



The City of
WORCESTER

Planning Board

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
PLANNING BOARD OF THE CITY OF WORCESTER**

Wednesday, February 1, 2023

Worcester City Hall – Levi Lincoln Chamber,
with remote participation options available via WebEx online at
<https://cow.webex.com/meet/planningboardwebex> and
call-in number 415-655-0001 (Access Code: 1601714991).

Board Members Present: Albert LaValley, Chair
Edward Moynihan, Vice Chair
Conor McCormack
Adrian Angus (*Arrived Late*)
Brandon King (*Participated Remotely*)

Board Members Absent:

Staff Present: Michelle Smith, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)
Pamela Harding, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)
Steve Cary, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)
John Kelly, Inspectional Services (*Participated Remotely*)
Sean Quinlivan, DPW

Call to Order

Board Chair Albert LaValley called the meeting to order at 5:36 pm.

Postponements

Item 2: 1073-1075 Pleasant Street (PB-2022-038)

Request to Postpone the Public Meeting on Parking Plan Approval to February 22, 2023
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to March 16, 2023

Item 5: 35 Portland Street (PB-2023-002)

Request to Postpone the Public Meeting to February 22, 2023
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to March 16, 2023

Item 8: 5 Salem Square (aka 109 Franklin Street) (PB-2023-006)

Request to Postpone the Public Meeting to February 22, 2023
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to March 16, 2023

Item 9: 2 Eaton Place (aka City Square) (PB-2023-007)

Request to Postpone the Public Meeting to February 22, 2023
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to March 16, 2023

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 4-0 (Angus absent) to grant the postponements.

New Business

2. 1L & 1R Honeysuckle Road (PB-2022-064)

a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

Jennifer Kurzon, attorney for applicant, summarized the application before the Board; described site plan development; addressed staff recommended conditions of approval.

Brian Dorwart, engineer on the project, addressed the swale on property.

Bob Gallo, applicant, reiterated that they do not intend to extend the existing swale.

Ms. Smith noted placement of adjacent catchment wall and asked applicant why that is not proposed on the subject; Mr. Dorwart discussed.

Ms. Harding provided staff comments, including staff concern about ledge and recommendation of catchment wall.

No comments from Law or Zoning.

Mr. Quinlivan provided DPW comment.

Public Comment

Mark Zannotti, abutter to the project, expressed concern about runoff and drainage issues in the area; expressed concern about space for the structure; expressed concern about the noise generated from the work and the wellbeing of children in the neighborhood.

Mr. LaValley asked the applicant to respond; Mr. Gallo stated that the machinery has been used in the past and addressed other concerns.

Board Discussion

Mr. McCormack asked whether applicant has reviewed conditions of approval; Ms. Harding reiterated that he had seen most of the conditions; Ms. Smith suggested that the Board discuss a possible catchment area given groundwater and icing issues; Mr. Gallo addressed the catchment and groundwater and icing issues.

Ms. Smith asked geotechnical engineer to weigh in on chain-link fence versus catchment wall; Mr. Dorwart provided comments.

Ms. Smith read through suggested conditions of approval; Board and Ms. Smith discussed.

Mr. LaValley clarified as to whether applicant prefers a chain link fence or catchment wall; applicant clarified that it would be a fence.

Mr. Moynihan asked about how groundwater issue on adjacent site can be resolved; Ms. Smith responded; Mr. Quinlivan weighed in; Mr. Moynihan asked about drains and keeping them clear; Mr. Quinlivan and Ms. Smith answered.

Mr. McCormack stated he was okay with the fence and conditions if applicant was.

Mr. LaValley agreed.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 4-0 (Angus abstain) to approve the site plan subject to staff-recommended conditions of approval in revised 02/01/2023 memo, striking 1i., #2, and #5 and modifying #6 to replace “wall” with “fence”, and incorporating DPW comments 1, 2, and 4.

3. 26-39 Hermon Street (PB-2022-075)

- a. Public Hearing – Amendment to Special Permit
- b. Public Meeting – Amendment to Definitive Site Plan

Attorney Donald O’Neil on behalf of applicant; described history of the project and the amendment that is before the Board this evening; stated that they are amenable to making access from Hermon Street one-way.

Anthony Rossi, developer, clarified on the number of existing and proposed units; there was discussion of transformer location; applicant agreed to a condition regarding transformer location.

Attorney O’Neil discussed driveway easement to be drafted.

No comments from Law, Inspectional Services, or DPW.

Board Discussion

Mr. Moynihan asked applicant confirm waivers being requested; Attorney O’Neil confirmed; Mr. Moynihan asked to confirm addition of condition of approval.

