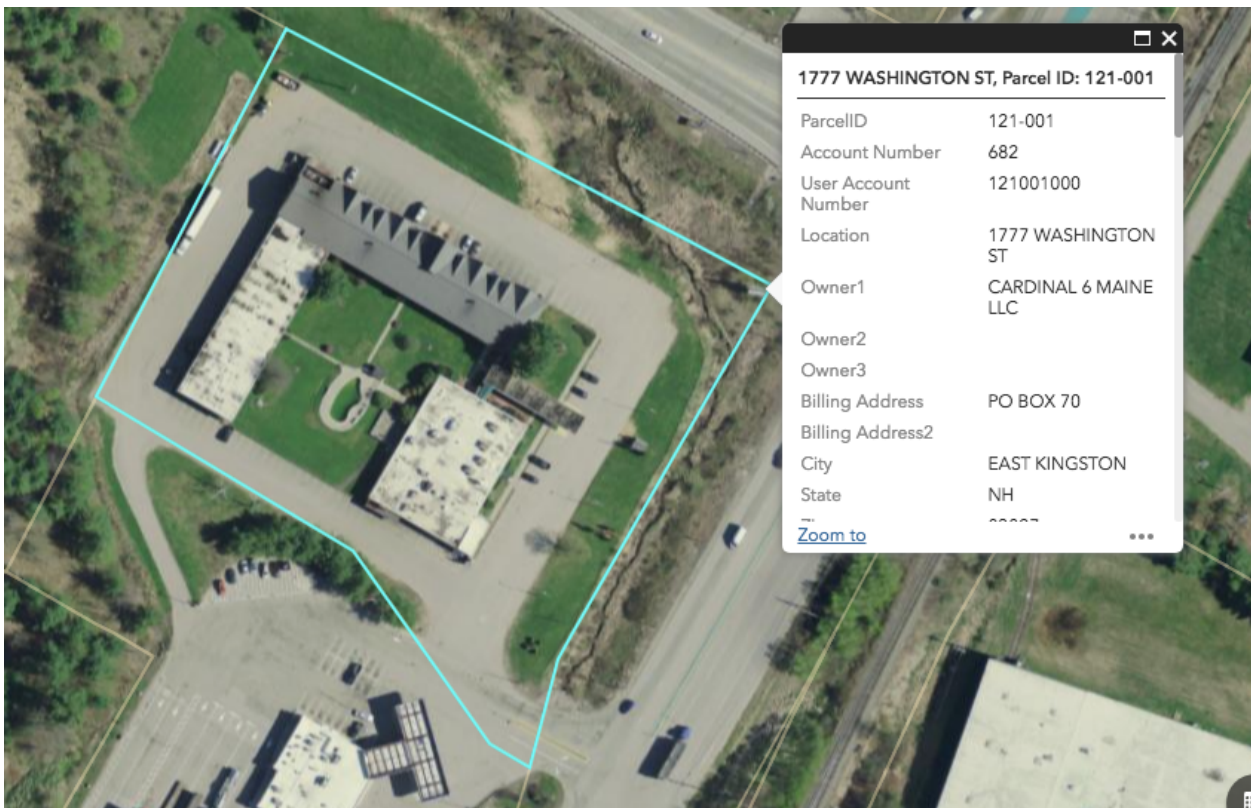


To: Auburn Planning Board  
 From: Megan Norwood, City Planner II  
 Re: Proposed Site Plan/Special Exception Auburn Marketplace: Redevelopment of a restaurant building to create 4 units – A quick service drive-thru, a sandwich shop/retail and the remainder as the lobby for the hotel, located at 1777 Washington Street (PID: 121-001) in the General Business Zoning District.  
 Date: April 14, 2020

I. PROPOSAL – Sebago Technics, on behalf of Pythia, LLC, is applying for a Site Plan Review and Special Exception in accordance with Sec. 60-45 and 60-499(b)(17): Any new building of 5,000 square feet or more or any existing building... which will occupy an area of 5,000 square feet or more in the General Business District.



