



# MEMORANDUM

## City of Watertown Planning Office

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**TO:** Norman J. Wayte II, Chairman, Planning Board

**FROM:** Kenneth A. Mix, Planning and Community Development Coordinator

**SUBJECT:** Site Plan Approval – 1500 Block Washington Street, Samaritan Senior Village

**DATE:** April 28, 2010

**Request:** Site Plan Approval for the construction of a 231,073-square foot, 288-bed senior living facility on the 1500 block of Washington St., Parcels Number 13-23-101, 13-23-102.1, and 13-23-104.

**Applicant:** Patrick J. Scordo, P.E. of GYMO, P.C. on behalf of Samaritan Medical Center

**Proposed Use:** Multifamily senior living facility

**Property Owner:** Watertown City School District, City of Watertown, and Samaritan Medical Center

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### Submitted:

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Property Survey: Yes	Preliminary Architectural Drawings: Yes
Site Plan: Yes	Preliminary Site Engineering Plans: Yes
Vehicle and Pedestrian Circulation Plan: Yes	Construction Time Schedule: Preliminary
Landscaping and Grading Plan: Yes	Description of Uses, Hours & Traffic Volume: Preliminary

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SEQRA: Unlisted Action	County Planning Board Review Required: Yes
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### Zoning Information:

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District: Commercial (after Zone Change)	Maximum Lot Coverage: None
Setback Requirements: None	Buffer Zone Required: Yes, 5-15 feet along northern and eastern site boundaries

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**Project Overview:** The applicant is proposing the construction of a 288-bed, 231,073-square foot senior living center, as well as necessary site and utility work. Such site work includes the construction of a 35-foot driveway loop with two connections to Washington Street, including a loading dock and 187 parking spaces arranged along the drive. Three storm water management structures are proposed; they will be pond retention basins, surrounded by decorative fencing. New sewer lines and water lines will also be constructed to serve the facility. The building will have two wings, one 3 stories and one 4 stories.

**Parking & Traffic:** Because this facility matches the description of a “Nursing Home” in many respects, but also has some qualities of a mixed-use project, the applicant’s parking calculations included the requirements of both §310-45 and §310-47. This means 1 space for every 3 beds (96), and 1 guest space for every 10 “dwellings” (29), for a total requirement of 125 spaces. The site as proposed exceeds this requirement with 187 spaces. Residents of the facility are not expected to have cars.

The applicant must show in the plans proposed restoration details for all existing asphalt, curb, and sidewalk work required for construction of the two entrances to the site. The applicant must provide a Traffic Impact Study.

**Pedestrian Circulation:** A five foot walk follows the majority of the new driveway around the perimeter of the site. This should be sufficient for the limited pedestrian traffic into and out of the site. The proposed garden areas contain further walkways for the on-site enjoyment of residents.

Pedestrian access between Samaritan Medical Plaza and the proposed Senior Village needs further attention. Two connections are shown, but their nature is not fully known or depicted. The driveway spur between Samaritan Medical Plaza and the new perimeter driveway lacks a sidewalk; it should have one along its eastern edge connecting the SMP parking lot to the new perimeter walkway. Further, some arrangement needs to be made for pedestrian traffic across the north side of the SMP building, between the storefront and the western entrances of the proposed Senior Village. Also, the walkway along the main entrance drive should be extended all the way to Washington Street at the southwestern corner of the site. Finally, a handicap ramp must be provided at the new entrance to Washington Street.

Public access to the trail system behind Wiley School from Washington Street should be preserved. There is an informal route now. A trail was put in along Hudson Lane as part of the Summit Wood project to connect to it. A condition of the sale of parcel 13-23-102.100 to SMC from the City is that a trail easement will be retained by the City. The location of the easement has not been agreed to yet. To connect to the school property an easement will also be needed across the land SMC is purchasing from the School District. The site plan does not show an easement, though it does show the location of the existing trail.

**Grading, Drainage and Utilities:** The Engineering Department has reviewed the plans and has the following comments:

- The site plan must depict the location of the dumpster enclosure.
- The existing 6 inch sanitary sewer servicing the Medical Plaza building is a private line, which the City has no plan to upgrade or take ownership of. The City will approve the connection as-is, but the NYSDEC has ultimate approval authority.
- The applicant should provide the City Engineer with copies of all correspondence with NYSDEC for the SPDES permit.
- All manholes and sewer pipes must be labeled with their associated information on the site plan.
- The applicant must provide a final grading and storm sewer plan, showing rims, inverts, piping, and spot elevations.

- The applicant must provide a stamped and signed copy of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.

**Water:** The applicant has proposed that water be delivered to the site via a new 2,800 foot length of 10” main, stretching from the Town of Watertown water tower through Town land, and entering the site from the south. After consultation with the applicant’s engineers, the Water Department and Engineering Department have agreed that this is the best solution. This plan will require the approval of the Town of Watertown and the NYSDOH.

