



Town of Bristol, Rhode Island

Planning Board

10 Court Street
Bristol, RI 02809
bristolri.gov
401-253-7000

DRAFT DECISION OF BRISTOL PLANNING BOARD

Comfort Inn & Suites – Major Land Development Project

Master Plan Decision

OWNER/APPLICANT: D & M Boca Development, LLC

PROPERTY ADDRESS: Gooding Avenue, south side approximately 50 feet east of the intersection with Broadcommon Road

ASSESSOR'S PLAT/LOT: Plat 111, Lot 1

Motion:

“The Bristol Planning Board hereby grants conditional approval to the Master Plan phase plans. Approval is based upon the following findings of fact and conclusions of law.

I. Procedural History

1. A pre-application meeting was held with the Planning Board on March 13, 2025.
2. A Master Plan application was submitted on May 23, 2025, with supplemental materials provided on June 6, 2025, and August 8, 2025, and was certified complete on August 13, 2025.
3. A technical review committee meeting was held on August 26, 2025.
4. The deadline for action was mutually agreed upon in writing by the applicant and the Planning Board with the deadline being March 27, 2026.
5. A public hearing was advertised for September 2025 and as requested by the applicant, was continued 4 times to January 8, 2026 and then continued to February 12, 2026 and then to March 5, 2026.

II. Project Description

1. The materials submitted for the Master Plan Phase application are:
 - Master Plan Application dated 5/15/25 and Checklist dated 4/8/25 with application fee submitted May 23, 2025;
 - Master Plan Submission “Comfort Inn and Suites” by DiPrete Engineering dated 7/9/2025 Revision 5 Sheets 1-13 of 13 along with Property Line Survey Sheet 14 of 14 by Barker Land Surveying

DECISION OF BRISTOL PLANNING BOARD
Comfort Inn & Suites – Major Land Development Project
Master Plan Decision

- Building Plans dated 5/6/24 and Elevations dated 3/12/24 by Silvestri received May 23, 2025
- Project Narrative and Environment Impact Statement dated revised June 6, 2025
- Two-hundred Foot abutters List and Map submitted May 23, 2025
- Traffic Impact Assessment provided by Solli Engineering dated as revised January 10, 2024 submitted May 23, 2025;
- Geotechnical Design Basis Report by Pare Corporation dated August 2015 submitted May 23, 2025
- Stormwater Management Report by DiPrete Engineering dated March 27, 2025 as revised
- Fiscal Impact Study by JDL Enterprises, dated May 2025
- Water Availability Request Form from Bristol County Water Authority dated January 27, 2025
- Written review by the Bristol Water Pollution Control Department dated August 25, 2025
- Permit to Alter Freshwater Wetlands from RIDEM dated December 6, 2024;
- Revised RIDEM Permit dated July 10, 2025
- Tax Certificate submitted May 2025
- Colored Elevation rendering dated 8/4/25 by Silvestri Architects
- Exterior Elevations by Silvestri dated 8/6/25
- Photometric Plan dated 5/6/24 by Silvestri Architects
- Landscape Architecture Plan by DiPrete dated 8/7/2025
- Report on Comprehensive Plan Consistency Analysis from Pimental Consulting dated January 28, 2025 and received on December 30, 2025.

III. Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law

After considering the submission and testimony of the Applicant, as well as the testimony and submissions of the public during the course of the public hearing, the Board conditionally approves this application for the following reasons:

(1) The proposed development is consistent with the comprehensive community plan and/or has satisfactorily addressed the issues where there may be inconsistencies;

- The Board accepts and relies upon the testimony of the Applicant's land use expert, which stands uncontroverted, that the proposed hotel is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The hotel requires no zoning relief or waivers and the use is permitted by right in the general business zoning district. Although objectors and members of the Board raised questions about whether environmental concerns bear on this required finding, the Board accepts the advice of counsel that environmental concerns cannot be used to deny a project at the master plan stage of review, and that framing these concerns as an issue of comprehensive plan consistency is not legally sound. That said, the Board does believe that a hotel with a smaller footprint and reduced

DECISION OF BRISTOL PLANNING BOARD
Comfort Inn & Suites – Major Land Development Project
Master Plan Decision

height and room count would be more consistent with the Town’s Comprehensive Plan. As noted below under conditions of approval, the Board will require the Applicant to provide plans, renderings, and a market analysis/fiscal impact study for a hotel with a smaller footprint and reduced height and room count.

- Policy E to Goal 1 in the Land Use Element “Maintain the character of Bristol and make sure that new development does not adversely impact the integrity of the Town.
- Policy K to Goal 2 in the Housing Element “Require new developments stay within a scale that is appropriate to Bristol and to surrounding homes” -- Goal 2 is “Ensure that neighborhoods are livable places” .
- Policy J to Goal 2 in Housing “Promote good design in all future developments”

(2) The proposed development is in compliance with the standards and provisions of the municipality’s zoning ordinance or has obtained relief from the same, or another provision of this chapter that exempts compliance with a specific provision or standard;

- The proposed hotel is fully zoning-compliant and requires no relief from the Zoning Ordinance or waivers from the Regulations.

