



**CITY OF WATERTOWN, NEW YORK**  
**CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
ROOM 305, WATERTOWN CITY HALL  
245 WASHINGTON STREET  
WATERTOWN, NEW YORK 13601-3380  
(315) 785-7741

MEETING: July 10, 2025

**PRESENT:**

Michelle Capone, Chair  
Peter Monaco  
Maryellen Blevins  
Linda Fields  
T.J. Babcock  
Scott Garra-brant

**ALSO:**

Michael A. Lumbis, Planning & Community  
Development Director  
Geoffrey Urda, Senior Planner  
Joseph Albinus, Planner

**ABSENT:**

Lynn Godek

Planning Commission Chairperson, Michelle Capone, called the July 10, 2025, Planning Commission meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**SUBDIVISION FINAL PLAT APPROVAL – 203 MASSEY STREET NORTH  
PARCEL NUMBER 7-06-101.000**

The Planning Commission then considered a request for a Subdivision Final Plat Approval submitted by Charles Marshall of Stewart's Shops Corp. for a two-lot subdivision of 203 Massey Street North, Parcel Number 7-06-101.000.

Charles Marshall, Director of Real Estate for Stewart's, attended to represent the request. He stated that the application was to subdivide a portion of 203 Massey Street North and would assemble the subdivided land with all the adjacent parcels that they already owned or were in the process of acquiring.

Ms. Capone then addressed the summary items in Staff's memorandum to the Planning Commission. Mr. Marshall had a question about summary item 2, which required the applicant to submit a signed Request for Real Property Tax Law 932 Split Form. He asked if prorating all their taxes would mean they wouldn't have to fill out the form.

Michael Lumbis then said that the Split Form is a requirement of the Assessment Department and that the Split Form is so that when they do their assessment there is not an untaxed parcel.

Ms. Capone then called the public hearing to order at 5:05 p.m. and read aloud the legal notice that had been published in the *Watertown Daily Times*. She asked if there was anyone from the public that would like to speak. Hearing none, she then closed the public hearing at 5:06 p.m.

Ms. Capone asked if the Short Environmental Assessment Forum (EAF) was for the Subdivision Final Plat Approval or for the upcoming Special Use Permit and Site Plan Approval. Mr. Urda clarified that the Planning Commission would need to consider all approvals involved in the Stewart's redevelopment, which included the Subdivision, Site Plan Approval, Special Use Permit and two Area Variances, all as a "whole action" when evaluating the environmental impacts to avoid segmentation of the SEQR review.

Ms. Capone said if the Planning Commission had questions about the Site Plan, they could ask their questions before completing the SEQR review if the answers might change their conclusions.

Maryellen Blevins then asked about the eliminator and how much of the oil it was eliminating. Mr. Marshall said he thought she could be referring to two different things; the eliminator could be the snouts or the downstream deflector. He said that they used to call them snouts and they sit so that the water and oil separate so it's contained within the catch basin, and while it should be effectively 100 percent, it would probably be slightly less.

Ms. Blevins then asked how far the vent on top of the canopy was from the residences. Mr. Marshall replied that the canopy is 175 feet from the property. Mr. Urda said that he could measure from the current canopy, even if the current and proposed canopy are in different places and said that the current canopy is 211 feet from the nearest residence. Mr. Marshall then said that the proposed canopy would be set back an additional 30 feet from Massey Street compared to the current canopy, so it would be 181 feet from the nearest residence, not 175 feet like he initially said.

Peter Monaco then asked how they would handle the elevation change for the southern parcel, as the elevation change was great enough to warrant a retaining wall between 229 Massey Street North and 203 Massey Street North.

Ms. Capone then said there would be additional questions for the Special Use Permit. Mr. Urda then shared the latest grading plan that showed the contours of the site. Timothy Babcock said he does not see a call out for a wall and that it looked to be graded from 469 feet to 460 feet.

Mr. Urda stated that while he is not an engineer, the City Engineer Thomas Compo had an extensive conversation with the Project Engineer, Ryan Rubado, and communicated to Mr. Urda that he was satisfied at the end of the phone call, and that he has a physical copy of all of Mr. Rubado's responses. He stated that Mr. Compo was satisfied on all grading and drainage questions.

Ms. Capone then began to complete Part 2 of the EAF for the whole project. After answering "no" to all questions contained in Part 2, Ms. Fields made a motion to issue a negative declaration for the proposed project according to the requirements of SEQR. Mr. Babcock seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Ms. Capone asked if there were any more questions about the Subdivision Final Plat approval. Hearing none, she asked for a motion to accept.

