



City of Auburn, Maine

Office of Planning & Permitting

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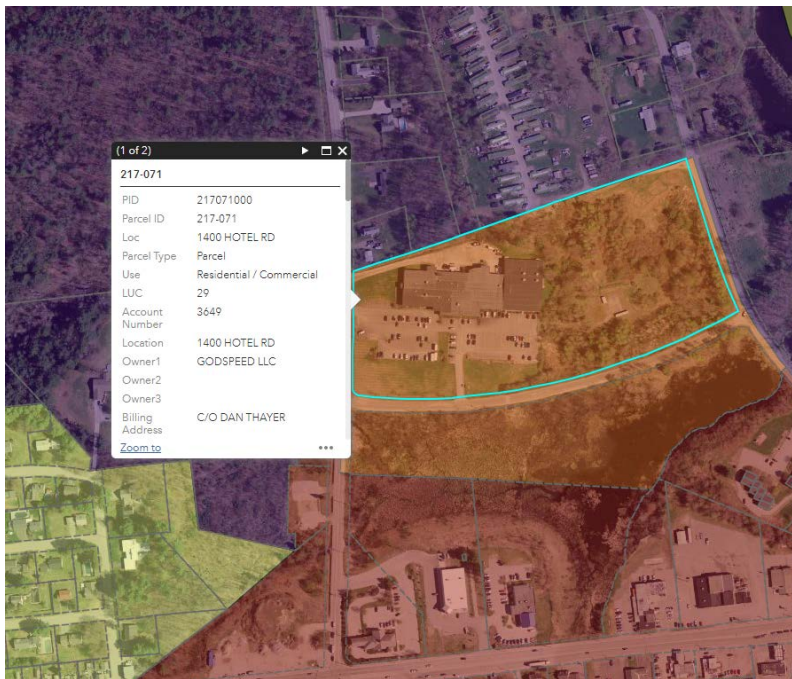
To Auburn Planning Board

From: Katherine Cook, Planning Coordinator

Re: Twin City Thunder Hockey Academy- 1400 Hotel Road

Date: October 11, 2022

Proposal: Public Hearing/ Site Plan Review: Twin City Thunder Hockey Academy, located at 1400 Hotel Road, Parcel I.D. 217-071, proposes to repurpose a portion of the existing site and building as a hockey training area with a dormitory. The proposal is pursuant to Chapter 60, Article IV, Division 12-General Business District and Chapter 60, Article XVI, Division 2- Site Plan Review, and Division 3-Special Exception.



Dormitories are not expressly listed in any zoning district, but hospitals, care homes, boarding houses, and lodging houses are included as some special exception uses under the General Business District (Sec. 60-499 (b)(5)). A lodging house is a dwelling which, for compensation, lodging or lodging and meals is provided to more than four persons and where a proprietor or owner may reside in the

building. No provisions for cooking in individual rooms other than a main kitchen are allowed, (Sec. 14-2). This definition matches the applicant’s proposed use.

Twin City Thunder Hockey Academy hosts two hockey teams and associate coaches/ resident advisors on a seasonal, rotating basis. The older student/ athlete teams will use the Norway Savings Bank ice arena for practice, attend St. Dom’s Academy, and return to the facility for studying, continued training, and sleeping/ social activities. Summer leagues will travel between the ice arena and lodging house.

11,085 square feet of the existing office space is proposed to be converted to lodging house accommodations (Use Group R-1) with twelve dorm rooms and additional common areas. The site has existing parking including 51 spaces and two accessible spaces for the Twin City Thunder. They will use the common dumpster and loading docks on the site. No changes to the current circulation or parking lot are proposed.

This is an industrial property originally built in 1968. It has gone before Planning Board in 2002 to grant a Special Exception to approve a heating and air conditioning business. The Memorandum dated August 27, 2002, specified that most of the building is approved, as well, for future tenants if those future uses are allowed in the zoning district.

Planning Board Action: Staff suggests that the planning board review this proposal under the appropriate ordinances, hold a public hearing, and vote on the matter.

Chapter 60, Article IV, Division 12-General Business (GB) District.