The only other alternative is to connect to the City’s 8” Washington Street main, and build a booster pump and storage tank to mitigate inadequate pressure. This option is far more expensive, and technically inferior.

The City Engineering Department requests the following:

- The applicant must provide the City Engineer with copies of all correspondence and submittals regarding the NYS DOH Water Supply Permit.
- The fire hydrant just east of the 4-story building should be moved to the west side of the parking lot.
- Label all water mains and other necessary information.

**Lighting:** The submitted engineering report includes provisions for site lighting controlled by timer and photocell. The Commons/Skilled Care building and the Assisted Living building will have separate lighting control systems. Site lighting will include cutoff area luminaries, decorative post top luminaries, and residential bollards. The parking lot luminaries will be 20 feet in height with a full cutoff. The decorative post luminaries will be 10-15 feet in height, also with a full cutoff. Review of the photometric plan confirms that spillage over the property line is limited to 0.5 foot-candles or less. Spillage is limited to areas along the northern site boundary, which is undeveloped land in the “Residence A” and “Residence B” zoning districts.

**Landscaping:** The site plan shows substantial new plantings, including garden areas adjacent to the proposed buildings, and shade trees lining portions of the proposed driveway (spacing varies from 25 to 110 feet). The planting schedule shows 113 total trees and sixteen different tree species. There are also eight different varieties of shrubs. With the variety of species shown, the plan meets the species diversity recommendation in the Planning Board’s Landscaping and Buffer Zone Guidelines.

There are several areas along the proposed driveway where there are no trees currently proposed including the south side of the main entrance from Washington Street to the proposed parking lot and the south side of the secondary access from Washington Street to the driveway spur leading to Samaritan Medical Plaza. Trees should be added to these areas. Also, trees should be added to the new parking lot island located on the south end of the Samaritan Medical Plaza parking lot.

As noted above, 187 parking spaces are proposed for the site. The guidelines recommend 1 interior parking lot tree for every 15 spaces meaning that 13 parking lot trees should be provided. The applicant has proposed 14 trees in islands that are spaced throughout the parking lot. Lawn areas and existing vegetation will line the outside perimeter of the parking lot which will adequately meet the recommendation for exterior parking lot landscaping.

Assuming the Zone Change Request for this site is approved (item #6 on this meeting's agenda), section §310-57 of the City zoning ordinance stipulates that the areas of this property abutting residential districts must have a landscaped buffer region no less than 5 feet in width. The submitted plan shows a line of shade trees along the property boundary in question. No additional planting should be required, considering that the abutting "Residence B" district is actually 30+ acres of wild vegetation, not a collection of residences.

**General Comments:** The submitted plans do not include a demolition plan. One should be provided, showing the scope and type of removal work planned for existing infrastructure. Further, the applicant needs to label address and/or tax parcel information for all properties on the plan sheets. The applicant must furnish the results of the Sensitive Area Investigation Reports.

**Summary:** The following lists key issues that should be addressed:

1. Connect the perimeter walkway to the Samaritan Medical Plaza parking lot, along the eastern curb of the driveway spur.
2. Clarify the intended pedestrian traffic pattern between the north side of the Medical Plaza building and the western entrances to the proposed Senior Village.
3. Continue the perimeter walkway to meet the Washington Street sidewalk at the southwestern corner of the site.
4. Include a handicap ramp at the new Washington Street entrance.
5. Depict the location of the dumpster enclosure.
6. Move the fire hydrant just east of the 4-story building to the west side of the parking lot.
7. Provide demolition plans for existing infrastructure.
8. Show proposed restoration details for all existing asphalt, curb, and sidewalk work required for construction of the two entrances to the site
9. Show address/tax parcel information on the site plan.
10. Provide a Traffic Impact Study, and the results of the Sensitive Area Investigation Report.
11. The existing sewer connection is approved as-is, but must also be approved by DEC. The applicant must provide copies of all correspondence related to the DEC approval.
12. Provide copies of all correspondence related to the NYSDOH Water Supply Permit.
13. Label all water mains on the site plan.
14. Label all manholes and sewer pipes with associated information.
15. Provide a final grading and storm sewer design, showing rims, inverts, piping, and spot elevations.
16. Provide a signed and stamped Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.
17. Provide additional street trees along the south side of the main entrance from Washington Street to the proposed parking lot and the south side of the secondary access from Washington Street to the driveway spur leading to Samaritan Medical Plaza.
18. Provide street trees in the new parking lot island located on the south end of the Samaritan Medical Plaza parking lot.
19. Update the site plan to include the trail easement, after its location is decided.

Cc: Planning Board Members  
City Council Members  
Robert J. Slye, City Attorney  
Justin Wood, Civil Engineer II  
Patrick J. Scordo, P.E.