The proposal is for the redevelopment of the existing Fireside Inn and Suites. The site currently contains about 100 rooms and suites and has a restaurant building that closed a few years ago. The proposed redevelopment is of the restaurant building and includes dividing the space into 4 units: One for a quick service restaurant with a drive-thru window on the south side of the building, one for a sandwich shop/retail, another tenant area that is an unknown commercial unit and the remainder of the building will be used as a lobby for the hotel. Approximately 5,452 square feet will be renovated inside the former restaurant for the proposed redevelopment project.

The Applicant is unsure at this time which tenant will use the quick service restaurant with drive-thru, however, the traffic estimates were provided for a Dunkin Donuts which has its own set of DOT traffic standards in terms of volume and traffic counts. A Traffic Movement Permit is required for this project. The current estimated traffic during peak hour is 88, with the proposed modifications, 303 trips are expected. The Traffic Movement Permit meeting has been scheduled with both Maine DOT and Androscoggin Transportation Resource Center (ATRC) Traffic Engineers. Staff recommends a condition that requires compliance with the requirements and issuance of the Traffic Movement Permit before the issuance of a building permit.

At the Development Review meeting, Department Heads expressed concerns about the building entrance location and pedestrian movements to access the hotel. Crosswalk striping and signage were added to the plans to better facilitate pedestrian movement between the two buildings.

Applicable Off Street Parking & Loading Requirements:

154 parking spaces exist currently with 7 handicapped spaces.

**Sec. 60-607(3):** Requires a 25 x 20 foot loading space for buildings having a gross floor area of less than 10,000 square feet. Staff did not see areas on the plan designated specifically as loading areas.

**Sec. 60-607(11):** Exterior lighting provided in any parking or loading area shall be arranged and shielded so that it is deflected away from adjacent properties used for residential purposes and from any public highway. The property is adjacent to the Exit 75 ramp; it does appear there is a small buffer strip in that area. LED wall-pack lighting is proposed on the exterior of the building. Any additional lighting proposed should be installed in accordance with this ordinance.

**Sec. 60-607(12)(C):** A substantial bumper of concrete, masonry, steel or heavy timber or a curb of similar material or an earthen berm shall be placed at the head of each parking or loading stall that abuts a structure, rear or side setback or property line, sidewalk, street ROW, or landscaped area to prevent vehicles from rolling into such areas. Parking spaces 10-23 abut a landscaped/grass area. The Planning Board will have to decide if a curb should be installed in this area. Curbing is proposed between the building and those abutting parking spaces.

**60-608 (Parking Requirements):** For mixed uses, required parking is calculated as the sum of various uses computed separately unless it can be demonstrated to the Planning Board's satisfaction that the need for parking by each occurs at different times. Retail, business or institution uses require one space per 300 square feet of gross floor area and restaurants require one space per 3 seats. Staff recommends a breakdown of how parking will be distributed between the tenants and the Inn. For example, will the Inn have a separate designated parking area?

**Sec. 60-700(4):** Safe sight distance on a 45MPH road is 450 feet. The sight distance at this location is over 710 feet in both directions.

Landscaping

New landscaping is proposed along the easterly side of the existing building, along the front of the building and along both sides of the access drive for buffering and aesthetics.

Stormwater



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The current impervious area on the site is 137,700SF, with the proposed changes, the impervious area is expected to be 141,455SF. Where the project will disturb less than one acre, a Stormwater Management Plan is not required. Erosion and Sedimentation Control notes were included in the materials provided.

