



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: May 5, 2020

PRESENT:

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

ALSO:

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

ABSENT:

Katie Dermody

Planning Board Chair, Larry Coburn, called the May 5, 2020 virtual Planning Board meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

Mr. Coburn then asked for a motion regarding the Minutes from the March 3, 2020 Planning Board Meeting. Ms. Fields made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Mr. Babcock seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

SUBDIVISION FINAL PLAT APPROVAL 650 STATE STREET, PARCEL NUMBER 12-05-232.000

The Planning Board then considered a request submitted by Patsy A. Storino, PLS on behalf of C. William Stoodley, Jr for a two-lot subdivision of 650 State Street, Parcel Number 12-05-232.000.

Mr. Storino called into the virtual meeting via phone to represent the request.

Mr. Storino began by saying that an entity called LKR Enterprises owned the property at 650 State Street, which he said contained the former Great American grocery store. He then said that his client, Mr. Stoodley, wished to purchase the 0.616-acre subdivided piece and assemble it with his adjacent property at 632 State Street, which contained the Reed & Benoit Funeral Home, which Mr. Storino said needed additional parking. He then briefly discussed some additional measurements and written permissions.

Mr. Coburn then said that this request required a public hearing, and that it was almost time to open the hearing. Mr. Coburn called the public hearing to order at 3:07 p.m., read the legal notice that had been published in the *Watertown Daily Times* and asked for public comment on the request. Hearing no comments, Mr. Coburn closed the public hearing at 3:08 p.m.

Ms. Fields then said she wished to recuse herself from the discussion, citing a previous professional relationship with Mr. Stoodley. She stated that she had no material interest in this application.

Mr. Coburn 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. 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, except Ms. Fields, who abstained.

Discussion then ensued regarding the ownership issues and drive aisle width. Ms. Capone then asked if she could abstain from the vote on the Subdivision. Mr. Urda replied that the Planning Board still had four voting members present, so Ms. Capone could abstain if she wished.

Mr. Babcock then moved to approve the request submitted by Patsy A. Storino, PLS on behalf of C. William Stoodley, Jr for a two-lot subdivision of 650 State Street, Parcel Number 12-05-232.000, contingent upon the following:

1. The applicant must assemble the subdivided Parcel "B" with the existing Parcel "C", known as 632 State St., Parcel Number 12-05-228, by way of new metes and bounds description filed with the County Clerk.
2. The applicant must show proof of ownership at the meeting. Otherwise, the applicant must be prepared to provide written permission from LKR Enterprises, Inc authorizing the applicant to apply for a subdivision on the property owner's behalf.

Mr. Coburn seconded the motion and all voted in favor except Ms. Capone and Ms. Fields who abstained.

**SUBDIVISION FINAL PLAT APPROVAL
890 PEARL STREET, PARCEL NUMBER 4-20-102.000**

The Planning Board then considered a request submitted by Ronald J. Pope for a two-lot subdivision of 890 Pearl Street, Parcel Number 4-20-102.000.

Mr. Pope, and his brother, Attorney Alan Pope, both attended the virtual meeting to represent the request.

Alan Pope began by saying that Ronald purchased the property back in 2003, and that the property contains an ABC self-storage and a car wash. Alan then said that Ronald now wished to sell the self-storage part, but retain the car wash.

Alan then explained that they were a single parcel bisected by the municipal boundary between the City of Watertown/Town of Pamela. He said that they first submitted and received a Subdivision Approval from the Town of Pamela, and were now seeking a Subdivision Approval from the City of Watertown.

Mr. Coburn then said that this request required a public hearing, and that it was almost time to open the hearing. Mr. Coburn called the public hearing to order at 3:24 p.m., read the legal notice that had been published in the *Watertown Daily Times* and asked for public comment on the request. Hearing no comments, Mr. Coburn closed the public hearing at 3:25 p.m.

Mr. Coburn 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. 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.

Ms. Capone then moved to approve the request submitted by Ronald J. Pope for a two-lot subdivision of 890 Pearl Street, Parcel Number 4-20-102.000.

Mr. Babcock seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

**SITE PLAN APPROVAL – THE ARC OF JEFFERSON-SAINT LAWRENCE
420 GAFFNEY DRIVE, VL-2 GAFFNEY DRIVE, 234-238 GLENN AVENUE, 419 GLENN
AVENUE, 233 STANTON STREET, and M151 CARLTON AVENUE,
PARCEL NUMBERS 8-40-101.003, 8-40-101.005, 8-40-108.000, 8-19-206.100, 8-18-322.000,
8-19-207.100, and 8-18-303.000**

The Planning Board then considered a request submitted by Howard Ganter of the ARC of Jefferson-Saint Lawrence for the construction of a 44-space parking lot, a reconfiguration of the existing parking lot, including reconfigured traffic patterns, and associated site improvements at 420 Gaffney Drive, VL-2 Gaffney Drive, 234-238 Glenn Avenue, 419 Glenn Avenue, 233 Stanton Street, and M151 Carlton Avenue, Respective Parcel Numbers 8-40-101.003, 8-40-101.005, 8-40-108.000, 8-19-206.100, 8-18-322.000, 8-19-207.100, and 8-18-303.000.

