

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

October 9, 2019

ESTHER HOWLAND CHAMBERS

Planning Board Members Present: John Vigliotti, Chair
Albert LaValley, Vice Chair
Paul DePalo, Clerk
Eleanor Gilmore
Edward Moynihan

Planning Board Members Absent: –

Staff Present: Stephen S. Rolle, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services
Michelle Smith, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services
Jodi Kennedy-Valade, Department of Inspectional Services
Jennifer Beaton, Law Department
Alexandra Kalkounis, Law Department
Nick Lyford, Department of Public Works

Call to Order – 6:00 PM

Approval of Minutes – 7/17/19; 8/7/19; 8/28/19; 9/18/19; 10/2/19 – Held to October 23, 2019

New Business

- 1. Property north of Madison Street in the vicinity of Washington Street, including 37 & 40 Gold Street (MBL 05-007-00004, 05-007-00003), 134 & 142 Madison Street (MBL 05-006-00014, 05-009-00009), 0 Assonet Street (MBL 05-006-00013), 62 & 90 Washington Street (MBL 05-004-00030, 05-004-00027), and adjacent land (PB-2019-063)**
 - a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan Approval (aka Polar Park)
- 2. 50 and 69 Washington Street (MBL 05-003-00016 & 05-003-00017) and adjacent land (PB-2019-064)**
 - a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan Approval (Office/Retail aka Left Field Building)
- 3. 15 Madison Street (MBL 05-010-00001) (PB-2019-065)**
 - a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan Approval (Municipal Garage)
- 4. 115 Madison Street (MBL 05-010-00001) (PB-2019-066)**
 - a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan Approval (Mixed Use Buildings – Hotel/Lab/Office/Retail)
- 5. 115 Madison Street (MBL 05-010-00001) & 149 Washington Street (MBL 05-009-00019) (PB-2019-067)**
 - b. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan Approval (Mixed Use Buildings Residential/Garage/Retail)

Items #1 through #5 were taken contemporaneously.

Attorney Mark Donahue appeared upon behalf of the applicant, Madison W. G. Holdings.

The summary of the project is as follows:

Project Summary

Madison Properties and the Worcester Redevelopment Authority have submitted five applications concurrently for Site Plan review for development projects associated with the construction of Polar Park for the AAA-affiliate Worcester Red Sox and neighboring mixed-use redevelopment of the former Wyman Gordon site. Given unique interconnectivity due to the coordinated nature of these developments, an overall summary of the collective

development is outlined in this memorandum, followed by specific staff comments relating to the construction of the park itself. Subsequent review memos address the remaining portions of the projects individually.

The project was first announced in August 2018, with an anticipated opening date for the Ballpark in spring 2021. Given both the scale of the development and the timeframe for construction of the projects, a process akin to “Design-build” is being employed whereby the major site work, foundations and structural elements are constructed while final design associated with the superstructures and other important design details for the projects are completed as construction progresses.

These initial site plans submittals will enable construction of major elements of the projects to commence, including foundations and structural systems. Additional design details will need to be approved by the Planning Board through subsequent amendments to these site plans.

The subject properties, including abutting right-of-ways, comprise approximately 20 acres, and are located within the City’s Downtown Urban Renewal Plan, as most recently amended, owned by a mix of the Worcester Redevelopment Authority, for the City, and Madison Properties’ subsidiaries, referred to here within as the “developer.”

In the properties within the subject area were re-zoned to BG-6.0 on June 25, 2019 to facilitate re-development of the properties in line with the intent of the Downtown Urban Revitalization Plan.

The project has undergone a coordinated environmental review through the MEMA process, as part of an amendment to the City’s Downtown Urban Renewal Plan. A MEPA certificate for the overall project was issued August 16, 2019.