### Comprehensive Plan Considerations

The Comprehensive Plan has this parcel designated as a Limited Business Development District. The district encourages the redevelopment of small and moderate scale nonresidential uses that have good vehicle access and are served or can be served by public water and sewer. When adjacent to residential uses, the LBD District intends to assure activity within the district has minimal adverse impact on adjacent residential areas. *Suggested* uses in the LBD District include:

- **Small and moderate size retail uses (<40,000 square feet)**
- Personal and business services
- Business and professional offices
- **Restaurants excluding drive-thru service**
- **Hotel, motels, inns, and bed & breakfast establishments**
- Residential uses (including single and two-family, townhouses, and multi-family housing)
- Community services and government uses
- Small and moderate size (<20,000 square feet) fully-enclosed research, light manufacturing, assembly, and wholesale uses
- Contractors and similar activities
- Motor vehicle service
- Motor vehicle sales limited to a subordinate or accessory use where the principal use is motor vehicle service
- Recreational uses and facilities

The issue really circles back to the fact that a City-wide rezoning was not accomplished after the Comprehensive Plan was developed in 2010. This creates a problem for the PB in situations like this. Typically, with our zoning ordinance we interpret the word shall as a requirement and should as a suggestion. The Comprehensive Plan purposely uses should instead of shall because it serves to act as a guide for a desired pattern of future land use and development as opposed to a regulation.

### II. DEPARTMENT REVIEW-

- a. **Police**- No comments.
- b. **Auburn Water and Sewer** – Mike Broadbent of the Auburn Water and Sewer Department has concerns with the use of individual meters and is working with the Applicant to address the issues.
- c. **Fire Department/Code Enforcement** – No comments.
- d. **Engineering** – No comments.
- e. **Public Services**- No comments.
- f. **Economic and Community Development** – Assuming safety concerns are addressed to the satisfaction of AFD and APD the department supports the proposed development of the lot.
- g. **Addressing** – An Addressing Plan shall be provided for each of the units.

PLANNING BOARD ACTION- The proposed project requires review and findings for approval of Sections 60-1277 and 60- 1336:

**A. Site Plan Review, Section 60-1277:** In considering a site plan, the planning board shall make findings that the development has made provisions for:

- 1. Protection of 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;**

*Applicant Response:* The site has been previously developed such that the use of the site currently occurs. Surface water drainage will flow to the existing catch-basins and vegetated swales as currently occurs. The paved parking minimizes the potential for dust and vibration. The only new lighting will consist of new LED wall-pack fixtures and additional, new landscaping is proposed along the perimeter of the redeveloped area as well as interior to the project for additional buffering. No detrimental or offensive uses will occur to adjacent areas.

- 2. Convenience and safety of vehicular and pedestrian movement within the site and in relation to adjacent areas;**

*Applicant Response:* The site will utilize the existing driveway, which provides access to this property and the abutting site. The drive-thru access drive will be 22-feet in width to allow for bypass traffic of the waiting vehicles. Additional pedestrian walkways are proposed to provide separate and handicapped accessible access to the doorways. The redeveloped site will provide safe and convenient access to the facility.

- 3. Adequacy of the methods of disposal for wastes; and**

*Applicant Response:* The existing site served by sanitary sewer infrastructure and solid waste disposal facilities, which will be utilized for the redeveloped site.

- 4. Protection of environment features on the site and in adjacent areas**

*Applicant Response:* Almost all of the site development will occur within areas of existing pavement except for the replacement of some lawn area with the access drive. No impact is anticipated to environmental features on or adjacent to the site.

**B. Special Exception, Section 60-1336.** - The board shall require evidence of the following:

- 1. That the special exception sought fulfills the specific requirements, if any, set forth in the zoning ordinance relative to such exception.**

*Applicant Response:* The site plan of the redevelopment meets all of the dimensional standards of the General Business District and we are unaware of any specific requirements of the District for the drive-thru.

