

CITY OF RUTLAND, VERMONT
Development Review Board Minutes
Thursday March 26, 2020
HEARING #1 re: 194 Woodstock Avenue

Development Review Board Members: Stephanie A. Lorentz, Al Paul, Jim Pell, Steve Wilk and Mike McClallen. Members present: Mike (Chair), Lorentz, Wilk and Pell.

Also present: Zoning Administrator Tara Kelly.

At 6:06 PM Chair McClallen called to order the Public Hearing to consider an application from Tesla Inc. to install six Tesla electric charging posts and equipment at Stewarts Shop Corp. 194 Woodstock Avenue in the Zoning Gateway Business Woodstock Avenue.

McClallen explained that following the applicant's testimony the Board will ask questions and then open the hearing to the general public for questions. This hearing will not be adjourned but continued for 10 days so that abutters who were unable to call in may submit additional evidence. On April 6 the DRB will reconvene the hearing to consider any new evidence and adjourn the hearing. Tara will forward any additional evidence to the DRB and applicants.

Anyone wishing to participate in the hearing was given a chance to swear in. In attendance for this hearing were the applicants, Edward Noseworthy and Trevor Smith of Tesla and Matt Tilden of Dewberry Engineers. There was 1 additional member of the public in attendance, Michael Moser, who stated he was simply observing the meeting.

Chair McClallen asked the applicants to present their project.

The following testimony was offered by the applicants: Edward Noseworthy thanked DRB for holding the hearing remotely due to the COVID-19 challenge. The proposal is for an electric vehicle charging station at Stewart's located at 194 Woodstock Avenue. The project is for six charging posts in the existing 6 parking spaces located closest to the corner of Stratton and Woodstock Avenues. Feeding the posts is a new electric utility service that will include a transformer that will feed a switch gear similar to those at home and two cabinets. Tesla is proposing some relocation to the native landscaping that Stewarts has created as well as additional Arbor Vitae to help stealth the equipment. These elements are in keeping with the existing site.

Trevor Smith provided additional information regarding the posts. There are two existing super charger stations at other Stewarts and this would be third. There has been success with the other locations. The average dwell time expected at the stalls is 20 minutes. These are a great amenity for locals or those traveling through the area over the weekend.

DRB member Lorentz noted some of the landscaped area on either side of the parking area is being removed in order to enlarge the parking area. Ed said we are carving out a few feet on the west and

eastern parking to create one additional parking space in that area. The charging ports are approximately 4 feet high and the transformer is nearly 7 feet tall.

Stephanie asked how tall the planned landscaping bushes between the transformer and the road are. Ed responded roughly seven feet tall. They are just over the height of the tallest piece of equipment they are installing.

With regards to demand, Trevor Smith of Tesla noted that they are building a long-term investment. They don't want to build for existing demand or even 2-3 years. It's a sizable investment so they build it to last for 5-10 years of forecasted demand. The Supercharger stations, such as what is proposed, tend to get high-peak utilization so this isn't everyday local use. Rather than local users, they are likely to be Tesla owners going skiing and hiking in the region. The forecast is for 4-6 all charging at once on the weekends during the heaviest utilization times. Only two parking spaces will be dedicated to Electric Vehicles only. The remainder will have signage that non-electric vehicles are welcome to park in the stalls for 10 minutes maximum. Trevor shared that in Brattleboro, VT they see just under 800 charge sessions per month and in the summer it was over 1,000. Nationally the use tends to increase 50-100% year over year.

DRM member Lorentz asked how many parking places will be left after the installation? Ed noted that 2 spots would be dedicated to electric vehicles, and one regular stall is being added. This results in the net loss of one parking space compared to what is on-site today. Stephanie asked where the air pump going will be moved. Ed responded that it will be moved to the west side of the stalls so they can keep the charge stalls together.

DRB member Wilk verified the parking space numbers and noted this is a good location and nice set up with a good plan and good presentation.

DRB member Pell asked if the project will result in an increase in traffic. Trevor said yes there will be an increase of traffic which is part of the charm for Stewarts as it helps their revenue and provides a unique amenity that is only available in a handful of locations in the state. It is about a 20-minute stop that will be needed to plug in your vehicle to make it to your next destination.

Chair McClallen asked for other questions from the general public. Hearing none, he asked the applicant for their closing remarks.

Ed asked about next steps and when a decision would be expected or general timeline that could be shared. Mike said the hearing will be tabled until April 6 to allow for the public to provide evidence. There will be a hearing to consider any new evidence and to formally adjourn the hearing. The DRB has 45 days to make a decision which is appealable within 30 days to the Environmental Court.

Ed added that Tesla is amenable to any small changes and to accommodate concerns. Tabled until April 6 at 6pm.

Respectfully submitted, Tara Kelly