Five separate site plan packages have been submitted (Figure 1). From north to south, these are:

Left Field Office Building

Madison Properties proposes to construct a mixed-use building on the left field edge of the ballpark consists of approximately ninety thousand (90,000) gross square feet of floor area and will incorporate ground floor retail uses fronting on a driveway/pedestrian area that is a physical extension of Plymouth Street, but is not a public right-of-way. Four floors of office space are proposed above, in addition to a rooftop terrace. Parking for approximately one hundred (100) cars will be provided in a below-ground parking garage. Access to the office building will be by way of Plymouth Street and a newly established street named “Canal Street”.

Ballpark (Polar Park)

The Worcester Redevelopment Authority proposes to construct a ballpark, to be called Polar Park, will be located on approximately six acres of property located north of Madison Street. The facility will be a multi-purpose, publicly owned, state of the art Triple-A ballpark with a capacity of approximately 10,000 people (+/- 7,000 seats, exact number to be determined). Along the Madison Street frontage, the ballpark will incorporate a three-story main structure that will include meeting rooms, restaurants, suites, function rooms, a pedestrian promenade, general retail space, and a team store. Mechanical space will be included on a proposed 4th level. Additional elements of the proposal include an active play area located at the intersection of Summit Street and Plymouth Street and a secondary plaza located across Summit Street.

Hotel and Office/Lab Building

Madison Properties proposes to construct a dual-branded hotel is proposed for the corner of Madison Street and the proposed Green Island Boulevard. This hotel block is proposed to include a 140-room extended-stay hotel, along with a 122-room boutique hotel. These hotels will share a common drop-off area, accessible from both sides of the building, and will provide for seamless pedestrian travel from Green Island Boulevard, on the east side of the building, and the adjoining public parking garage, located to the south.

Other ground floor uses will include a 5,000 square-foot restaurant and approximately 9,000 square feet of retail space facing Madison Street. The next six floors above the street-level retail will be the hotel guest rooms for both the boutique and extended stay hotels. A partial 8th level will include private function rooms and roof decks.

As part of a future phase of development, a second structure will be constructed to the south of the proposed hotel, east of the proposed parking garage (described below) fronting along the proposed Green Island Boulevard, it is anticipated that the structure will contain a mix of laboratory space and/or offices, likely with a ground floor retail element. This structure will be part of a future phase and is shown on the plans for context only at this point.

Parking Garage

The Worcester Redevelopment Authority is proposing a new 528-space (approximately) parking structure which will be built to the south of the proposed hotel. The garage is sited to the rear (western) edge of the property in order to accommodate the future development of an office/lab space building fronting Green Island Boulevard. The garage will be accessible by vehicle from two entrances off of Green Island Boulevard, and will have direct pedestrian connections to Green Island Boulevard and adjacent uses as well. The structure will consist of one below-ground parking level, a surface level of parking on top of the lower-level parking, and 3 levels of additional parking decks above finished grade.

Residential/Mixed Use Development

Madison Properties intends to construct the first phase of proposed residential developments south of Madison Street on the parcel bounded by the proposed Green Island Boulevard, and existing Madison Street, Washington Street and a new interior circulation road (private driveways denoted Drive A & B on the plans).

The ground floor of the development parcel will include access to a 2-level parking garage having a capacity of approximately two hundred and two (202) vehicles, retail space, and lobbies for two separate residential towers. Each residential tower will have five additional stories on top of the retail/parking podium. A rooftop terrace is proposed between the two towers, providing common amenity space for the residents of the development.

The project proponent also proposes reuse of the former Stanley Tool Building located at the corner of Washington and Lamartine Street, and a second residential building east of Green Island Boulevard and north of Lamartine Street. These projects will be detailed in subsequent site plan amendments.

The proposed site plans show neighboring public streets for context and overall project understanding, but the layout and design of these streets is a separate process. The city continues to advance the design of these neighboring streets, and their ultimate configurations may vary from those shown on the plans presented.



Figure 1: Location of proposed developments

Project Location

The overall development program spans Madison Street west of Kelley Square. The entire site is located within the BG-6.0 and CCOD overlay districts. The sites are largely comprised of vacant former industrial land with a few small commercial uses.

