

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

June 24, 2020

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 23, 2020 Order, as amended, imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting was conducted through remote participation. The meeting was livestreamed from the City of Worcester website and via the local cable access channel and is available for streaming online. Public participation was facilitated through a call-in number, 415-655-0001 (Access Code: 730323290#), which was publicized on the posted meeting agenda and during the video broadcast.

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

Planning Board Members Not Participating:

Staff present: Stephen Rolle, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services
Michelle Smith, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services
Gabrielle Weiss, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services
Jody Kennedy-Valade, Department of Inspectional Services
Nicholas Lyford, Department of Public Works & Parks
Jennifer Beaton, Law Department

Call to Order – 6:08 PM

Approval of Minutes – 05/13/2020, 06/03/2020

Upon a motion by Mr. DePalo and seconded by Ms. Gilmore, the Board voted to 5-0 to approve the minutes as reviewed.

Requests for Continuances, Extensions, Postponements, and Withdrawals

Upon a motion by Mr. DePalo and seconded by Ms. Gilmore, the Board voted 5-0 to continue or postpone the following items:

1. Higgins Farm (fka 727 Salisbury Street) or Salisbury Hill CCRC (PB-2019-047)

- a. Public Hearing – Special Permit Amendment – To allow a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC)
- b. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

Testimony Date(s): 10/2/2019 & 11/13/2019

Postpone to 7/15/2020 and extend the constructive grant deadline to 8/6/2020.

2. 185 Madison Street (PB-2019-079)

- a. Public Hearings
 - i. Special Permit for CCOD to allow drive-through facilities and services
 - ii. Special Permit for CCOD for relief from the maximum front-yard setback dimensional requirement
- b. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

Postpone to 7/15/2020 and extend the constructive grant deadline to 8/6/2020.

3. 141 (aka 139 & 143) Southwest Cutoff (PB-2020-008)

- a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

Postpone to 7/15/2020 and extend the constructive grant deadline to 8/6/2020.

4. 90 Barber Avenue (PB-2020-030)

- a. Public Meeting – Extension of Time (Definitive Site Plan)

Ms. Gabrielle Weiss summarized the proposed extension of approval.

Mr. Matt Bombaci from Bohler Engineering spoke representing the item and described the project and its use as a self-storage facility.

Mr. Moynihan inquired about what the sunset date of the extension would actually be, some confusion because of a typo in the Staff Memo.

Upon a motion by Mr. DePalo and seconded by Ms. Gilmore, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the requested extension of time to May 15, 2022 with the conditions outlined in the staff memo.

5. 129 & 133 Granite Street (PB-2020-031)

- a. Public Hearing – More than One Building on a Lot
- b. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan Amendment

Ms. Michelle Smith reviewed the item. After outlining the previously approved plan, she described the changes for the amendment and the reason for removing the special permit application and adding the more than one building on a lot approval. She then outlined the conditions for both the Definitive Site Plan Amendment, and the More than One Building On a Lot.

Attorney Catherine Garrahan from Bowditch & Dewey introduced the project team. Requested that condition 3 be reworded to “will *coordinate* with WRTA”. Requested to not change the phasing schedule due to the expense of updating the plans. Agreed with the request for waiver from all subdivision requirements other than from ANR.

Mr. Steve Rolle inquired about the alignment and accessibility of the proposed pedestrian crossings. Dave LaPoint from Beals & Thomas responded that the crosswalks can be adjusted so that they don’t align with the drive aisle. Driveway rises to meet the sidewalk at the crossings.

Mr. DePalo inquired if staff is amenable to the rewording of condition 3, Ms. Smith stated staff is. Attorney Garrahan agreed.

Upon a motion by Mr. DePalo and seconded by Ms. Gilmore, the Board voted 5-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Mr. DePalo and seconded by Ms. Gilmore, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the definitive site plan amendment with staff recommended conditions noted in the memo except the edit of condition 3: “the applicant shall coordinate with the WRTA regarding relocation of the onsite bus stop”; and to approve the application for more than one building on a lot with the waivers and conditions on the staff memo; and to endorse the ANR plan.

6. 115 Madison Street at 149 Washington Street (PB-2020-032)

- a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan Amendment

Mr. Steve Rolle introduced the project and Attorney Mark Donohue. Attorney Donohue introduced the project and presented an overview of the history of the project.

Mr. Matt Mrva with Bohler Engineering updated the Board on design progress and responses to conditions from the approval from October 2019. He then presented updated plan drawings and rendered views.