Patrick Currier of C&S Companies and Robert Seeley of Environmental Design & Research, Landscape Architecture, Engineering & Environmental Services, D.P.C both attended the virtual meeting to represent the request.

Mr. Seeley began by saying that he would give a quick overview of the project and take any questions. Mr. Seeley then gave a summary of the reconfigured vehicular circulation patterns at both the north and south ends of the site. He identified what would change and what would remain the same. He followed that with summaries of drainage and landscaping, then asked if there were questions.

Gaetano and Julie Williams, who own the adjacent property to the north at 433 Glenn Avenue, asked questions about stormwater runoff, snow storage, and traffic patterns, particularly the potential for motorists to use the internal drive aisle as a cut-through from Glenn Avenue to Gaffney Drive.

Mr. Seeley and Mr. Currier then both spoke in turn to respond to the Williams' concerns, with both of them addressing the different drainage, landscaping and circulation issues. Mr. Katzman specifically suggested speed bumps to discourage through traffic. Following additional discussion about the need for multiple vehicular access points and trash disposal, Mr. Seeley and Mr. Currier moved on to the summary items in Staff's memorandum.

Mr. Seeley said that they had no objections to any of the summary items, and went through them one-by-one and pledging to comply with each. Following this, Mr. Coburn asked if any Planning Board Members had questions. Mr. Johnson asked about lighting and following a brief discussion about operating, Mr. Arquitt said that the City Engineering Department was satisfied with the proposed lighting.

Mr. Lumbis then suggested that the Planning Board discuss and formalize any conditions that it wished to add. After discussing the issues that had arisen, the Planning Board Members agreed to add conditions requiring internal speed bumps, a fence along the northern property line and moving the northern drive aisle connecting to Glenn Avenue ten feet to the south of its proposed location. Once the Planning Board had finished that, Mr. Coburn asked for a motion.

Ms. Capone then moved to recommend that City Council approve the request for Site Plan Approval submitted by Howard Ganter of the ARC of Jefferson-Saint Lawrence for the construction of a 44-space parking lot, a reconfiguration of the existing parking lot, including reconfigured traffic patterns, and associated site improvements at 420 Gaffney Drive, VL-2 Gaffney Drive, 234-238 Glenn Avenue, 419 Glenn Avenue, 233 Stanton Street, and M151 Carlton Avenue, Respective Parcel Numbers 8-40-101.003, 8-40-101.005, 8-40-108.000, 8-19-206.100, 8-18-322.000, 8-19-207.100, and 8-18-303.000, as shown on the site plans submitted to the City on April 23, 2020, contingent upon the following:

1. The applicant must identify all proposed one-way drive aisles on the site plan.
2. The applicant must assemble all seven (7) subject parcels, as proposed, by way of a new metes and bounds description that is filed with the County Clerk.
3. The applicant should consider increasing the topsoil depth to 2 ½ feet in both landscaped strips, including bump outs, along Gaffney Drive and Glenn Avenue and supply high quality topsoil throughout to ensure the long-term survival of the proposed trees.
4. The applicant must address all issues identified in the "Utilities and Hydrology" section of Planning Staff's April 30, 2020 memorandum to the Planning Board.

5. The applicant must submit proof of ownership of 419 Glenn Avenue or be prepared to provide written permission from WGS Arsenal Housing Associates, LLC authorizing the applicant to apply for Site Plan Approval on the property owner's behalf.
6. The applicant must obtain the following permits, minimally, prior to demolition and construction: Building Permit, General City Permit, Sanitary Sewer Connection Permit, Water Supply Permit and a Certificate of Zoning Compliance.
7. The applicant shall install an opaque fence along the entire length of the shared property line with 144 Glenn Avenue at the northern edge of the site, consistent with the Planning Board's adopted Landscaping and Buffer Zone Guidelines.
8. The applicant shall move the northern access drive from Glenn Avenue 10 feet south from the location proposed on the site plan submitted to the City Planning Department on April 23, 2020.
9. The applicant shall install speed bumps across the interior drive aisle that connects Glenn Avenue with Gaffney Drive through the northern section of the site to discourage through traffic.

Mr. Katzman seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

ZONE CHANGE

**VL-2 GAFFNEY DRIVE, PARCEL NUMBER 8-40-108.000
COMMERCIAL TO PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT #2**

AND

**234-238 and 419 GLENN AVENUE, 233 STANTON STREET and M151 CARLTON AVENUE,
PARCEL NUMBERS 8-19-206.100, 8-19-207.100, 8-18-322.000 and 8-18-303.000
RESIDENCE C TO PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT #2**

The Planning Board then considered a request submitted by Howard Ganter of The ARC of Jefferson-St. Lawrence to change the approved zoning classification of VL-2 Gaffney Drive, Parcel Number 8-140-108.000 from Commercial to Planned Development District #2 and to change the approved zoning classification of 234-238 Glenn Avenue, 419 Glenn Avenue, 233 Stanton Street and M151 Carlton Avenue, Parcel Numbers 8-19-206.100, 8-19-207.100, 8-18-322.000 and 8-18-303.000 from Residence C to Planned Development District #2.

