



City of Newton, Massachusetts
 Department of Planning and Development
 1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459

Ruthanne Fuller
 Mayor

Barney S. Heath
 Director

INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 3, 2021

TO: City Council

FROM: Barney Heath, Director of Planning and Development
 Jennifer Caira, Deputy Director of Planning and Development
 Cat Kemmett, Planning Associate

SUBJECT: §5-58 of the City of Newton Ordinances, request for site plan approval to create an addition and renovate the maintenance facility at the Commonwealth Golf Course

CC: Alejandro Valcarce, Public Buildings Department
 Design Review Committee
 Law Department

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Planning & Development Department conducted a Section 5-58 review of the proposed renovations to the Commonwealth Golf Course maintenance facility. The functions that are served by the building include cold storage for maintenance equipment and materials, a repair bay for equipment upkeep, a grinding room to maintain and repair equipment parts, parts storage, a makeshift staff break room, shower and toilets and an office for the course facility director.



The Newton Commonwealth Golf Course is a municipal golf course that was originally opened in 1897. When first built, a portion of the golf course was located in Boston. That portion of the land, which housed a maintenance building, was sold off around 1966, and the current course maintenance facility was constructed at that time on a narrow portion of the site that falls along the Newton/Boston boundary.

The existing structure is a 40' x 100', single-story, flat roofed building. Since its construction in

1966, the only noteworthy capital improvement project was a roof replacement in 2016. The four exterior walls are single-wythe, load-bearing, non-insulated Concrete Masonry Units walls set on a concrete spread footing and foundation.

An addition and partial renovation of the existing structure is being proposed by the operators of the golf course to expand and improve the facility to better suit its variety of functions that support the golf course. The addition will alleviate some of the existing equipment and cold storage needs. The plans for renovation include enlarging the repair bay to provide adequate space to safely work on equipment. The grinding room and parts storage will be rebuilt in different locations for a more efficient use of space. The current shower/ toilet/locker/break room space will be rebuilt, enlarged and separated to create appropriate spaces for each function. At the mezzanine level, the facility director's office will be reconstructed to allow transparency to the operations below in the repair bay as well as direct access to the exterior. The renovations also include creating a bedroom for an intern who will work at the facility.

The energy efficiency within the heated spaces will be increased, the exterior envelope will be improved and all service utilities to the building, including water, gas and sanitary, will be replaced. The entire building, existing as well as the addition, will be outfitted with sprinklers. The proposed renovations to the existing building will extend the useful life of the facility and improve the working conditions for the staff who maintain the golf course.



SITE PLAN APPROVAL PROCESS

Prior to the construction of any municipal project, Section 5-58 of the Newton City Code requires reviews of associated plans by the following:

- The Director of Planning and Development for consistency and compatibility with the *Newton Comprehensive Plan* and other applicable planning and analytical studies;
- The Design Review Committee for layout, construction, and relationship to surroundings;
- The Public Facilities Committee to provide a forum for public comments and discussion about proposed buildings and their locations, followed by City Council action.

Once the site plans are formally approved by these bodies, they become the schematic design upon which the final set of project plans and construction drawings are based. Significant changes to the schematic design or to the structural and programmatic plans of the new project must be resubmitted to the Design Review Committee and to the City Council. After the requirements of §5-58(a)(1) through (a)(6) have been satisfied, the City Council can appropriate funds for preparation of detailed construction drawings.

Work on the facility is scheduled to begin in Fall 2022. Plans submitted by the Public Buildings Department were prepared by Raymond Design Associates, Inc dated August 11, 2021. These are the plans that have been reviewed by Planning Department staff.

I. PROPOSED FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

The project proposal includes an addition to the existing structure, totaling 3,000 square feet in gross floor area. The repair bay will be enlarged, the grinding room and parts storage area will be rebuilt. The shower/locker room area will be renovated and reconfigured so that the area is larger, and each function of the area has its own dedicated space. The interior renovation will also include reconstructing the facility director's office and creating a new sleeping area for a seasonal facility intern.

The planned improvements also include increasing energy efficiency systems and replacing the majority of the building's utilities, including water, gas, and plumbing services. Degraded elements of the building envelope will be fixed, and windows replaced. An automatic sprinkler system will be installed in both the existing building space and the addition.

II. TECHNICAL REVIEW OF SITE PLANS UNDER SECTION 5-58

1. Location and Existing Site Conditions

The maintenance facility is located on the west side of Undine Road, at the northwest edge of the golf course site, close to the property line side yard setback. The west edge of the lot alongside the building is a very steep downward slope to the abutting Town Estates Condominiums in Boston.

The golf course is located on the south side of Kenrick Street between the intersections of Magnolia Avenue and Lake Shore Road. The address is 212 Kenrick Street, and the work proposed would occur on Parcels 72039 0017 and 72039 0018 on the east side of the course. The City of Newton owns this property, which includes an actively operating golf course. Including the golf course as well as other open space with associated buildings, paved parking lots, concrete sidewalks, cart paths, and landscaped areas, the total parcel area is approximately 993,358 square feet. The existing maintenance building has a footprint of approximately 4,000 square feet.

Vehicular access to the site is from either the south through Boston off Undine Street or from the north down the paved access road to the golf course property. Vehicular access is restricted to those two dead end points of access with no access from the east or west.

The maintenance building is located within the Public Use District (PU) zoning district, and therefore not required to meet parking requirements.