Ms. Fields made a motion to grant Subdivision Final Plat Approval to Charles Marshall of Stewart's Shops Corp. for a two-lot subdivision of 203 Massey Street North, Parcel Number 7-06-101.000, contingent upon the following:

1. The applicant shall assemble the 0.284-acre northern section with all other adjacent Stewart's Shops-owned land into a single parcel, by way of a new metes and bounds description that is filed with the Jefferson County Clerk.
2. The applicant shall submit a signed Request for Real Property Tax Law 932 Split Form.
3. The applicant shall submit a Subdivision Final Plat Drawing for signature by the Clerk of the Planning Commission.

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

**SPECIAL USE PERMIT AND SITE PLAN APPROVAL – 229 MASSEY STREET NORTH;  
319 COFFEEN STREET; 327 COFFEEN STREET; 203 MASSEY STREET NORTH  
PARCEL NUMBERS; 7-06-119.100; 7-06-118.000; 7-06-117.000; 7-06-101.000**

The Planning Commission then considered a request submitted by Charles Marshall of Stewart's Shops Corp. to construct a 4,500 square-foot (SF) convenience store, a 2,000 SF gas canopy and associated site improvements on lands that currently comprise 229 Massey Street North, Parcel Number 7-06-119.100; 319 Coffeen Street, Parcel Number 7-06-118.000; 327 Coffeen Street, Parcel Number 7-06-117.000; and a section of 203 Massey Street North, Parcel Number 7-06-101.000.

Ms. Capone then stated that the Planning Commission asked the applicant to work with Planning Staff and Engineering Staff to deem the application complete. She stated that she thought Staff was satisfied with summary item 2, which required the applicant to discuss with Staff and the Planning Commission whether Massey Street North or Coffeen Street would be a more appropriate address and "front" for the proposed development and apply to the Zoning Board of Appeals for any Variances necessitated by the selected orientation. She said that if Staff was satisfied with the discussion from the May 6, 2025 meeting, the Planning Commission could remove this condition.

Mr. Urda stated that the applicant had worked with Staff and determined that a Coffeen Street address would be more appropriate. Mr. Urda then said that he wouldn't recommend removing the condition, just reword it to say the applicant must obtain both Area Variances.

Ms. Capone then said that previous summary items requiring a full Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation Plan, Utility Plan, Parking Plan, proposed hours of operation, a wider landscaped buffer and tree protection notes were all satisfied.

Ms. Capone then asked if the summary item requiring Subdivision Final Plat approval was fulfilled. Mr. Urda said that the subdivision item would stay but be reworded to require the applicant to fulfill all conditions of that Subdivision Approval.

Ms. Capone then read the item requiring the applicant to provide a plan detailing the storm retention system. Mr. Urda stated that Mr. Compo was satisfied with the discussions held between him and the project engineer, but the project engineer would still need to submit the documents.

Ms. Capone read a summary item from one of the applicant's previous submissions, requiring the discussion of a combined driveway, then stated that it was satisfied and the Planning Commission eliminated it.

Ms. Capone then read the summary item requiring the transplanting of a 2-inch street tree, stating that it will remain but be reworded.

Ms. Capone then read the previous item requiring the updated plan requiring a light plan and stated that it had been fulfilled.

Ms. Capone then read the item requiring SEQR review and eliminated it as it had been fulfilled.

Ms. Capone then asked about the "Additional Staff Comments (Resubmission)" section of Staff's updated memorandum to the Planning Commission.

Mr. Urda stated that this section supports and elaborates on Staff's responses to the previous summary items, both the fulfilled summary items and those that remain and provides additional details on why.

Ms. Capone then asked if the sediment control drawings were included the resubmission. Mr. Urda replied that his understanding was that Mr. Compo was satisfied with everything submitted to him and the item was re-worded to refer to the bullet point list earlier in the report and it would fall under condition 5.

Ms. Capone then asked Mr. Marshall if he had the report so he knew what the Planning Commission and Staff were talking about. Mr. Marshall replied that he had a copy of the email exchange between Mr. Rubado and Mr. Compo and he has the erosion and sediment control plans and knows it has been satisfied. He said that he also has the questions Mr. Compo has asked Mr. Rubado along with the indication that they had been satisfied.

