



CITY OF WATERTOWN, NEW YORK

CITY PLANNING BOARD
ROOM 304, WATERTOWN CITY HALL
245 WASHINGTON STREET
WATERTOWN, NEW YORK 13601-3380
(315) 785-7740

MEETING: March 2, 2021

PRESENT:

Larry Coburn, Planning Board Chair
Michelle Capone
Michael Pierce
Neil Katzman
T.J. Babcock
Kerry Johnson

ALSO:

Michael A. Lumbis, Planning and Community
Development Director
Geoffrey Urda, Planner
Michael DeMarco, Planner
Michael Delaney, City Engineer
Matthew Timerman, City Fire Chief
Leta Harp, Secretary

ABSENT:

Linda Fields

Planning Board Chair, Larry Coburn, called the March 2, 2021 Planning Board meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Mr. Coburn then asked for a motion regarding the Minutes from the February 2, 2021 Planning Board Meeting. Mr. Babcock made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Mr. Katzman seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

SUBDIVISION FINAL PLAT APPROVAL - 311 HAMILTON ST NORTH, PARCEL NUMBER 6-11-119.000

The Planning Board then considered a request for Subdivision final plat approval for a two-lot subdivision of 311 Hamilton Street North. Michael Battista, PLS, was present to represent the request. He said in summary the subdivided 46'x 64' lot is to be combined with the neighbor at 915 Bronson Street notated as parcel "B" on the map provided to the Planning Board members. Mr. Coburn questioned if the summary item number one establishing new metes and bounds description had been filed with the County Clerk. Mr. Battista responded that he had drafted the new metes and bounds description for the resultant parcel.

The Planning Board then considered each question on Part II of the Short Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) one-by-one, answering no to all of them. Ms. Capone then made a motion to issue a Negative Declaration for the proposed subdivision pursuant to the requirements of SEQRA. Mr. Babcock seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

Next, Mr. Coburn called the Public Hearing to order at 3:05 p.m. for a Final Plat Subdivision of 311 Hamilton Street North, Parcel number 6-11-119.000. Mr. Coburn read the legal notice for the public hearing that had been published in the *Watertown Daily Times*. He announced that anyone that wished to be heard in the public matter had privilege of the floor. No one was present to speak regarding comments or concerns in the matter. Mr. Coburn then closed the public hearing at 3:06 p.m.

Mr. Babcock then made a motion to approve the Final Plat Subdivision of 311 Hamilton Street North, Parcel number 6-11-119.000. subject to one condition:

1. The applicant must assemble the subdivided 0.07-acre parcel “B” with 915 Bronson Street by way of new metes and bounds description filed with the County Clerk.

Ms. Capone seconded the motion, all voted in favor.

**SITE PLAN APPROVAL – 1290 ARSENAL STREET,
PARCEL NUMBER 8-53-108.100**

The Planning Board then considered a request for a request for Site Plan Approval submitted by Clint Mattson of Chick-fil-A Inc. to construct a 5,000 square-foot restaurant building, and a 1,233.6 square-foot order-point canopy at 1290 Arsenal Street, Parcel Number 8-53-108.100 that had been tabled at the February 2nd meeting.

Robert Osterhoudt of Bohler Engineering was present with Paul Van Cott of Whiteman, Osterman, & Hanna LLP attorneys at law to represent the project summary and revisions. Mr. Osterhoudt said they had been actively developing the application and worked through the previous comments from the Planning Staff and Fire Department. He said they had submitted a revised plan set and hoped that the Planning Board would recommend approval, and that the project could go before City Council at its March 15, 2021 meeting.

Mr. Osterhoudt began by indicating the two proposed fire hydrant locations, noting that he had worked with the Fire Chief on their location. He then summarized the revisions to vehicular traffic patterns, as depicted on the Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation Plan. He explained that egress from the Chick-fil-A drive thru would remain two lanes. He then discussed changes that would minimize the development’s impacts on the neighboring Starbucks, including installing mountable curbing at the northern exit from Starbucks to enhance emergency accessibility, and shrinking the curbed island at Starbucks’ southern entrance to add maneuvering space for vehicles. He explained that the changes near Starbucks were still subject to Starbucks’ and landlord approval.

He then said that they added three directional signs to the plans to guide motorists from Western Boulevard to Chick-fil-A, one with an interchangeable arrow that would direct drive-thru traffic around the back of I.H.O.P. during peak periods. Mr. Katzman said he disagreed that Chick-fil-A staff would have time to change the signs manually during peak periods. Mr. Osterhoudt said instruction on changing the signage would be part of the Grand Opening training

for staff. Mr. Katzman asked if the sign could be electronic, and Mr. Osterhoudt replied that according to the sign vendor, the distance to the signs was too great to change them remotely.