Mr. Coburn noted that this was directly related to the previous request, and the purpose was to assemble multiple parcels across multiple zoning districts into a single, uniformly zoned parcel. He then asked if there were any questions.

Ms. Capone asked if the zone change was consistent with the recommended Interstate Commercial land use in the City's newly adopted Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Urda replied in the affirmative.

Mr. Babcock then moved to recommend that City Council approve the request submitted by Howard Ganter of The ARC of Jefferson-St. Lawrence to change the approved zoning classification of VL-2 Gaffney Drive, Parcel Number 8-140-108.000 from Commercial to Planned Development District #2 and to change the approved zoning classification of 234-238 Glenn Avenue, 419 Glenn Avenue, 233 Stanton Street and M151 Carlton Avenue, Parcel Numbers 8-19-206.100, 8-19-207.100, 8-18-322.000 and 8-18-303.000 from Residence C to Planned Development District #2.

Mr. Katzman seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Ms. Capone then stated that she had to leave the meeting.

ZONE CHANGE

1348, 1352 and 1356 WASHINGTON STREET PARCEL NUMBERS 14-21-106.000, 14-21-107.000, and 14-21-108.000 RESIDENCE B TO NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS

The Planning Board then considered a request submitted by Michael Altieri, P.E. of Bernier, Carr & Associates, Engineers and Land Surveyors, P.C. on behalf of Sundus and Sarah, LLC to change the approved zoning classification of 1348, 1352 and 1356 Washington Street, Parcel Numbers 14-21-106.000, 14-21-107.000, and 14-21-108.000 from Residence B to Neighborhood Business.

Mr. Altieri attended the virtual meeting to represent the request, and said that he had the property owners in his office with him.

Mr. Altieri began by saying that his clients had recently acquired the three subject parcels and sought to rezone them to facilitate developing a mixed-use site with offices, retail and apartments. He then noted that his submission included a very conceptual drawing, and asked if there were questions.

Stephanie Russell, a neighbor living at 1347 Sherman Street, asked to address the Board. Ms. Russell expressed concern about flooding, as well as dust and odors resulting from construction. Following some discussion between Ms. Russell and Mr. Altieri about those issues, Mr. Urda noted that the applicants would need additional approvals before any construction could occur. Mr. Arquitt noted that the process would be identical to what the Gaffney Drive site just went through and it would be just as thorough.

George Ashcraft, a neighbor living at 1358 Washington Street, then said that he would like to keep the shared driveway he had with the 1356 property, but with a fence to divide it in half. He then stated that he did not oppose redeveloping the site.

Tiffany Marra, a neighbor living at 1351 Sherman Street, then said that she also had drainage and privacy concerns. Mr. Altieri noted that drainage was a common theme, and that this input from the neighbors would be valuable when designing a site plan. Mr. Coburn then asked if the Planning Board Members had questions.

Mr. Babcock asked if the subject properties were currently zoned Residence B or C. Mr. Urda replied that it was Residence B. Mr. Altieri asked if Staff could confirm that the request was consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Urda confirmed that it was consistent, stating that the plan recommended that area for Urban Mixed-Use (UMU), and read aloud the section from the Comprehensive plan that described the UMU land use character area.

Discussion then ensued about avoiding SEQR segmentation and the need to describe the proposed development in greater detail in a resubmitted Short EAF.

Ms. Fields then said that she opposed the zone change request because she was afraid of fair market value changes to nearby properties and she also feared that it would set a precedent encouraging future purchases of adjacent properties and subsequent requests to rezone those parcels. She added that she would also like to see more details of the proposed development.

Mr. Katzman then said that he objected as well, and cited what he said was previous dishonesty on the part of the property owners regarding the use of an adjacent property for which they previously sought and obtained a Site Plan Approval in 2012. Discussion then ensued about how that was a separate issue than what was before the Planning Board now and how it is not the Planning Board's role to act as enforcers.

Following that discussion, Mr. Babcock then moved to recommend that City Council approve the request submitted by Michael Altieri, P.E. of the Bernier, Carr & Associates, Engineers and Land Surveyors, P.C. on behalf of Sundus and Sarah, LLC to change the approved zoning classification of 1348, 1352 and 1356 Washington Street, Parcel Numbers 14-21-106.000, 14-21-107.000, and 14-21-108.000 from Residence B to Neighborhood Business.

Mr. Johnson seconded the motion and it carried, 4-1, with Ms. Fields casting the dissenting vote.

Mr. Urda then said that the City Council would schedule a public hearing on the request for June 1, 2020, at which point the Council would be free to act on the request.

Mr. Katzman then asked if it would be smart to consider rezoning the entire block now, rather than just three houses. Mr. Urda advised against any proactive rezonings until the Zoning Ordinance rewrite process had run its course. Mr. Lumbis echoed that sentiment.

Mr. Katzman moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Babcock seconded the motion and all voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 5:02p.m.