2. Proposed Improvements

Significant portions of the existing interior will be rebuilt, and the layout changed. An addition of 3,000 feet in gross floor area will be constructed. The envelope will be improved through repairs to the masonry on the exterior of the facility. A new stormwater management system will be installed, drainage work done at the hill on the southern side, and portions of the access road south of the facility will be repaved. The existing metal windows will be replaced with larger, more energy efficient windows.

In the interior, below grade utilities will be installed and the concrete floor will be cleaned and sealed. A new automatic sprinkler system will be installed in compliance with MA State Building Code and NFPA 13. All plumbing fixtures will be replaced, as well as the water heating system. All new and existing water piping will be insulated. Some HVAC and electrical services and fixtures will also be updated.

III. OTHER REVIEWS

- **Associate City Engineer.** Plans were presented to the city engineer twice, and the proponents have responded to comments. The city engineer has provided a recommendation to present to the DRC for site plan approval.
- **City Traffic Engineer.** This project has not been reviewed by the City Traffic Engineer. However, as the facility is only accessible to staff, there are no anticipated changes to traffic patterns or demands as a result of this project.
- **Fire Department.** Fire suppression sprinklers will be installed throughout the building. The Public Buildings Department should continue to coordinate with the Fire Department to meet all applicable safety codes.
- **Conservation Commission.** Not subject to review by Conservation Commission
- **Newton Historical Commission.** Not subject to review by Newton Historical Commission

IV. CONSISTENCY WITH NEWTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND OTHER PLANS/STUDIES

The 2007 *Newton Comprehensive Plan* places value on the protection and preservation of large open spaces, in keeping with the plan's emphasis on the importance of the preservation of natural resources and opportunities for active and passive recreation. In the interest of accommodating passive recreation, shared usage of space, and green-space linkage, the plan lists the following as a goal: "To pursue courses of action necessary to protect and preserve remaining large open spaces, including golf courses and parcels owned by institutions and private entities" (Section 7, Page 4). Similarly, the 2020-2027 Open Space and Recreation Plan lists the protection and expansion of open space resources as a priority, and notes the valuable role golf courses play in providing recreational opportunities and ecological benefits (Section 4, Page 68).

Because the maintenance facility plays a function in a number of important aspects of golf course upkeep and storage, and also serves as a necessary hub for golf course staff, these planned improvements to the building align with the City's consistent goal across different plans and policies of preserving and maintaining open space and outdoor recreation opportunities.

V. SITE PLAN REVIEW CRITERIA

In accordance with Section 5-58, the City has filed plans for Site Plan Approval. These are to be reviewed in accordance with the procedure outlined in Chapter 30: Article 6, Chapter 5, Section 5-58 of the Revised Ordinances. The following is a review of the submitted plans against the relevant criteria established in this section.

A. Convenience and safety of vehicular and pedestrian movement within the site and in relation to the adjacent streets, properties or improvements

The access roads and maintenance facility itself are not open to the general public. There is currently no wayfinding signage for vehicular access to the facility, and no new signage is planned for this renovation. The convenience and safety of vehicular and pedestrian movement should remain much the same as the existing site now.

B. Adequacy of the methods for regulating surface water drainage

Architects Raymond Design Associates in partnership with Garcia, Galuska, DeSousa Consulting Engineers, Inc have provided a Drainage Analysis report for this project (Attachment A). Between the 3,000 square foot building addition and the paving alterations, there will be a net gain of 2,100 square feet of impermeable surfaces on the site. However, the new subsurface drainage system that will be installed is designed to handle a volume of increased stormwater runoff that will come as a consequence of that increase in impermeable surface. The project is in compliance with all standards of the Stormwater Regulations.

C. Screening of parking areas and structures from adjoining premises. Location of parking between the street and existing or proposed structures shall be discouraged.

There is currently a stockade fence along the eastern edge of the parking area that shields the view of parking from the abutters. This fence will be maintained, and the parking area will be improved with tree screening alongside the proposed addition. No new lighting is planned in the parking lot.

D. Avoidance of topographic changes; tree and soil removal shall be minimized.

None of the existing tree growth on the site was planted. The self-seeded trees in the location of the building footprint will be removed. There are plans to add a row of trees alongside the addition to the east to soften the view for the apartments to the east of the site.

E. Consideration of site design including relationship to nearby structures.

The maintenance facility borders several apartments to the east of the project site in Boston, and the contractor has identified as a goal improving the view of the facility for residents of these apartments through new tree planting. The site design is responsive to potential runoff and drainage issues associated with the project.

VI. **CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT**

The contractor should submit a Construction Management Plan (CMP) to the City Engineer, and the Commissioner of Inspectional Services for review and approval before any construction activities related to this project begin.

This plan should identify hours of construction, expected length of construction, location of proposed on-site contractor parking, and material storage and staging areas.

VII. **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Director of Planning and Development has determined that the site plans for this project are consistent with the *Newton Comprehensive Plan* and other relevant plans and studies, including the site plan review criteria listed in Section 30-23.

If the Council and Executive Office choose to approve these plans, prior to applying for Building Permits the Public Buildings Department should submit:

- 1) The most current plans showing any alterations to proposed egresses, pedestrian crossings, or landscaping to the Engineering, and Fire Departments;
- 2) A construction management plan to the ISD and Engineering Departments