Polar Park will be located north of Madison Street and west of the Canal District's commercial core. The ballpark is bordered by commercial and residential uses to the east, and new proposed mixed-use development to the south, the Providence and Worcester Railroad to the west, and the proposed left-field building to the north.

List of Exhibits

- Exhibit A: Site Plan Application; received September 13, 2019; Worcester Redevelopment Authority.
- Exhibit B: Site Plan; dated September 13, 2019; prepared by Bohler Engineering.

Left Field Office Building

The proposed mixed-use building on the left field edge of the ballpark consists of approximately ninety thousand (90,000) gross square feet of floor area and will incorporate ground floor retail uses fronting on a driveway/pedestrian area that is a physical extension of Plymouth Street. Four floors of office space are proposed above, in addition to a rooftop terrace. Parking for approximately 114 (+/-) cars will be provided in a below-ground parking garage. Access to the office building will be by way of Plymouth Street and a newly established street named "Canal Street".

List of Exhibits

- Exhibit A: Site Plan Application; received September 13, 2019; Worcester Redevelopment Authority.
- Exhibit B: Site Plan; dated September 13, 2019; prepared by Bohler Engineering.

Parking Garage

The Worcester Redevelopment Authority is proposing a new 528-space (approximately) parking structure which will be built south of the proposed hotel. The garage is sited to the rear (western) edge of the property to accommodate development of an office/lab space building fronting Green Island Blvd. The garage will be accessible by vehicle from two entrances off of Green Island Boulevard, and will have direct pedestrian connections to Green Island Blvd and adjacent uses as well. The structure will consist of one below-ground parking level, a surface level of parking on top of the lower-level parking, and additional decks above finished grade.

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- Exhibit A: Site Plan Application; received September 13, 2019; Worcester Redevelopment Authority.
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Hotel and Office/Lab Building

A dual-branded hotel is proposed for the corner of Madison Street and the proposed Green Island Boulevard. This hotel block is proposed to include a 140-room extended-stay hotel, along with a 122-room boutique hotel. These hotels will share a common drop-off area accessible from both sides of the building and will provide for seamless pedestrian travel from Green Island Boulevard on the east side of the building and adjoining public parking garage.

Other ground floor uses will include a 5,000 square-foot restaurant and approximately 9,000 square feet of retail space facing Madison Street. The next six floors above the street-level retail will be the hotel guest rooms for both the boutique and extended stay hotels. A partial 8th level will include private function rooms and roof decks.

Because the office building has yet to be developed beyond a conceptual level, the applicant is not seeking approval for that structure at this time. However, the Board is welcome to comment on the concept as it is presented. The office building will be formally reviewed in a subsequent application to the Board.

List of Exhibits

- Exhibit A: Site Plan Application; received September 13, 2019; Worcester Redevelopment Authority.
- Exhibit B: Site Plan; dated September 13, 2019; prepared by Bohler Engineering.

Residential/Mixed Use Development

The first of the proposed residential developments south of Madison Street will be constructed on the parcel bounded by Green Island Boulevard, Madison Street, Washington Street and a new interior circulation road (private driveway).

The ground floor of the development parcel will include access to a 2-level parking garage having a capacity of approximately two hundred and two (202) vehicles, retail space, and lobbies for two separate residential towers. Each residential tower will have five additional stories on top of the retail/parking podium. A rooftop terrace is proposed between the two towers, providing common amenity space for the residents of the development.

The project proponent also proposes reuse of the former Stanley Tool Building located at the corner of Washington and Lamartine Street, and a second residential building east of Green Island Boulevard and north of Lamartine Street. These projects will be detailed in subsequent site plan amendments.

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Exhibit B: Site Plan; dated September 13, 2019; prepared by Bohler Engineering.

Public Meeting

Michael Traynor, Chief Development Officer of the Executive Office of Economic Development of the City of Worcester, provided a brief introduction on the development of the project.

Matt Smith and Matt Mrva from Bohler Engineering and Kevin Dandre reviewed the plans for the site.