Mr. King asked about EV-ready spaces; Mr. Rossi stated that there would be 7 in the rear.

Mr. LaValley stated his support.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 5-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 5-0 to approve the Amendment to Special Permits and Amendment to Definitive Site Plan, with staff-recommended conditions of approval, adding condition 1j.

4. 17 Hermon Street (PB- 2023-001)

- a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

Hal Reader, applicant, described proposed development and history of the site.

Carl Hultgren, engineer, provided additional information about the site plan and addressed staff-recommended conditions of approval.

Ms. Harding provided staff comments, including regarding EV-ready spaces and landscaping; expected reduction in traffic impacts considering discontinuation of industrial use; asked applicant to address traffic flow on Harris Court.

Mr. Hultgen described Harris Court traffic; Ms. Harding confirmed that DTM had no issue with two-way traffic.

No comments from Law or ISD.

Mr. Quinlivan provided DPW comments; striking comment #1.

Board Discussion

Mr. Hultgen stated he was glad to see a historic structure being repurposed.

Mr. Moynihan asked for clarification about waiver being requested; Mr. Hultgen clarified.

Mr. Moynihan asked staff to clarify about COA regarding stop sign; Ms. Harding clarified and suggest it would be condition 1m.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack, the Board voted 5-0 to approve site plan with staff-recommended conditions of approval, adding conditions 1m and DPW comments.

6. 135 Brooks Street (PB-2023-003)

a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

Attorney Joshua Lee Smith provided a history of the site and the proposed development, described use, described reasoning for the site layout, described other uses that would be allowed by-right.

Greg DiBona, civil engineer, described traffic flow within Brooks Street and proposed alterations; described redevelopment approach to the site and proposed reduction of impervious surface on the site; stated that a tenant has not been chosen yet; discussed landscaping and screening from neighboring properties; described proposed lighting; presented renderings to the Board and described a shadow box style fence; presented truck circulation on site; described employee parking and emergency access.

Robert Michaud, traffic engineer, described traffic study and anticipated traffic generation and impacts.

Mr. LaValley asked about the number of trailers anticipated to be on the site; RM responded.

Mike Bahtiarian, noise engineer, discussed results of the noise generation study.

Ms. Harding provided staff comments with regard to the cul-de-sacs within Brooks Street and concerns about site layout.

Mr. LaValley asked applicant to respond to staff concerns; Attorney Lee Smith described intent of removing cul-de-sacs, to provide more green space buffer and to further discourage vehicular traffic from traveling down the road; stated applicant would be amenable to removing cul-de-sacs.

Mr. DiBona described how mirroring the building, per staff recommendation, would look and operate.

Public Comment

Todd Rodman, attorney on behalf of 222 Brooks Street development, asked the Board to take no action, as abutter has not had time to review noise generation memo; stated concern about building orientation and noise generating features of the site.

David Sullivan, Chamber of Commerce, spoke in favor of the development, citing the job creation.

Janette Wada, 112A Brooks Street, stated concern about whether there will be traffic impacts; Mr. LaValley noted that there would not be impacts to that portion of Brooks Street; Ms. Wada asked about emergency access gate; Mr. LaValley responded that only emergency response vehicles would have access; Ms. Wada asked about maintenance; Mr. LaValley responded he assumed the City; Ms. Wada asked about recourse if noise became an issue; Ms. Smith responded that would be ISD; John Kelly (ISD) discussed noise regulations; Ms. Wada asked about hours of operation; Attorney Lee Smith responded.

Craig Blais, WBDC, described history of the site, stated that WBDC has recently acquired former Norton properties and that their plans are complementary to this proposed use.

Board Discussion

Mr. King had no comment.

Mr. LaValley stated his appreciation for the diagram of the flipped building; Mr. LaValley asked about types of tenants; Mr. DiBona responded.

Matthew Frank, Criterion, discussed the lease-ability of the site as it relates to site operations.

Mr. Bahtiarian addressed possible noise generation in the flipped building scenario.

Attorney Lee Smith reiterated screening that is to be provided; discussed possible noise attenuation.

Tim Engelbert, architect, describe architectural facades.

Attorney Lee Smith made closing remarks with regard to trucks maneuvering and frequency through the site.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack, the Board voted 5-0 to continue the meeting to the February 22, 2023 meeting of the Planning Board.

7. 757 Salisbury Street (PB-2023-005)

a. Public Hearing – Amendment to Special Permit (CCRC)

Jeff Smetana on behalf of the applicant described the proposed amendment to the special permit for a Continuing Care Retirement Community.

Mr. Cary provided staff comment.

No public comment.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack, the Board voted 5-0 to close the hearing.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the amendment to the special permit.