This district is intended to include commercial uses serving both the city and the region, together with normal accessory uses compatible with a cohesive and attractive shopping and office area.

The proposal meets the minimum lot size with over 10,000 square feet. (Sec. 60-500 (1)) Less than 30 percent of the lot is covered by structures (Sec. 60-500 (2)). The parcel has frontage on Hotel, Belgrade Ave, and Stevens Mill Rd. The existing building conforms with all dimensional and setback requirements in the General Business District including front and side setbacks each of at least 25' (Sec. 60-500 (3)).

Chapter 60, Article XVI Division 2- Site Plan Review.

The purpose of site plan review is to ensure that the design and layout of certain developments permitted by special exceptions, or other developments noted herein, will constitute suitable development and will not result in a detriment to city, neighborhood or the environment, (Sec. 60-1276).

Sec. 60-1277. - Objective.

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;
2. Convenience and safety of vehicular and pedestrian movement within the site and in relation to adjacent areas;
3. Adequacy of the methods of disposal for wastes; and
4. Protection of environment features on the site and in adjacent areas.

Chapter 60, Article XVI, Division 3- Special Exception.

The planning board can approve or deny the proposal as a special exception in the General Business District if they find that they fit with the intent of the zoning ordinance and are in harmony with the city's master development plan, and that the special exception will serve public convenience and welfare, and not involve dangers to health or safety, (60-1335).

Sec. 60-1336. - Conditions.

- a. As conditions prerequisite to the granting of any special exceptions 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.
 2. That the special exception sought will neither create nor aggravate a traffic hazard, a fire hazard, or any 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.
 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.
 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.
 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.
 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.
- b. As part of the granting or the denial of any such petition for a special exception, the board shall show by written statements filed in its records of such application and by a statement in the minutes of the board how the special exception sought fulfills the foregoing conditions. An applicant may request the board to make a statement as to how the special exception may be granted without danger to health and safety and without substantially derogating from the essential intents and purposes of the zoning ordinance or of the city master development plan.
- c. Approval of a special exception may be made subject to such conditions, modifications and restrictions on the proposed land use as the planning board may deem necessary to carry out the foregoing objectives and conditions. Any development of the land uses allowed by special exception shall be carried out only in conformity to such conditions, modifications and restrictions in addition to those that may be called for by an approved site plan for the same site and shall be enforced by the municipal officer charged with enforcement in the same manner as specified for approved site plans. Any change, addition or enlargement of a use allowed by special exception shall require approval of the planning board in the same manner as specified for the original special exception.

(Ord. of 9-21-2009, § 7.2B)

Peer Review:

Engineering Department: Applicant addressed request to include a circulation plan to depict traffic within and around the site in the additional application information narrative dated September 27, 2022, and the Site Parking Plan, sheet C100, dated September 27, 2022.

Planning Department: Applicant addressed staff request to provide a lighting plan, signage details, setbacks, and highlighted space where dorms would be. These details are shown on the additional application information narrative dated September 27, 2022, the Parking Photometric Plan, sheet C101 dated September 27, 2022, and the Site Parking Plan, sheet C100, dated September 27, 2022.

AWSD: No comment.

Fire Department: Applicant addressed the request to delineate utilities. The updated plan dated September 27, 2022, shows existing overhead equipment, water, sewer, gas mains, and lighting.

Police Department: No comment.

Findings of Fact:

Based on the application materials submitted for the October 11, 2022, planning board meeting, and on discussion during this meeting. Suggested findings include the following:

1. The proposal meets all requirements of the Article IV, Division 12, General Business District.
2. The proposal meets all requirements of Article XVI Division 2, Site Plan Review.
3. The proposal meets all requirements of Article XVI Division 3, Special Exception.
4. The proposal aligns with Auburn’s 2021 comprehensive plan.

Suggested Motion:

I make a motion to approve repurposing a portion of the existing site and 11,085 square feet of the building located at 1400 Hotel Road, Parcel I.D. 217-071 as a lodging house subject to the following **conditions:**

1. A building permit must be issued by the City of Auburn’s building inspector and associated fees must be paid prior to commencing construction.