Mr. Rolle provided brief presentation on traffic, sidewalks, and bike improvements planned for the neighborhood.

Randall Ormon requested an overview of what route people would use to access the proposed garage on the site.

Maura (spelling) requested a reviewed on how the buildings would be heated and cooled.

A member of the public [didn't identify himself] asked about the hotels, offices, and parking proposed for the site.

Jo Hart suggested that rail service should be considered as part of the proposal.

Patricia Hobbs expressed concern that some streets in the area would be congested with people looking for free parking and suggested that resident parking might be considered.

The Board took a 10 minute recess.

The Board and the applicant discussed pedestrian access, sidewalk accessibility, bike paths, and landscaping proposed for the site.

Upon a motion by Mr. LaValley and seconded by Ms. Gilmore, the Board voted 5-0 to close the Public Hearing.

Votes

- 1. Property north of Madison Street in the vicinity of Washington Street, including 37 & 40 Gold Street (MBL 05-007-00004, 05-007-00003), 134 & 142 Madison Street (MBL 05-006-00014, 05-009-00009), 0 Assonet Street (MBL 05-006-00013), 62 & 90 Washington Street (MBL 05-004-00030, 05-004-00027), and adjacent land (PB-2019-063)**

- a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan Approval (aka Polar Park)

Upon a motion by Mr. LaValley and seconded by Ms. Gilmore, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the Definitive Site Plan (aka Polar Park) with conditions outlined in staff's memo.

- 2. 50 and 69 Washington Street (MBL 05-003-00016 & 05-003-00017) and adjacent land (PB-2019-064)**

- a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan Approval (Office/Retail aka Left Field Building)

Upon a motion by Mr. LaValley and seconded by Ms. Gilmore, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the Definitive Site Plan (Office/Retail aka Left Field Building) with conditions outlined in staff's memo.

3. 15 Madison Street (MBL 05-010-00001) (PB-2019-065)

- a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan Approval (Municipal Garage)

Upon a motion by Mr. LaValley and seconded by Ms. Gilmore, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the Definitive Site Plan (aka Municipal Garage) with conditions outlined in staff's memo.

4. 115 Madison Street (MBL 05-010-00001) (PB-2019-066)

- a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan Approval (Mixed Use Buildings – Hotel/Lab/Office/Retail)

Upon a motion by Mr. LaValley and seconded by Ms. Gilmore, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the Definitive Site Plan (aka Mixed Use Buildings) with conditions outlined in staff's memo.

5. 115 Madison Street (MBL 05-010-00001) & 149 Washington Street (MBL 05-009-00019) (PB-2019-067)

- a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan Approval (Mixed Use Buildings Residential/Garage/Retail)

Upon a motion by Mr. LaValley and seconded by Ms. Gilmore, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the Definitive Site Plan (Mixed Use Buildings Residential/Garage/Retail) with conditions outlined in staff's memo.

Other Business

6. Approval Not Required (ANR) Plans

- a. 11 Marshfield Street & Prudence Street (Private) (AN-2019-058)

Upon a motion by Mr. LaValley and seconded by Ms. DePalo the Board voted 5-0 to endorse the ANR.

7. 305 Belmont Street (aka Hospital Drive) Definitive Subdivision – Held to October 23, 2019

- b. Request to Accept Restrictive Covenant as form of Security
c. Endorsement of Plan

8. Request for Acceptance of (Open Space) Restrictive Covenants – Held to October 23, 2019

- d. Worcester Country Club Acres (CCRC) (PB-2018-042)
e. 407 Cambridge Street (Cluster Special Permit) (PB-2018-021)

9. Discussion of Board Policies and Procedures

- f. Proposed changes to Planning Board Rules and Regulations pertaining to sealing (stamping) of plans and documents prepared by professional engineers or professional land surveyors. – Postponed to October 23, 2019.

10. Signing of Decisions (from prior meetings)

Adjournment

Upon a motion by Ms. Gilmore and seconded by Mr. Moynihan, the Board voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m.