(3) There will be no significant negative environmental impacts from the proposed development as shown on the final plan, with all required conditions for approval;

- The Board shares the public’s concern that development on this property may have negative environmental impacts; however, as noted above, the Board accepts the advice of its counsel that the master plan stage is not the time to make this finding, as the finding explicitly refers to the final plan stage. Additionally, unlike many proposed developments that are presented to the Board for review, in this case, RIDEM has already approved a wetlands permit for the project. The Board intends to revisit this finding at the next stage of review once detailed engineering plans have been submitted and evaluated by the Town’s peer review engineer.

(4) The subdivision, as proposed, will not result in the creation of individual lots with any physical constraints to development that building on those lots according to pertinent regulations and building standards would be impracticable. (See definition of Buildable lot). Lots with physical constraints to development may be created only if identified as permanent open space or permanently reserved for a public purpose on the approved, recorded plans; and

- This finding is not applicable as no subdivision has been proposed.

(5) All proposed land developments and all subdivision lots have adequate physical and permanent physical access to a public street unless there are local zoning ordinance provisions allowing exceptions to this requirement or the applicant has obtained the required relief from this provision.

- This finding is satisfied because the existing and proposed conditions include access to the property via Gooding Avenue.

DECISION OF BRISTOL PLANNING BOARD
Comfort Inn & Suites – Major Land Development Project
Master Plan Decision

IV. Conditions of Approval

The proposed development shall be subject to the following conditions of approval:

1. Revised Engineering plans based on comments from Fuss and O'Neill in their review memorandum of August 22, 2025;
2. Revised plans to address
 - a. any proposed lighting in the rear parking lot (photometric plan),
 - b. snow removal area,
 - c. a trash enclosure to screen the dumpster;
 - d. a 6' opaque fence on the west side in addition to the proposed arborvitae bordering the abutting residential property on Lot 9, Plat 111, 78 Gooding Avenue.
 - e. accurate location of driveway and abutting residential property on Lot 9, Plat 111, 78 Gooding Avenue.
3. Revised plans to indicate a generator or a plug in for the emergency pump station as requested by the Fire Chief at the TRC meeting to accommodate occupants during a power outage event.
4. An operations and maintenance agreement for the proposed drainage system/stormwater management including a determination on an amount for an escrow account to guarantee the applicant's maintenance of the drainage.
5. In order to further mitigate site drainage and runoff, the parking area must have pervious pavement with a maintenance plan for same;
6. Revised and updated plans and renderings per the recommendations of the peer review architect in their August 15, 2025 report, including revised architectural façade plans (suggested alternate renderings A & B) so that the building fits into the New England character of Bristol rather than the standard chain hotel façade.
7. Revised plans for a smaller building, including alternate layouts for a smaller footprint, reduced height, and fewer rooming units, which have implications for drainage in the Silver Creek Watershed, as well as implications for traffic and implications for Comprehensive Plan consistency and neighborhood compatibility.
8. A Market Analysis, to be peer reviewed, on the hotel's viability based on the proposed number of rooming units and the alternate smaller layout with fewer rooms and a reduced height and footprint.
9. Agreement for the maintenance of the sewer including an estimate for escrow to guarantee the maintenance of same.
10. Review of the Landscaping Plan by the Conservation Commission.
11. A report from a licensed arborist on the trees to be removed from the project site and tree removal to be offset by either the planting of additional trees in the watershed or a dollar value to be paid to the Town, dollar value as determined by the Town's Tree Warden, for replanting trees elsewhere in the watershed. (Reference Section 6.3 of the Subdivision and Development Review Regulations "Mitigation of Negative Impacts").

DECISION OF BRISTOL PLANNING BOARD
Comfort Inn & Suites – Major Land Development Project
Master Plan Decision

12. Conservation easement to the Town for the remainder of the property of approximately 8 acres to be left as permanent and protected open space.
13. Peer review of the Fiscal Impact Statement, Traffic Assessment, Landscape Architect Plan, and Stormwater Management Report with the cost for same to be reimbursed by the applicant.
14. The applicant shall record a deed restriction prohibiting future use of the property as “co-living property,” meaning a residential property that includes one or more sleeping units that are independently rented and lockable, with residents sharing separate kitchen and/or bathroom facilities with other sleeping units in the building. Such a deed restriction shall not require the applicant to forfeit any rights they may have with regard to adaptive reuse, as currently defined and regulated pursuant to the Rhode Island Zoning Enabling Act, but shall prohibit future use of the property as a boarding or rooming house, as would be permitted by legislation proposed during the 2026 session of the Rhode Island General Assembly (reference H 8036).
15. The Planning Board will open the Preliminary Phase Public Meeting to the public for comments on the additional and updated materials presented.

Motion by Boardmember Katz, seconded by Boardmember Clark
Voting In Favor: Boardmembers Katz, Clark, Sousa, Jarest
Voting Against: Boardmember Ruggiero

Chair Millard and Vice Chairman Murgo were recused from participation in this matter.

Motion passes.

Being a decision of the Bristol Planning Board on March 5, 2026.

Written decision review and approved on April 9, 2026.

BY: Diane M. Williamson, Administrative Officer
Date: