



The City of **WORCESTER**

Planning Board

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

Wednesday, April 6, 2022

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
Kevin Aguirre, Clerk - *Participated remotely*
Conor McCormack

Board Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Stephen Rolle, DPRS
Stephen Cary, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)
Alexandra Kalkounis, Law
Jodie Kennedy Valade, Inspectional Services

Call to Order

Board Chair LaValley called the meeting to order at approximately 5:31 pm.

Request for Continuances, Extensions, Postponements, and Withdrawals

2) 1103 Millbury Street (PB-2020-072) – Definitive Site Plan

Request to continue the public meeting to April 27, 2022 and extend the constructive grant deadline to May 19th, 2022.

No Comments

3) 5, 7, & 9 Richards Street (PB-2021-014) –Amendment to Definitive Site Plan

Request to continue the public meeting to June 8, 2022 and extend the constructive grant deadline to June 30th, 2022.

No Comments

4) White Birch Village (FKA Burncoat Gardens) or 34, 36, 44, 46 and 49-80 Goldthwaite Road (AKA Phases 2 & 3 and part of Phase V) (PB-2021-026) – Definitive Site Plan & More than One Building on a Lot

Request to continue the public meeting to April 27, 2022 and extend the constructive grant deadline to May 19th, 2022.

No Comments

7) 75 Quinsigamond Ave (PB-2021-079) – Definitive Site Plan

Request to continue the public meeting to May 4, 2022 and extend the constructive grant deadline to May 19th, 2022.

No Comments

9) 9 Dalton Street (PB-2022-003) – Definitive Site Plan

Request to continue the public meeting to April 27, 2022 and extend the constructive grant deadline to May 19th, 2022.

No Comments

10) Salisbury Hill CCRC (a/k/a 727 Salisbury Street) (PB-2022-005) – CCRC Special Permit Amendment & Definitive Site Plan Amendment

Request to continue the public meeting to May 4, 2022 and extend the constructive grant deadline to May 19th, 2022.

No Comments

12) 0 Meadow Lane/Pleasant Street (PB-2022-010) – Definitive Site Plan

Request to continue the public meeting to April 27, 2022 and extend the constructive grant deadline to May 19th, 2022.

No Comments

13) 8 Harvard Street (PB-2022-014)– Definitive Site Plan

Request to continue the public meeting to April 27, 2022 and extend the constructive grant deadline to May 19th, 2022.

No Comments

14) 640 & 642 Park Avenue (PB-2022-016) – Definitive Site Plan

Request to continue the public meeting to April 27, 2022 and extend the constructive grant deadline to May 19th, 2022.

No Comments

On a motion made Mr. Moynihan and seconded by Mr. McCormack, the Board voted 4-0 to grant the continuances and postponements.

New Business

1) 47R Fourth Street (PB-2020-072)

John Grenier on behalf of applicant; explained that project had been approved in 2018 and that he was brought on to update and get new approvals; 9 proposed dwelling units; stated that this plan is better than what is approved and described differences, including differences with cul-de-sac; stated that applicant has worked with staff to develop the current iteration of the plan; stated that Dario Designs has done architectural designs; explained that Fire is satisfied with emergency access.

Mr. Rolle gave overview of approvals needed and described Special Permit for a Cluster development that is being sought; reiterated that previous approval has expired and agreed that this was an improvement over the previous design; asked applicant to describe basin protection.

Mr. Grenier described the layout of the basin and open space calculations.

Mr. Rolle asked applicant to confirm that ramp at end of walkway along driveway is ADA-compliant and to discuss lighting and parking areas; Mr. Grenier confirmed that it would be compliant and discussed on-site lighting.

The Law department, Zoning and DPW did not have any comments.

Public Comment

Joseph Zwirblia of 4 Fourth Street; stated that he has lived in this neighborhood for a long time; stated that it was a difficult property to develop; stated his concern about drainage; stated his concern about Fire access given a fire in the past; explained that school children wait for the bus there and there are dangerous traffic conditions; stated that city has rated the street condition poorly.

Mr. Rolle stated that this development would be too small to trigger a traffic memo; encouraged Mr. Zwirblia to reach out to his City Councilor.

Mr. Grenier discussed the traffic and construction impacts the development will have on the surrounding neighborhood.

Board Discussion

Mr. Moynihan asked about backyard features of the condominiums; Mr. Grenier answered.

Mr. McCormack had no comment.

Mr. Aguirre asked about runoff issues; Mr. Grenier addressed runoff issues.

Mr. LaValley stated that he looks forward to supporting proposal given need for housing in the city.

Mr. Grenier confirmed waivers requested.

On a motion made by Mr. Moynihan, and seconded by Mr. McCormick, the Board voted 4-0 to close the Public hearing.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormick, the board approve the proposal 4-0.

6) 35 Lakewood Street (PB-2021-077) –taken out of order

Steven J Pikul of Bertin Engineering spoke on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Pikul described the existing site conditions; the slope of the site; utility connections and accessibility from the units to the curb.

Stephen Cary asked the applicant to identify the proposed type of fencing on top of the retaining walls and to describe runoff and soil infiltration Mr. Cary also gave DPW comments to the applicant. Mr. Pikul described the soil conditions.

Mr. Rolle noted some trees that may not be removed along Lakewood Street in the public right of way.

Law and Zoning had no comments.

Public Comment

Joseph Raulinaitis, an abutter asked to comment. Mr. Raulinaitis expressed his concerns for the compact, boxy architectural style for the new development. He described the existing homes in the area as larger, Victorian style homes.

Board Discussion

Mr. McCormack had no comment.

Mr. Aguirre asked about the affordable aspect of the development as stated by the applicant. Mr. Pikul responded.

Mr. LaValley asked if additional information has or will be provided regarding the sidewalk detail and the retaining wall fence. Mr. Cary confirmed the request to the applicant for additional information. Mr. Pikul confirmed they will provide the plans.

On a motion made by Mr. Moynihan, and seconded by McCormick, the Board voted 4-0 to close the Public hearing.

On a motion made by Mr. Moynihan, and seconded by Mr. McCormick, the Board voted 4-0 to approve the proposal.

5) **4 Henschman Terrace & Henschman Terrace Right of Way (PB-2021-060)**

Don O'Neil on behalf of the applicant; described the proposal; stated that applicant is amenable to staff-recommended conditions approval; stated that engineer Joseph Graham has provided responses to City concerns.

Mr. Rolle described challenges posed by Henschman Terrace; stated that the Fire Department generally requires 20' width but that it is not possible with the conditions of the existing right-of-way; described other staff comments within regard to street opening approval; described staff concerns pertaining to site plan approval, which includes additional screening given the architectural features of the proposed building. Mr. Rolle asked the applicant about trash pickup and storage. Mr. O'Neil responded that they will deal with trash internally.

Mr. LaValley gave DPW comments. Mr. O'Neil addressed the DPW comments and described drainage treatment.

Joseph Graham addressed concern about drainage and stormwater flow along right-of-way and stated that a catch basin is being added along Henschman Terrace

The Law department and Zoning did not have any comments.

Public Comment

Jay Lee, owner of abutting property, expressed concern about emergency access due to a previous fire and expressed concern about obstructing materials within the right-of-way.

Don O'Neil stated that the development would make Mr. Lee's property *more* accessible to the Fire Department.

Jay Lee stated his concerns for his tenant's parking; Mr. O'Neil addressed those concerns,

Board Discussion

Mr. Moynihan asked about size of units to be provided; Mr. O'Neil clarified; Mr. Moynihan asked about Electric Vehicle charging spaces; Mr. O'Neil stated that they would not be provided as the future tenants would be unlikely to use it; Mr. Moynihan asked if they would be market-rate; Mr. O'Neil stated that they would; Mr. Moynihan stated that he thought it possible that tenants would drive EV vehicles.

Mr. McCormack asked about architectural treatments and potential for variation; Mr. O'Neil stated that applicant would be amendable to architectural enhancement and they could provide that detail to Planning Division.

Mr. Aguirre had no comment.

Mr. LaValley asked if there were any amendments to conditions of approval; Mr. Rolle added relative to Ch12Sec12 approval:

- e. Clarifies that Henschman Terrace will be improved for entire length of property frontage.

f. Henschman Terrace shall be graded such that it meets the elevation of the neighboring property at 8 Henschman Terrace to maintain access that is provided today.

On a motion made by Mr. Moynihan, and seconded by McCormick, the Board voted 4-0 to close the Public hearing.

On a motion made by Mr. Moynihan, and seconded by McCormick, the Board approved the proposal 4-0.

8) 25, 26, 33, 38 & 45 Arctic Street, 1, 14 (a/k/a 8 & 10 Plastics Street) & 23 Hygeia Street, 274, 284 (a/k/a 5 & 7 Arctic Street) & 290 Franklin Street and the Arctic Street & Plastic Street Rights-of-Way (PB-2021-082)

Brendan Gove, on behalf of GoVenture Capital Group; described geographical context of development and gave an overview of the 420 unit apartment complex.

Chris Anderson, Hannigan Engineer, described parking on site; described intended improvements to rights-of-way and sidewalk; addressed staff comments and stated that applicant was amendable; describe on-site amenities within courtyard, including rooftop space and a dog park.

Mr. Rolle stated that staff comments were focused on access to the building and impacts on surrounding pedestrian environment; stated importance of shade trees to aid reduce the urban heat island and vertical plantings to help blend buildings; described requested changes to proposed lighting and that staff would like to see photometric plan; described proposed parking garage and that there would be controlled entrance and exit to enhance pedestrian environment; described proposed improvements relative to Ch12 Sec12 approval.

Mr. Rolle relayed DPW comments; Mr. Anderson addressed them.

No comment from Law or Zoning departments.

No public comment.

Board Discussion

Mr. Moynihan asked about where the garage would be in context of the site plan; Mr. Anderson clarified; asked about access to site via Arctic; Mr. Anderson clarified.

Mr. McCormack asked about pedestrian access; Mr. Anderson clarified; Mr. McCormack asked about opportunity for retail along Franklin Street; Hal Reader described efforts to “activate” Franklin with siting of amenities; Mr. McCormack asked about condition of existing buildings and if any of them are historical; Mr. Reader described them.

Mr. Aguirre ask if these would be market-rate apartments; Mr. Reader stated that it would be market-rate but geared towards workforce housing.

Mr. LaValley asked about unit mix and size of units; Mr. Reader stated it would be majority 1-bedrooms with some studios and two-bedrooms; Mr. LaValley asked when they would like to start project; Mr. Reader stated early 2023; Mr. LaValley asked about acoustic concerns regarding cars in the parking garage; Mr. Reader described materials of garage and barrier between garage and living spaces; Mr. LaValley stated he was glad to see a development adjacent to Union Station.

Mr. Reader confirmed that they were requesting Leave-to-Withdraw for private street removal request.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, and seconded by Mr. McCormack, the Board voted 4-0 to grant the leave to withdraw for the removal of a private street.

Mr. Moynihan calls for a motion to approve the Definitive Site Plan and Ch12 Sec 12 with staff recommendations as outlined, seconded by Mr. McCormick and approved by the Board 4-0.

11) 300 Southbridge Street (PB-2022-009)

Todd Brodeur of Fletcher Tilton spoke on behalf of the applicant. He described the redevelopment of the site and the previous applications to the Planning Board; the process of going through the historical commission and the historic nature and significance of the property. Mr. Brodeur described the added landscaping including a pocket park and community garden; redevelopment of the parking lot; 21 market rate apartments with an enclosed garage which houses also four Electric Vehicle charging spaces.

Travis Blake, architect with Sousa Design Architect described the curb cuts; the accessible access for residents; removal of the loading dock; and bike storage.

Erin Hossaini-Fitch spoke to the parking and pedestrian circulation; the location of the resident and mixed use entrances; the proposed vegetation and 23 shade treed; the proposed drainage and stormwater plans to mitigate existing issues onsite; the resident shared greenspace that includes a patio with seating and murals; the topography of the site and proposed retaining wall.

Mr. Rolle described the existing conditions of the site and commended the applicant on their inclusion of green space and interconnectivity of the pedestrian walkway. Mr. Rolle mentioned staff comments regarding the access/egress to the parking garage and the recommendation of a visual notification for cars exiting the garage.

The Zoning, Law, and DPW departments had no comments.

Public Comment

Joseph Zwirblia, or Worcester asked to comment. He expressed his approval and excitement for the project; he asked if there was any solar panels proposed for the building and if there are any proposed security measures. Mr. Brodeur confirmed there are not any solar panels proposed, and in regards to the security, the doors would be locked and a garage door that is controlled by a resident key.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Moynihan expressed his approval of façade improvements and inquired about the size of the community garden. Ms. Hossaini-Fitch described the size of the community garden. Mr. Moynihan followed up, and asked if it's a community garden or for residents only; Ms. Hossaini-Fitch confirmed it's for residents only.

Mr. McCormack asked if any affordable units will be included, and if the retail space will remain; Mr. Brodeur explained that no affordable units are proposed, and the retail space will be converted to amenity space, but can be reexamined later on.

On a motion made by Mr. Moynihan, and seconded by McCormick, the Board voted 4-0 to close the Public hearing.

On a motion made by Mr. Moynihan, and seconded by Mr. McCormick, the Board voted 4-0 to approve the definitive site plan.

15) 378 Plantation Street (ZA-2022-009)

Steven Madaus of Mirick O'Connell on behalf of UMass Memorial Health Care spoke before the Board. Mr. Madaus described the petition to rezone 378 Plantation Street to from an RL-7 to INH zoning district. He described the existing site of 4.1 acres and a building that was previously a nursing home; the close proximity to the UMass Memorial hospital campus; the reuse of the parcel for needs of the UMass Campus with only an extension of the existing INH zone directly to the south.

Mr. Cary summarized staff comments. Mr. Rolle added that a nursing home isn't typically found in an RL-7 zone and its reuse within that zone is limited, but is compatible with an INH zoning amendment.

The Zoning, Law and DPW departments had no comments.

No public comments.

Board Discussion

Mr. LaValley stated he feels this is a standard zoning map amendment change.

No comments from Mr. McCormack and Mr. Aguirre.

On a motion made by Mr. Moynihan, and seconded by Mr. McCormick passes 4-0, the Board voted to close the public hearing.

On a motion made by Mr. Moynihan, and seconded by Mr. McCormick passes 4-0, the Board voted to approve definitive site plans as outlined.

16. Street Petitions

a. Grand Street (Illinois SE) - Remove from Official Map (Public) (ST-2022-002)

Mr. Rolle describe the street petition to remove a short portion of the street but retain a utility easement.

On a motion made by Mr. Moynihan, and seconded by Mr. McCormick passes 4-0, the Board voted to discontinue and remove Grand Street from Illinois SE.

b. Umbagog Drive - Convert to Public (ST-2022-003)

Mr. Rolle described the petition to convert to public road with a DPW priority 3.

c. Chequesset Road - Convert to Public (ST-2022-004)

Mr. Rolle described the petition to convert to public road with a DPW priority 4.

d. Pocono Road - Convert to Public (ST-2022-005)

Mr. Rolle described the petition to convert to public road with a DPW priority 4.

On a motion made by Mr. Moynihan, and seconded by Mr. McCormick passes 4-0, the Board voted to favorable recommend the conversion to public streets for Umbagog Drive, Chequesset Road and Pocono Road.

17. Approval Not Required (ANR) Plans

a. 24&26 Honeysuckle Rd. (Public), 0 Snowberry Cir. & Bittersweet Blvd. (Developers) (AN-2021-069)

Not properly before the Board.

b. 23 Columbus Street (Public) (AN-2021-061)

Mr. Cary described the ANR plan to divide the lot with adequate frontage and lot area in an RG-5 zone.

c. 50 Skyline Drive (Officer Manny Familia Way) (Parks Road) (AN-2022-008)

Not properly before the Board.

d. 3 Farrington Street (Private) (AN-2022-010)

Mr. Cary described the ANR plan to slightly divide the lot to provide adequate frontage to the parcel to the right.

e. 10 Svenson Avenue & Hjelm Avenue (Private) (AN-2022-017)

Mr. Cary described the ANR plan to dive two lots into five lots, all which have adequate frontage and lot area.

f. 27R Whipple Street & Reeves Street (Public) (AN-2022-019)

Not properly before the Board.

g. 153 Green Street (Public) (AN-2022-020)

Mr. Cary described the ANR plan to draw new lot lines, while it doesn't have adequate lot area for residential use, it has been designated for non-residential use.

h. 0 New York Street (Public) (AN-2022-021)

Mr. Cary described the ANR plan to divide the lot with both proposed lots having adequate frontage and lot size.

On a motion made by Mr. Moynihan, and seconded by Mr. McCormick, the Approval Not Required plans b-e, g, h were endorsed 4-0.

18. Communications

a. Notice regarding Indian Hill School nomination for National Register eligibility.

b. Letter regarding 15 Waban Ave; from Donna Flood and John Swiatlowski, dated March 16, 2022

Mr. LaValley described the letter received by the Board and since it did not regard any of the items on the agenda, chose not to read it into the record.

21. Approval of Minutes – 2/2/2022; 2/23/2022; 3/16/2022

Mr. LaValley noted some errors in the minutes for 2/23/2022 and recommended the Board vote to approve it on the condition it will be amended.

In a motion proposed by Mr. Moynihan, and endorsed by Mr. McCormick the minutes from Planning Board meetings on 2/2/2022; 2/23/2022; 3/16/2022 were conditionally approved 4-0.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan and seconded by Mr. McCormick, the Board voted 4-0 to adjourn at approximately 8: 14p.m.