



# 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: February 21, 2020

PRESENT:

Michelle Capone, Acting Chair  
T.J. Babcock  
Linda Fields  
Kerry Johnson  
Neil Katzman

ALSO:

Michael A. Lumbis, Planning and Community  
Development Director  
Jennifer Voss, Senior Planner  
Geoffrey Urda, Planner  
Benjamin Arquitt, Civil Engineer I

ABSENT:

Larry Coburn  
Katie Dermody

The February 21, 2020 Planning Board Meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m. by acting Planning Board Chair, Michelle Capone.

Ms. Capone then called for a reading of the Minutes from the February 4, 2020 Planning Board Meeting. Ms. Fields made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Mr. Katzman seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

**SUBDIVISION FINAL PLAT APPROVAL  
VL-2 RAIL DRIVE, PARCEL NUMBER 9-43-101.220 and  
901 RAIL DRIVE, PARCEL NUMBER 9-43-101.008**

The Planning Board then considered a request submitted by Howard T. Lyndaker III, PLS of GYMO, DPC on behalf of the City of Watertown, the Jefferson County Industrial Development Agency, Watertown Local Development Corporation and MLR Realty, LLC for a three-lot subdivision of VL-2 Rail Drive, Parcel Number 9-43-101.220 and a two-lot subdivision of 901 Rail Drive, Parcel Number 9-43-101.008.

Donald Rutherford, CEO of the Watertown Local Development Corporation (WLDC), and Howard T. Lyndaker III, PLS of GYMO, DPC attended to represent the request.

Ms. Capone then said that this request required a public hearing and that it was almost time to open said hearing. Ms. Capone said that a public hearing had been scheduled for the subdivision and that a legal notice that had been published in the *Watertown Daily Times*. She called the public hearing to order at 3:05 p.m. and asked for public comment on the request. Hearing no comments, Ms. Capone closed the public hearing at 3:06 p.m. Ms. Capone then invited Mr. Rutherford to speak about the request.

Mr. Rutherford began by introducing himself as CEO of the WLDC and said that the WLDC had an exclusive option on land in the City Center Industrial Park. Mr. Rutherford then said that two major companies in the industrial park, Roth Industries and Renzi Foodservice, approached him last spring with projects they wanted to work on. One of the projects wanted to utilize an existing rail spur and the other conflicted with the rail spur.

Mr. Rutherford then referred to the drawing and identified a track off the main rail line, which although installed 20 year ago, never entered into service. He said that its original installation was for a company that never moved in, and thus the spur went unused for two decades.

Mr. Rutherford then said that Roth approached first him about using the rail spur to bring resin in to its location, and they began discussing ways to repair the track and bring it back into service. A few days later, Mr. Rutherford said, Renzi approached him about buying land that included the rail spur, as they wanted to expand their footprint. He explained that these requests initiated a process of how to carve up the land to make both companies happy.

Mr. Rutherford said they went through several iterations before deciding on the proposed series of subdivisions and assemblages, which would shift the rail spur to the north and bring it in closer to Rail Drive. That shift, Mr. Rutherford explained, would open up land to the immediate north of Renzi's footprint, as the track's current location impeded their ability to expand. It would also allow Roth to conduct staging on Rail Drive to bring in and offload resin for their production.

Mr. Rutherford then said that this premise represented a year and a half of work and asked if the Planning Board had any questions. Mr. Katzman asked if Renzi would be able to access the track if they wanted. Mr. Rutherford replied that they would have access if they needed, but right now, they did not need it. He said that they could develop a staging area anywhere and further explained that what Renzi needed now was room to expand.

Ms. Capone then asked if the staging area was public and if any business could use it. Mr. Rutherford replied that the JCIDA owned the staging area, but if demand arose, they could look into an appropriate location for a public staging area.

Mr. Lumbis then said that the WLDC and the City kept the proposed new rail spur parcel a little bit wider than necessary. He said that the existing rail spur was about 30 feet wide and the proposed rail spur parcel was 100 feet wide. Mr. Lumbis then said that Rail Drive to Pine Street was a potential location for a future third rail crossing and the City did not want to move anything into that line of connection that might impede such an idea in the future.

Ms. Fields then said that she wished to disclose for the record that her husband did work for the JCIDA, but she did not have any financial or personal interest in this proposal. Mr. Katzman then said that he wished to disclose for the record that he also did work for the JCIDA, but he did not have any personal or financial interest in this proposal.

Ms. Capone then said that the Planning Board needed to complete Part 2 of the Short Environmental Assessment Form (EAF). The Planning Board then considered each question on Part 2 of the EAF one-by-one, answering no to all of them. Mr. Katzman then made a motion to issue a Negative Declaration for the proposed subdivision pursuant to the requirements of SEQRA. Mr. Katzman seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Ms. Capone then asked about the four summary items. Mr. Urda replied that the applicant had submitted a new Short EAF Part 1 to Staff earlier in the day, so the Planning Board could strike the third summary item, which dealt with SEQR issues. Ms. Capone then briefly went through the other three summary items and said they would need to remain as conditions of approval.

Ms. Fields then moved to approve the request submitted by Howard T. Lyndaker III, PLS of GYMO, DPC on behalf of the City of Watertown, the Jefferson County Industrial Development Agency, Watertown Local Development Corporation and MLR Realty, LLC for a three-lot subdivision of VL-2 Rail Drive, Parcel Number 9-43-101.220 and a two-lot subdivision of 901 Rail Drive, Parcel Number 9-43-101.008, contingent upon the following:

1. The applicant must submit the required metes and bounds descriptions for all resultant parcels prior to the Clerk of the Planning Board signing the Final Subdivision Plat.
2. The applicant must address all issues identified in the “Required Drawing Edits” section of Staff’s February 14, 2020 memorandum to the Planning Board.
3. The applicant must assemble all subdivided land into the combined resultant parcels as proposed, by way of new metes and bounds descriptions filed with the County Clerk.

Ms. Fields seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Mr. Katzman moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Babcock seconded the motion and all voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 1:15p.m.