Mr. Rolle stated that he is excited to see a project that is mixed use and is in keeping with the CCOD. Complimented the architecture and progress with changes along Madison Street to make the upper ‘plaza’ level more open and welcoming.

Mr. Frank Gomez of Worcester raised a concern about the Left Field Building. He described the concerns from his email regarding the contractor for the building as they may be the contractor working on a Wall Street apartment project.

Mr. DePalo stated he is in favor of the project, stated he wants to see exterior bike racks. Appreciated that Mr. Gomez raised issues regarding worker safety.

Ms. Gilmore inquired how many bedrooms the proposed dwelling units will have. Attorney Donohue stated it is a mix of studios, one bedrooms, two bedrooms, and three bedroom units. Ms. Gilmore commented that it seems the project is mostly geared toward those without children and then echoed Mr. Rolle's comments that it is meeting the CCOD requirements, and an example for future development. She encouraged the applicant to provide balconies, porches, and exterior elements as much as possible. She also asked why there are parallel spaces being proposed for Drives A and B, suggested that there may not be a need for all of the spaces. Encouraged the developers and applicants in general to reduce parking. Ms. Gilmore then stated that she is encouraged by the look of this project, it is one of the more attractive ones the City has seen.

Mr. Moynihan stated that he is in agreement with Ms. Gilmore, is also excited to see this project move forward.

Mr. LaValley stated he agrees with the sentiment of his colleagues on the board.

Attorney Donohue stated that there is currently no contractor selected for any projects, but once a contractor is selected, they will be required to abide by City of Worcester Responsible Employer policies.

Upon a motion by Mr. DePalo and seconded by Ms. Gilmore, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the definitive site plan amendment with staff recommended conditions, noting the edit to condition 1d as shown in the staff memo.

7. 50 & 69 Washington Street (PB-2020-033)

a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan Amendment

Mr. Rolle introduced Attorney Mark Donohue on behalf of the applicant. Attorney Donohue introduced the project and described the evolution of the building and the project's overall importance in the development and operation of the ballpark.

Mr. Mrva from Bohler Engineering described the project on behalf of the applicant, highlighting design evolution from the original approval. Discussed staff condition item 1a, asked if this was actually necessary as there is a desire to keep the aisle narrow, emphasize the pedestrian nature of the area.

Mr. Nicholas Lyford requested that manhole number 3 be moved out of the Washington Street right of way and onto the property. Stated that connecting to the southern manhole for the Millbrook Conduit is acceptable, but DPW would appreciate a detail of the connection.

Mr. Rolle clarified that staff is requesting that the parking spaces be pushed in 2' while keeping the curb cut at the same width currently shown on plans. Suggested that DPW should review the final utility design for drainage. He then pointed out that there cannot be street trees along Canal Street because it is above a garage, and the proposed raised planters are the best option.

Ms. Gilmore complimented the design of the building, and praised its reference to the industrial heritage of the City.

Mr. LaValley echoed Ms. Gilmore's comments on the architecture and expressed his support.

Upon a motion by Mr. DePalo and seconded by Ms. Gilmore, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the definitive site plan amendment with staff recommended conditions and also subject to an additional condition requested by DPW of moving manhole #3 outside of the Washington St Right of Way.

Other Business

8. Approval Not Required (ANR) Plan(s)

a. 43 Lyman Street – Private Right of Way (AN-2020-025)

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

b. 34 Cutler Street (AN-2020-028)

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

c. 133 Granite Street (AN-2020-029)

A motion was made to endorse this item earlier in the meeting.

d. 37 Humes Avenue (AN-2020-030)

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

9. Subdivisions

- a. Definitive (Frontage) Subdivision Plan Endorsement for 249 – 265 Lake Avenue (PB-2019-040)
Ms. Smith requested that the Board take a motion to authorize staff to endorse.

Upon a motion by Mr. DePalo and seconded by Ms. Gilmore, the Board voted 5-0 to authorize staff to endorse the plan.

10. Discussion of Board Policies and Procedures

- a. Discussion of review criteria for applications and review of staff progress on revising application materials.

Mr. LaValley inquired if item 8, the notary signature section could be simplified or if the notary is a requirement.

11. Communication(s)

Adjournment

Upon a motion by Mr. DePalo and seconded by Ms. Gilmore, the Board voted 5-0 to adjourn at 8:30pm.