Ms. Capone said that when the restaurant becomes known, the regular visitors will become accustomed to the traffic pattern. Mr. Pierce asked for verification that the signs were added to the plans. Mr. Johnson asked who was advising Chick-Fil-A and developing the plan, because there were many other advantageous sites in Watertown that he felt would be a better fit.

Mr. Osterhoudt then said that the nine parking spaces along the shared drive-aisle between Chick-fil-A and Starbucks would remain earmarked for employee parking. He then recalled that Ms. Fields, who was absent today, had previously suggested changing the drive-thru egress to a single lane, but explained that the two lanes would remain a critical component for speed and accuracy, and the second lane would be staffed heavily during peak traffic. Mr. Pierce said that Chick-fil-A would only need the second drive-thru bay during peak times and asked if Chief Timerman had any concerns with access.

Chief Timerman concurred that the plans were very accommodating to all the concerns that he voiced at the previous Planning Board meeting and they appeared to be conducive to an emergency vehicle if it needed access, but this was beneficial to the business owner and property owner as well. The Chief asked the water main diameter size to supply the hydrants. Mr. Delaney replied that the main to supply Ruby Tuesday's was adequate and would be sufficient for Chick-fil-A, and nothing needed to be changed. Ms. Capone asked if the applicant had added the surrounding existing conditions to the plan drawing as required by Summary Item 1. Mr. Urda replied that the applicant had submitted updated drawings on March 1, 2021 that depicted all the required existing conditions to Staff's satisfaction.

Mr. Osterhoudt continued that the summary item requiring an Area Variance was also satisfied, and that the Zoning Board of Appeals had approved their request for a 31.8-foot setback from the western property line. Mr. Urda then said the applicant had addressed the first and fourth Summary Items to Staff's satisfaction, and if the Board was satisfied with Summary Item 3, it could go away as well. He said Summary Item 2 must remain, but it would be cleaner to divide into two separate conditions, one for the mountable curbing at Starbucks' northern exit and the other for widening the access gap at Starbucks' southern entrance to create more space for vehicles to maneuver into Starbucks' parking bay. Although the updated drawings depicted both changes, Mr. Osterhoudt said they were working through the details with Starbucks and the landlord on the revised plan. Mr. Urda then said that Staff recommended approval with the four remaining conditions.

Mr. Osterhoudt then requested that the Board change the language for Summary Item 6 to add the word "applicable" prior to demolition and construction to make it easier to implement the project in stages. Mr. Urda said the language could possibly change but deferred to Mr. Delaney. Mr. Delaney said the demolition plans submitted for approval looked fine, but he was concerned about the Erosion and Sedimentation (E & S) plan that is usually submitted with the demolition plan. He then asked if Mr. Osterhoudt wanted to break all the permits out separately. Mr. Osterhoudt said the demolition and new construction is to be all done consecutively, and we do not want to be held up waiting on a permit that may take a few weeks, we want to be moving forward and keeping up with the progression of the project.

Mr. Urda then offered splitting the permitting condition into two categories – one for the demolition permit, and one for the other required permits. Mr. Delaney said he needed an E & S plan for the Demolition Permit and then they would still need to obtain the rest of the permits and fees as the project went along. Mr. Osterhoudt said they have the plans and would like flexibility if needed when issues arise.

Mr. Coburn also questioned the need for an asbestos survey. Mr. Urda said Code Enforcement would not issue a Demolition Permit without an asbestos survey. Mr. Osterhoudt suggested the language be “prior to the applicable demolition and construction.” Mr. Urda said Staff did not object to that change in language.

Ms. Capone made a motion to recommend that City Council approve the Site Plan submitted by Clint Mattson of Chick-fil-A, Inc to construct a 5,000 square-foot restaurant building, and a 1,233.6 square-foot order-point canopy at 1290 Arsenal Street, Parcel Number 8-53-108.100, contingent upon the following:

1. The applicant shall install mountable curbing at the north access gap to Starbucks’ dedicated drive aisle, as depicted on the updated versions of Sheets C-2.0 and VP-1.0, as submitted to the City Planning and Community Development Department on March 1, 2021.
2. The applicant shall widen the access gap at the south end of Starbucks’ dedicated drive aisle and implement one-way southbound traffic on the shared drive aisle as depicted on the updated versions of Sheets C-2.0 and VP-1.0, as submitted to the City Planning and Community Development Department on March 1, 2021.
3. The applicant must commission an asbestos survey prior to issuance of a Demolition Permit and perform subsequent abatement prior to demolition if the survey reveals the presence of asbestos.
4. The applicant must obtain the following permits, minimally, prior to applicable demolition and construction: Demolition Permit, Building Permit, Sign Permit, Sanitary Sewer Connection Permit, and a Water Supply Permit.

Mr. Babcock seconded the motion. The Planning Board voted 5-1 in favor, with Mr. Johnson casting the dissenting vote.

Mr. Babcock then moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Pierce seconded the motion, and all voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 3:53 p.m.