

Village of Schoharie Planning Board

Nov. 13, 2025

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance:

Board members: Tom Hitter, Steve Babbitt, Dave Knoop

Board Consultants: Dave Brennan, Mike Harrington

Applicants: Mainbridge Commons team: Dr. Hazem Elbially, Teresa Bakner, Chris Knox, Brian Messina

Chairperson Tom called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Board member Mike Ullman was absent. We reviewed the draft meeting minutes from the Oct. 28 meeting and no corrections were requested; Tom made a motion to approve the draft minutes, seconded by Dave, and the vote was 3-0 in favor.

Old Business: Mainbridge Commons

Tom reviewed the status of the pending actions by other government bodies we await before we can advance with the subdivision/lot line adjustment, site plan, and special use review processes:

- Zoning Change Process Incomplete: The Village Board approved the requested zoning change at their mid-October meeting, but the process requires further steps: They need to enact a local law and file it with the Secretary of State.
- County Referral Completed: The County Planning Commission approved the SEQR negative declaration with no conditions tacked on at their early Oct. monthly meeting.
- Fire Dept Approves Hydrant Placement and Fire Vehicle Access Routes: 2 new hydrants will be located on a new water main extension along Furman Dr, near the 2 Mainbridge driveway entrances.
- 2 Area Variances will be considered by Zoning Board of Appeals at a Nov. 17 meeting.

Next, we addressed some questions raised during the Oct. 28 public hearing:

- Could more runoff be directed away from the brook towards the state highway or to the drainage ditch that runs south of The Birches, beneath the state highway near Sunset Dr, then westward to Schoharie Creek?
This doesn't appear feasible. DOT has rules limiting increased runoff onto a state highway corridor, and runoff would have to be conveyed across the Ballard or The Birches properties to reach the drainage ditch.
- Will the Ballard driveway Right Of Way incur increased runoff, since it is sandwiched between the two raised pads of fill, yet it sits several feet lower in elevation?
It seems probable, but we await site elevation cross-sections and drainage piping profiles to better understand the situation. So, no answer for this yet.
- Will the mature willow trees alongside the brook be cut down?
Only 4 of the willow trees are on Mainbridge Commons land at the extreme southeastern corner of their parcel. 5 or 6 others alongside the brook are on adjoining properties and certainly won't be touched. Chris felt at least 3 of the 4 Mainbridge willows would need to be removed, but he will have the engineers reassess; the concern is that if a tree is spared, but it suffers extensive root damage from grading, it will probably end up dying and become a hazard anyway.

For the remainder of the meeting, we reviewed 2 lists of open items, one a list prepared by Teresa, the other a comments letter from Lamont Eng pertaining to the most recent drawing release (Oct. 21 date stamp).

Traffic Analysis Says Current Highway Facilities Are Sufficient: Teresa distributed copies of a traffic analysis commissioned from Lansing Engineering. The analysis concludes that the peak hour traffic generated by the development, between 110 and 158 trips, when spread across the 2 entries onto the state highway, falls below the DOT threshold for triggering further, more in-depth analysis: **the existing highway facilities are sufficient as-is.** But the consultants also recommend that the medical/dental office traffic be directed using signage to the southern driveway as the preferred entry, and steering them away from using Furman Dr.

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Mike sought more expansive commentary pertaining to the troublesome Furman Dr/Bridge St/state highway intersection: could the traffic engineering experts offer any insights or discussion regarding the challenges created by the Bridge St and Furman Dr being offset slightly, instead of being directly opposite, and the state highway being a dog-leg and not straight?

Further design details requested to assess drainage/stormwater: The 2 Great Am. Stormwater pumps behind the building shell had been extricated from their pits and examined. They were 230 volt, 3-phase, 4.5 Kilowatt, which helps in understanding site runoff flows. Chris said field perc tests showed good infiltration toward the rear of the property, but not so great that it would degrade the performance of the gravel wetland. The disturbed soil where the parking lot used to be is tougher to assess, but there is some infiltration. Mike recommended the infiltration be optimized to lessen the discharge into the brook, and that the stormwater analysis model be adjusted to account for this. The site fill pad will be relatively flat, but there is a low berm alongside the brook, which would create a low swale puddle, and there is also a low spot at the end of Furman Dr. **Several site cross-sections should be added** to the drawings, and piping profiles, to enable assessment of the drainage.

Still Awaiting National Grid Response: Crawford (Chris) still awaits engagement from National Grid to discuss details for connection to the electrical grid.

Non-Conversion Agreement Needed for Flood Plain Permit: FEMA flood plain rules basically prohibit basements in new construction being used as inhabited space (office or residential). Before the Code Enforcement Officer can issue the Flood Plain permit, Mainbridge Commons must provide a non-conversion agreement for the underground parking area, guaranteeing to not convert this space to an inhabited use. Chris confirmed that the portion of the structure below grade would be floodproofed.

Rainwater harvesting: The design is being revised to route it into the gravel wetland and not surface discharge into brook.

Phasing Plan: A simplified description or depiction of the phasing plan presented in the SWPPP will be added to a site plan drawing.

Snow removal: Snow stockpile areas appear small; a contingency snow removal plan should be prepared. Will available parking be consumed to stockpile snow? Their intent is for snow to be transported to an offsite disposal spot.

Fire Access Route Connectivity to The Birches: Add the Ballard driveway on The Birches parcel to the site plan drawing and show where the cross-over route to access the rear of The Birches connects to it.

Wayfinding signage: Architect will add traffic flow arrows to drawings which direct the commercial building traffic to the primary entry to Main St at the southern end of the complex and not to the Furman Dr entry.

Why 2 separate water lines to each structure, instead of 1? This practice is common at other municipalities Crawford has served.

The underground Cultec recharger units: Additional detailing needed to show how to find and access the inspection port.

Landscaping needed along Eastern & Western sides of the satellite parking lot: Architect will add details to drawings.

Light Pole dimensional data should appear on site plan drawing: Mike suggested that a data table be added to the drawings which provides basic dimensional and performance features of the light poles and lighting fixtures.

Minimum width for an ADA-compliant sidewalk? 36 inches, with a 5 ft node or 'passing space' every 200 ft, or, for a sidewalk of uniform continuous width, the minimum width = 5 ft.

We scheduled the next meeting and adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Future Meetings: Tuesday Dec. 02

Respectfully,

Steve Babbitt

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