



# MEMORANDUM

CITY OF WATERTOWN PLANNING OFFICE  
245 WASHINGTON STREET, ROOM 304, WATERTOWN, NY 13601  
PHONE: (315) 785-7730 – FAX: (315) 782-9014

**TO:** Planning Board Members  
**FROM:** Michael A. Lumbis, Planner *ML*  
**SUBJECT:** Site Plan Approval – Samaritan Medical Center, 830 Washington Street  
**DATE:** December 31, 2015

**Request:** Approving the site plan for construction of a 17,900 square foot, three story addition with a reconfigured parking area at 830 Washington Street, Parcel Number 14-02-101.000.  
**Applicant:** Michael Altieri, P.E. of Bernier, Carr & Associates, on behalf of Samaritan Medical Center  
**Proposed Use:** Maternity Ward  
**Property Owner:** Samaritan Medical Center

<b>Submitted:</b>	
Property Survey: No	Preliminary Architectural Drawings: Yes
Site Plan: Yes	Preliminary Site Engineering Plans: Yes
Vehicle and Pedestrian Circulation Plan: Yes	Construction Time Schedule: Yes
Landscaping and Grading Plan: Yes	Description of Uses, Hours & Traffic Volume: Yes

SEQRA: Unlisted

County Review: No

<b>Zoning Information:</b>	
District: Health Services	Maximum Lot Coverage: N/A
Setback Requirements: Front: 20', Interior side: 5' Street side: 10', Rear: 25' Existing setback variances in specified unrelated areas	Buffer Zone Required: 5'-15' Where site abuts residential district

**Project Overview:** The applicant proposes to construct a 4,550 square foot three story maternity addition to the Samaritan Medical Center (SMC) with a total of 17,900 total square feet. The applicant will also be reconfiguring the parking area and loading area.

**Parking and Vehicle Circulation:** Currently, the SMC complex has 1,280 parking spaces and the proposed construction will remove 26 of these spaces, leaving a total of 1,254. The applicant's parking analysis, provided as part of the Engineering Report, indicates that the total spaces currently required for the entire campus is 1,403. This means that the campus is short 149 spaces. The last major building project at SMC was the construction of two enclosed connector structures: one between SMC and Samaritan Keep Home (SKH), and one between SMC and the attached medical office building. The project also included modifications to the parking lot located near SKH. The projects were approved by the Planning Board and City Council in 2011.

During the site plan review process in 2011, the applicant did not submit updated parking calculations but it was estimated at that time, based on the submitted information and records from a previous site plan review in 2007 that the complex required 1,192 spaces. The existing parking count in 2011 was 1,291 spaces, which exceeded the requirement. It should be noted that all of the previous parking calculations included the medical office building as that building, while not owned by SMC at the time, was part of the overall campus.

Based on 17,900 gross square feet, the proposed addition increases the required number of parking spaces by 90. Besides the addition, we are not sure what has increased the number of required parking spaces since 2011. It is possible that ongoing interior renovations to the older portion of the hospital has increased the size of the accessory space and changed the required parking or it is also possible that the current parking calculation is more accurate than previous ones submitted. Another possible reason for the discrepancy is that the current parking calculation is based on gross floor area and does not exclude the areas used for utility facilities and storage.

Regardless, based on the parking calculation provided, the complex does not meet the number of parking spaces required by the Zoning Ordinance. In order for this proposed building addition to obtain site plan approval as submitted, additional parking would have to be provided or a variance for the number of parking spaces must be granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

On the submitted site plan, the applicant depicts that parking spaces will be 8 feet from the street margin of Sherman Street. The City Zoning Ordinance requires for hospitals or nursing homes, that all parking spaces shall be at least 20 feet back from any street lot line (§310-36 Paragraph B). In order for this building addition and parking lot reconstruction project to obtain site plan approval as proposed, a variance for parking setback requirements must also be granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The applicant has recently submitted two requests to the Zoning Board of Appeals to vary the number of parking spaces and to vary the setback requirement.

There is a proposed Materials Stockpiling area shown on the plans in the southwest corner of the parking lot. The applicant should ensure that there is adequate sight distance while turning from Pratt Street to Sherman Street. The submitted site plan does not disclose the the width of the proposed driveways. The width should be shown on the plan.

**Sidewalks, Curbing & Grading:** In the submitted grading plans, the applicant has not indicated how the curb for the proposed driveway on Sherman Street will tie into the existing street curbing.

Although the applicant has submitted site sidewalk details, the applicant did not include a City sidewalk detail for sidewalks within the City margin. All proposed curb ramps and sidewalks within the City margin shall be built to City specifications and shall meet the requirements of Public Right of Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG). The existing curb ramp and drop curbs at the intersection of Sherman and Pratt shall also be upgraded to meet PROWAG standards.

Engineering staff has also noted that since the concrete sidewalks continue through the driveway openings, the truncated domes are not required.