Ms. Capone then asked how the communication was handled to verify that all conditions were fulfilled. Mr. Urda replied that summary item 5, would stay and that it represents all the engineering comments that were part of the bullet points and if the applicant had those. Mr. Lumbis said that they could include the bullet points in the summary item. Ms. Capone then said that she liked that idea as it would be clearer to the applicant. Mr. Lumbis said that they could re-word summary item 5 to include the bullet points.

Mr. Urda said that as he understood it, Mr. Rubado and Mr. Compo agreed that everything was good verbally and the applicant just needs to submit the plans. Mr. Marshall then said that the original sediment control is in the plan and they won't get a Building Permit until the plans are ready.

Ms. Capone said that she just wants to make sure they are getting the right contingencies in the approval and asked if any other Planning Commission members had questions.

Ms. Blevins then said that the application said that for every two customers per hour, they would have a parking space, which equated to 27 spaces plus 3 for employees, which totaled 30, but the plans only provided 28 and she wondered if that was okay. Mr. Urda replied that the applicant would likely be all right since they are already over the maximum parking spaces in an Urban Mixed Use District according to Section 310-35 of the Zoning Ordinance, clarifying that the reason the applicant had to submit a parking plan was because they had been over the maximum.

Linda Fields then asked how many ADA-accessible parking spaces there would be and where they would be located. Mr. Marshall then said that there were two and pointed to where they would be on the map.

Ms. Fields then asked if the proposed ADA-accessible spaces would be more visible than the current handicapped were now. Mr. Marshall then discussed overall improvements that would be done to improve the ADA-accessible spaces.

Ms. Fields then said that she was concerned about the available space for a disabled person getting in or out of their car. Mr. Marshall then said that for the delineated spaces there would be a chance of getting blocked in, but there was a hatched access aisle in between the two ADA-accessible spaces.

Mr. Urda then said that if the parking space was not blocked, it would meet all the other standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Mr. Marshall stated that legacy stores like the current one have a 4-to-6-inch curb reveals and they would be turned into a flush curb with the new store.

Ms. Fields then asked if there would be striping at the ADA-accessible spots. Mr. Marshall said there would be and pointed it out on the plan, clarifying the bay would be where people exit the vehicle.

Ms. Capone asked if there were any other questions.

Mr. Monaco asked if they had an expected date to start building. Mr. Marshall replied that it would be different from their last project in the city. They would build the building first and then come back in the spring of 2026 to install underground gas tanks, as winter may interfere with the pouring of concrete.

Ms. Capone then asked if they could keep the current store operational while constructing the new one. Mr. Marshall confirmed and said that the construction project would be different.

Ms. Capone then asked for a motion.

Ms. Fields made a motion to grant a Special Use Permit and Site Plan Approval to Charles Marshall of Stewart's Shops Corp. to construct a 4,500 square-foot (SF) convenience store, a 2,000 SF gas canopy and associated site improvements on lands that currently comprise 229 Massey Street North, Parcel Number 7-06-119.100; 319 Coffeen Street, Parcel Number 7-06-118.000; 327 Coffeen Street, Parcel Number 7-06-117.000; and a section of 203 Massey Street North, Parcel Number 7-06-101.000, contingent upon the following:

1. The applicant shall fulfill all conditions of the Subdivision Approval for 203 Massey Street North granted by the City of Watertown Planning Commission at its July 10, 2025 meeting.
2. The applicant must obtain Area Variances from the Zoning Board of Appeals granting relief from the maximum unbuilt frontage and minimum ground-floor, front-façade transparency requirements of the Urban Mixed Use District.
3. The applicant an erosion and sediment control plan.
4. The applicant shall provide a concrete drop curb detail for the proposed driveway locations.
5. The applicant shall show and dimension the limits of the sawcut along Coffeen street and provide a section detail of the full depth sawcut and concrete curb(s) detail. The butt joint shall include asphaltic sealant.
6. The applicant shall provide the layout geometry for the driveway entrance tapers.
7. The applicant shall ensure that the driveway apron(s) and sidewalk shall be concrete consistent with the current and surrounding parcel aprons.
8. The applicant shall provide work zone traffic control and pedestrian safety routing plans for the work areas
9. The applicant must coordinate with the City Forester to relocate the existing 2” diameter street tree along Massey Street North as depicted on the Landscaping Plan submitted to the City Planning Department on June 27, 2025.
10. The applicant must obtain the following permits and other documentation, minimally, prior to construction: Demolition Permit, Building Permit, General City Permit and a Zoning Compliance Certificate.

Timothy Babcock seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Ms. Fields or moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Babcock seconded the motion and all voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Albinus  
Planner