- 2. That the special exception sought will neither create nor aggravate a traffic hazard, a fire hazard or any other safety hazard.**

*Applicant Response:* The special exception proposes a drive thru at the facility currently serviced by a driveway access from Washington Street. The MDOT classifies this driveway intersection as a High Crash Location (HCL) as 9 crashes have occurred in the last three years. We see no specific pattern to these crashes that could be easily corrected, nor do we anticipate aggravating that situation with the special exception. The proposed redevelopment of the interior of the building will utilize the existing sprinkler system and will include building acceptable fire alarms and additional access doors so as to not create a fire or other safety hazard.

- 3. That the special exception sought will not block or hamper the master development plan pattern of highway circulation or of planned major public or semipublic land acquisition.**



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*Applicant Response:* Based on our review of the applicable codes, plans and studies, this proposed drive-thru will not block or hamper the master development plan pattern of highway circulation or of planned major public or semipublic land acquisition.

- 4. That the exception sought will not alter the essential characteristics of the neighborhood and will not tend to depreciate the value of property adjoining and neighboring the property under application.**

*Applicant Response:* The proposed project consists of the redevelopment of an existing restaurant to include drive-thru service, which will not depreciate the value of the surrounding properties and may increase their value.

- 5. That reasonable provisions have been made for adequate land space, lot width, lot area, stormwater management in accordance with section 60-1301 (14), 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.**

*Applicant Response:* The redeveloped site impacts little area that is not currently impervious and a vigorous landscaping plan is proposed within the area of redevelopment which will be maintained by the applicant. The majority of the other aspects of the redeveloped site will be the same as existing.

- 6. That the standards imposed are, in all cases, at least as stringent as those elsewhere imposed by the city building code and by the provisions of this chapter.**

*Applicant Response:* The attached plans and are submitted with this application to show that the redeveloped site meets the Site Plan and Zoning standards as no building expansion is proposed. We anticipate that all aspects of the redevelopment of the building will be reviewed in association with the building permit application process to assure that all proposed improvements meet applicable building, electrical and plumbing code requirements.

- 7. That 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.**

*Applicant Response:* All City services required for this project are currently available at the site and the proposed drive-thru will not disrupt the City's master development plan.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS-** Staff recommends the Planning Board find that the Site Plan for the proposed development, meets the requirements of Sec. 60-1277, and further that the application meets the requirements of Special Exception, Sec. 60-1336, and APPROVE the project application. Staff recommends the following conditions:

- A Traffic Movement Permit shall be issued before the issuance of a building permit and the project shall comply with all conditions included in the Traffic Movement Permit.
- Before construction, the Applicant shall work with the Auburn Water and Sewer Department on a metering plan for the building that is designed to the satisfaction of the Auburn Water and Sewer Department.
- A loading area shall be designated on the plan for the proposed businesses.
- The Applicant shall provide a breakdown of the parking area shown on the site and the different uses.
- An Addressing Plan for the new units shall be provided to the Addressing Officer before the start of construction.

- (And potentially) Curbing shall be installed between parking spaces 10-23 and the landscaped area abutting Washington Street South.

*Suggested Motion:* I make a motion to approve the Site Plan/Special Exception for the redevelopment of a restaurant building to create 4 units – A quick service drive-thru, a sandwich shop/retail and the remainder as the lobby for the hotel, located at 1777 Washington Street (PID: 121-001) in the General Business Zoning District with the following conditions:

- A Traffic Movement Permit shall be issued before the issuance of a building permit and the project shall comply with all conditions included in the Traffic Movement Permit.
- Before construction, the Applicant shall work with the Auburn Water and Sewer Department on a metering plan for the building that is designed to the satisfaction of the Auburn Water and Sewer Department.
- A loading area shall be designated on the plan for the proposed businesses.
- The Applicant shall provide a breakdown of the parking area shown on the site and the different uses.
- An Addressing Plan for the new units shall be provided to the Addressing Officer before the start of construction.
- (And potentially) Curbing shall be installed between parking spaces 10-23 and the landscaped area abutting Washington Street South.

*Megan Norwood*

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City Planner II