



Amesbury Technical Review Committee

March 5, 2026

City Hall Auditorium

62 Friend St.

9:30 am

In Attendance: Chief Bailey, Lauren Blatchford, Joe Buckley, Howard Snyder Nipun Jain, Amanda Armington, Jim Wilson, Joe Neipp, Lauren Blatchford, Chief Serino, and Becky Frey

Absent: Nick Cracknell

Nipun Jain called the meeting to order at 9:34 am.

Pre-Application Presentations:

1. 10 Chestnut Street

Ben Becker, owner, and Dan MacRitchie, civil engineer, were present to speak to the application. Dan MacRitchie commented that they were looking to do improvements on the paved areas of the property. They are planning to repave all the areas with hatched lines. There is one small area on the west side that will be new pavement. The site has some grading issues they would like to fix before paving it. There currently is no subsurface drainage system and the roof runoff drains directly onto the paved area. In addition, there is a utility pole in the lower right-hand corner in the middle of the paved access area. They would like to move it to one side or the other. Then they would create parking in that area. There is a hydrant in the road on Chestnut St. They would consider relocating that further off the street and rebuilding a granite curb island to provide some protection. Nick Cracknell had suggested flipping the planned accessway to the other side of the hydrant than what is proposed. That would create a straight shot. The goal was to start an initial discussion with everyone and understand if a site plan review would be triggered with this.

Chief Serino questioned if they knew where the easement for public accessway was. Dan MacRitchie responded that the survey plan did not show a public access easement. Chief Serino commented that it was his understanding there was an easement around the building. Fire will need access around the building. They will need to figure out the road width and confirm accessways. Coming in from Chestnut St. is the best possible access for Fire. The biggest thing will be nailing down access around the building. Dan MacRitchie commented that it was their intention to give a 20-foot-wide access width from Washington St. to Chestnut St. They ran templates for the largest vehicle, and it works. They are on the same page with that. They may not want it open all the time, so it may make sense to put a gate on the Washington St. side.

Joe Buckley commented that if there was no easement in the title search, then it doesn't exist. Chief Serino agreed he just wanted to understand what was there and what was not. Chief Serino commented they can look at what was needed as far as a fire lane or



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easement was concerned. He was supportive of this project but wanted to make sure it worked.

Joe Buckley commented that he was not sure if this street had been accepted.

Jim Wilson commented that the building has had issues with residents on Washington Street in the past and the fence has helped with that. Ben Becker confirmed they installed a gate and fence. Chief Serino commented that he was not opposed to a gate as long as Fire had access via a knox box. If there is a public access easement, then they can't do a gate.

Dan MacRitchie commented that they were looking for input on drainage. They would like to try to capture the roof water that now drains on the pavement. Ideally, they would like to pipe it into the city storm water catch basin. There is a catch basin on the corner of the property on Chestnut St. That is their first choice, but if they can't do it, then they would look for input on other options. They also wanted to confirm that moving the hydrant off the gutter line of the street and bringing it in with a curved island would be acceptable. Joe Buckley commented that if it did not stay in the right of way, then they would need an easement. Dan MacRitchie commented that they could keep it in the right of way. They would need to talk to the Water Department as well. Their objective is to make the existing paved area more workable. They will coordinate with DPW about piping into the catch basin.

Nipun Jain questioned what the lot size was. Dan MacRitchie responded it was 1.6 acres. Nipun Jain questioned what the impervious surface percentage was. Dan MacRitchie responded it was high number, but he would need to follow up with the exact number. Nipun Jain commented that it looked like it was 30-40% of the site. Nipun Jain questioned if they looked at whether this was in any shape or form subject to environmental permitting. Ben Becker responded they were just asking to fix up the existing pavement and make a slight extension. Dan MacRitchie added there may be some opportunities to offset the paved extension area. They could make it a net 0 pervious calculation to what's there now.

Ben Becker commented that he wanted to discuss the entrance on the Washington St. side. There is a double storefront door that opens to the street. They want to put something there to make the step up to code. It is on the property line for the city, so they are not clear on how to do that. They could put in a ramp parallel to the building with a handrail. Jim Wilson questioned if that entrance was used for loading. Ben Becker responded that it was not. It is just for tenants and pedestrians coming and going. Jim



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Wilson commented that it will need to be an accessible ramp. Joe Buckley commented that if it was in the right of way, then they would need to get permission to put it in the road.

Nipun Jain summarized what the applicant was looking to do. They are looking to improve access for parking and pedestrians on Chestnut St. and Washington St., better organize parking, introduce landscape areas, address drainage onsite and onto public ways, and improve the access at the rear of the building. This will require some changes to loading areas and waste management areas on the site. Nipun Jain commented that many things have happened in this industrial area. Slowly over time it has converted to commercial use with tenants. There is increased need for public access. This is an opportune time to make improvements and follow the site plan review standard. That will create a baseline for compliance for this non-conforming site as best as possible. They should file a site plan review application and look to section XI.C. for the zoning code requirements. They can ask for waivers. This will address public safety concerns about circulation and access. DPW will have a say on connecting storm water and hydrants. Dan MacRitchie agreed with the caveat that they really are not changing the use at this point. They are looking to make it as good as they can. They may not be able to comply with current standards. Nipun Jain responded that was understood. It would be good to know what the limitations are. The proposal will be making improvements to make the site function better from a drainage and safety perspective. To show those improvements against the performance standards, then they can explain where they can't meet certain requirements.

Amanda Armington commented that she did a desk top review of the plan, and they are outside the 200-foot riverfront buffer. This does not appear to be subject to conservation jurisdiction.

Lauren Blatchford agreed with Chief Serino's comments on public access.

Howard Snyder commented that he would draft access comments and coordinate with them offline. They may be able to pull the parking away from the mill building to get more of an area between the parking and entrance for a vegetation improvement. Ben Becker responded that the parking is pushed in because there is a garage door to the right. There could be an opportunity to put vegetation somewhere else in that area. Howard Snyder clarified he was talking about moving the parking to put in a strip between the building and parking.

Chief Bailey agreed with Chief Serino's comments on public access.



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Nipun Jain commented that they should make sure Washington Street is not used for parking and increase pedestrian safety. They can make those entrances more inviting. They should work with Chief Serino to make sure there is adequate fire safety access. They can look to provide more exciting access to the facility. They can use this opportunity to make it more pedestrian friendly.

Jim Wilson commented that he would coordinate with them about the step on Washington St. offline.

Joe Buckley commented that they should make an appointment with DPW to talk about water and sewer. There is a sewer manhole on the site. It could have water and sewer line in there. That is DPW's responsibility to maintain. It would be good to check against our records. When it comes time to address the sidewalk, they will need permits and can discuss standards.

Nipun Jain commented they should coordinate with OCED as well. Nipun Jain questioned if the water from the roof daylighted on Washington St. Ben Becker responded that there are 3 roof drains on the main building that come out to the center. They had a backup 4-5 years ago that flooded 2 units. They rerouted 2 roof drains to outlet on Washington St. Ideally, this would get rid of that. It was a temporary measure. They would like to put that into a catch basin. Nipun Jain agreed it should be resolved.

Administrative:

1. Minutes – 12-17-25

Chief Serino motioned to approve the minutes from the 12-17-25 TRC meeting. Seconded by Nipun Jain. The motion passed unanimously. Joe Buckley abstained because he was absent.

General Communications:

Chief Serino motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:11 am. Seconded by Nipun Jain. The motion passed unanimously.