**Landscaping:** The existing landscaping at the site consists of an 8' +/- grass strip between the parking lot and Sherman Street and a lawn area with small trees on the south side of the existing building. The proposed landscaping and green infrastructure practices include a continuation of the grass strip along Sherman Street that will be supplemented by deciduous trees. Plans also include two bioretention areas along Sherman Street that will collect stormwater runoff from the parking lot. These areas will be planted with perennials grasses, flowers and ground cover. The plans also show 5 landscaped rain gardens in the interior of the parking lot, adjacent to the accessible parking spaces. These areas will be constructed at an elevation that is slightly lower than the surrounding parking lot and will collect and treat stormwater runoff.

The conceptual landscaping plan generally meets the intent of the Landscaping and Buffer Zone Guidelines; however, the applicant must submit an updated and finalized Landscaping Plan that contains a landscaping schedule that includes proposed tree species, sizes, and quantity. When preparing the plan, the applicant should diversify the tree species such that no one tree species accounts for more than 15% of the total.

**Lighting:** The submitted photometric plan appears to show significant light spillage onto the property to the north. The plan should be modified so that light spillage to the north of the property will be below 0.5 foot candles at the property line.

**Utilities & Drainage:** Although the proposed building addition appears to include roof drains, the applicant has not indicated the location of any roof drains and how they connect to the storm drain. The roof drain and/or foundation drains must be shown on the utility plan.

The applicant has submitted plans that do not depict a connection to an existing storm manhole detail. This detail must be provided. Additionally, an inlet protection detail for City owned catch basins must be provided. The inlet protection detail included in the plans indicates excavation around catch basins. This will not be allowed on City catch basins.

**Permits:** The applicant must obtain a Demolition Permit, Building Permit, Sidewalk Permit, General City Permit (to work within margin), Storm Sewer Connection Permit, and Sanitary Sewer Connection Permit.

**Miscellaneous:** A Boundary and Topographic Survey was not provided that was created and stamped by a Professional Land Surveyor.

The site plan depicts a proposed Biohazard Storage Area near the Sherman Street entrance to the parking lot. There is no indication regarding the contents that are to be stored there and how they will be protected from nearby streets. This should be clarified by the applicant.

Site plans shall include a Land Use and Zoning table of requirements and shall address, minimally, number of parking spaces, setbacks, coverage, etc. that are required by zoning, and are proposed for the project.

**Summary:** The Planning Board should make a decision in this matter based on a thorough understanding of the proposed project's compliance with the City's Zoning Ordinance, specifically in regards to parking and setback requirements. As currently proposed, the project cannot be approved by the City Council. Therefore, Staff recommends that the Planning Board table this application until the Zoning Board of Appeals acts upon the applicant's variance requests. The Planning Board can then make a decision based on the outcome of those proceedings. At this present time, with in regards to the submitted plans, Staff recommends that the following should be addressed:

1. The applicant shall obtain a variance for parking space requirements.
2. The applicant shall obtain a variance for parking setback requirements.

3. The applicant shall ensure that there is adequate sight distance around the proposed Materials Stockpiling area while turning from Pratt Street to Sherman Street.
4. The applicant shall depict the width of the proposed driveways on the plan.
5. The applicants must indicate in the grading plans how the curb for the proposed driveway on Sherman Street will tie into the existing street curbing.
6. Plans shall include a City Sidewalk Detail, separate from the site sidewalk details, which meet City sidewalk specifications for the walks within the City margin.
7. All proposed curb ramps and sidewalks within the City margin shall be built to City specifications and shall meet the requirements of Public Right of Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG).
8. The existing curb ramp and drop curbs at the intersection of Sherman and Pratt shall be upgraded to meet PROWAG standards.
9. The applicant must submit an updated and finalized Landscaping Plan that contains a landscaping schedule that includes proposed tree species, sizes, and quantities.
10. The plans shall be modified so that light spillage to the north of the property shall be kept below 0.5 foot candles at the property line.
11. All roof drain and/or foundation drains shall be shown on the utility plan.
12. The applicant must provide a detail showing the connection to existing storm manhole.
13. The applicant must provide an inlet protection detail for the City owned catch basins that does not allow excavation around catch basins.
14. The applicant must obtain the following permits (minimally) prior to construction: Demolition Permit, Building Permit, Sidewalk Permit, General City Permit (to work within margin), Storm Sewer Connection Permit, and Sanitary Sewer Connection Permit.
15. The applicant shall submit a Boundary and Topographic Survey that is created and stamped by a Professional Land Surveyor.
16. The applicant shall clarify the intent of the Biohazard Storage Area.
17. Site plans shall include a Land Use and Zoning table of requirements and shall address, minimally, the number of parking spaces, setbacks, coverage, etc. that are required by zoning and proposed for the project.

cc: City Council Members  
Brian Drake, Civil Engineer II  
Michael Altieri, 327 Mullin Street, Watertown, NY 13601