10. 139 & 153 Green Street (PB-2023-008)

a. Public Meeting – Preliminary Site Plan

Mark Borenstein described the nature of a preliminary site plan approval; described the existing site; described the proposed development, a mixed-use building and parking garage; described proposed skybridge exclusively for residential users; noted the spirit and intent of the CCOD and the implications of the parking garage, and that there would be refinements; described renderings; described proposed parking and traffic implications.

Matt Mrva, landscape architect, described initial proposed landscaping; describing proposed streetscapes; discussed grading and drainage; describe pedestrian amenities; noted that ANR plan would be submitted as part of definitive filing.

Ms. Smith described preliminary site plan approvals and their purpose; described Board's options for actions to take; provided high-level staff comments regarding the Commercial Corridors Overlay Districts (CCODs); noted that this would be transit-oriented development given its proximity to the train station; discussed aspect of the design that staff supported; noted that staff would like to see 10' minimum on the sidewalks to accommodate display racks or outdoor dining; discussed

interfacing of northwest corner of building with pedestrian realm; discussed Ash Street streetscape; noted issues around zoning compliance and the skybridge; discussed sight lines on Spruce Street; described staff concerns about the parking garage and the intent of the CCOD and the feasibility of ground floor commercial use, made suggestions for architectural interventions to make garage feel more activated; noted that staff would like to see more infiltration.

Law and ISD had no comment.

Mr. Quinlivan provided DPW comments.

Public Comment

Allen Fletcher, abutter to the project, noted neighborhood support for Spruce Street; asked about how building is going to look from Ash Street; stated his opposition to the proposed parking garage and its impact on the reinvigorated Madison Street; urged the developer to have a commercial use on the ground floor of the garage.

David Sullivan, Chamber of Commerce, stated his support for the project.

Attorney Borenstein reiterated that the applicant will explore options for a commercial use on the first floor of the garage; stated that a view of Ash Street would be provided; noted staff-recommended conditions of approval and requests for modifications.

Ms. Smith and Attorney Borenstein discussed modifying conditions of approval.

Attorney Borenstein noted that the applicant would be willing to provide 15% EV-ready spaces and bike storage.

Board Discussion

Mr. Angus stated he was glad to see a new street and a mixed-use building; stated his displeasure with the parking garage and that it does not meet the intent of the CCOD; made suggestions.

Mr. McCormack stated that he was looking forward to seeing changes to the garage; asked applicant to discuss the need for that many spaces; Attorney Borenstein described that the parking spaces would be used by more than just the development proposed herein; Mr. McCormack reiterated reservations about allotting that much space for vehicles; noted support for Spruce Street and his opposition to the skybridge.

Mr. Moynihan noted that he appreciated the articulation of the façade in the mixed-use building but overall did not support the plan; stated his opposition to parking garages and frustration with the overall design.

Mr. Angus discussed the skybridge that was never built across Major Taylor Boulevard and stated his opposition to the skybridge here; Attorney Borenstein reiterated that the skybridge would be restricted to residents only.

Mr. King stated his opposition to the skybridge.

Mr. LaValley suggested a bike storage area with glass façade for the Madison Street facing side of the garage.

Ms. Smith clarified on the staff-recommended course of action, to approve with modification.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the Preliminary Site Plan with staff-recommended modifications.

11. 157 Olean Street (PB-2023-009)

a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

Carl Hultgren presented the project to the Board and described the site plan, a single-family structure on a slope greater than 15%.

Mr. Cary provided staff comment, suggesting that they strike condition 1.b; made further comments with regard to accounting for the steepness of the slope.

No comments from Law or Zoning.

Mr. Quinlivan provided DPW comment.

No public comment.

No Board discussion.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the Definitive Site Plan with staff-recommended conditions, striking condition 1b, and incorporating DPW comments.

Other Business

12. Approval Not Required (ANR) Plans(s)

a. 65 Chatanika Avenue (Public) (AN-2023-007)

~~b. Ararat Street, Shore Drive, Stores Street, New Bond Street, Norton Drive, and West Boylston Street (Public & Private) (AN-2023-008)~~

c. 40 Brattle Street & Ararat Street (Public) (AN-2023-009)

d. 612 Grove Street, Holden Street, and Nelson Place (Public) (AN-2023-010)

Mr. Cary described the ANRs before the Board for endorsement, stating that 12b was not properly before the Board.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack, the Board voted 5-0 to endorse Items 12a, 12c, and 12d.

13. Communications

No discussion.

14. Board Policy and Procedures

No discussion.

15. Approval of Minutes - 11/30/2022; ~~12/21/2022; 01/11/2023~~

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes from 11/30/2022.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Angus, seconded by Mr. McCormack, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:22pm.