



# 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  
SUBJECT: Site Plan Approval – VL-3 Marble Street  
DATE: July 29, 2015

**Request:** Site Plan Approval for the construction of a 1,659 square foot building at VL-3 Marble Street, Parcel Number 4-27-402.100

**Applicant:** Ron England of Al's Siding LLC

**Proposed Use:** Storage Building for Al's Siding

**Property Owner:** Al's Siding LLC

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## Submitted:

Property Survey: Yes	Preliminary Architectural Drawings: No
Site Plan: Yes	Preliminary Site Engineering Plans: No
Vehicle and Pedestrian Circulation Plan: No	Construction Time Schedule: No
Landscaping and Grading Plan: Grading (no contours)	Description of Uses, Hours & Traffic Volume: Uses and anticipated traffic are identified; hours are not.

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SEQRA: Type II	County Review Required: No
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## Zoning Information:

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District: Heavy Industry	Maximum Lot Coverage: 100%
Setback Requirements: All Yards – 0'	Buffer Zone Required: No

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**Project Overview:** The applicant proposes to construct a 1,659 square foot building to serve as a storage building for his siding business. The building will be located in the center of the parcel, which consists almost entirely of crushed stone. A 22 square foot shed currently exists on the site. The applicant received a permit for and began construction on the project. A 52' by 32' foot concrete foundation was built, but construction has been halted pending the approval of the site plan. The site is 0.43 acres.

The applicant had previously applied for a waiver of site plan approval, which the Planning Board denied at its June 2 meeting. At that meeting, the Planning Board determined the project did not meet the criteria for a waiver because the proposed storage building would be the first permanent structure on the site.

**Parking and Vehicular Circulation:** Section 310-50 of the Zoning Ordinance states that areas used for storage can be subtracted from the required parking calculations; therefore no designated parking is required for the project. Section 310-49 of the Zoning Ordinance requires a 10' by 30' loading space for storage use. The applicant identifies this loading space on the site plan.

The applicant is not proposing any paved areas on the site. The site plan, as proposed, involves utilizing the existing crushed stone groundcover as a parking area. The applicant does identify two driveway entrances on the site plan. However, since the applicant also states that no landscaping will be installed, it is unclear how these driveway entrances will be delineated on the ground. This proposal is unacceptable. Access points to the property need to be controlled from the City Streets. A grassed median should be provided between the street and the proposed parking area to delineate the access points and to provide for snow storage.

**Lighting:** A photometric plan was not provided. The applicant states that security lighting will be installed on the exterior of the building, resulting in less than 0.5 footcandles at the property line. No other lighting, including interior lighting, is proposed anywhere on the site.

**Grading, Drainage and Utilities:** The applicant states that no appreciable or calculated stormwater will exit the site and that no modification to the current stormwater runoff and direction of flow is proposed. There is an existing catch basin in the center of the site that stormwater drains to. There is a storm drain within this catch basin; however it does not connect to anything underground either on or off the site and effectively functions as a pit to collect stormwater as it is absorbed into the ground. There is no impermeable paving material proposed on any part of the site.

To provide power to the security lighting, the applicant is proposing to connect to an existing overhead utility line running along the north side of Marble Street.

The site plan, while providing spot elevations at various points on the property, does not show any existing or proposed contour lines. The site plan should be amended to show existing and proposed contours at 1' intervals and labeled with appropriate spot elevations. Existing contours should be dashed.

**Landscaping:** The applicant is proposing the installation of shrubs and perennials in three planters/pots to be located in front of the building. Other than the planters, there is no new landscaping currently proposed for the site. When the applicant applied for a waiver of site plan approval in May, Staff had requested in its report that the applicant submit a landscaping plan as a part of his submission for full site plan approval.

The applicant has not submitted a landscaping plan and is still not proposing any landscaping for the site, contending that the entire site consists of gravel, directly over bedrock, and is therefore unsuitable for any planting or landscaping. However, prior to applying for the waiver in May, the applicant had already performed some work on the land, which resulted in the displacement of a thin layer of soil and vegetation from the surface. The displacement was evidenced by a talus pile at the eastern end of the lot, where the pre-existing surface materials were pushed.

At a minimum, the applicant should perform the landscaping action identified above in the "Parking and Vehicular Circulation" section, which is to install a grassed median between the street and the parking area. While Staff would like to see additional landscaping work performed, further landscaping at this time, other than installing the requested median, need not be a condition of site plan approval.

**SEQRA:** A State Environmental Review Short Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) was submitted. Section 617.5 of the State Environmental Quality Review Act states that “Construction or expansion of a primary or accessory/appurtenant, non-residential structure or facility involving less than 4,000 square feet of gross floor area and not involving a change in zoning or a use variance and consistent with local land use controls, but not radio communication or microwave transmission facilities;” is a type II action that requires no further review under SEQR. Therefore, no further action under SEQR is required.

**Engineering Comments:** The plan should be adequately dimensioned and include radii, specifically all proposed driveway radii. The Planning Data Table should also be updated to reflect the setbacks from the proposed margin. It is unclear at this point what work is proposed within the City margin to delineate the driveways. Should a shoulder closure become necessary to complete margin work, then maintenance and protection of traffic plans and notes will be required.

**Miscellaneous:** There is a concurrent subdivision request before the Planning Board that is also related to this project. When the applicant applied for a waiver of site plan approval in May, Staff discovered that the metes and bounds of the applicant’s parcel extended partially into the paved footprint of Eagle Avenue. The applicant has communicated a willingness to transfer ownership of this portion of land to the City for use as public right-of-way. The City of Watertown has therefore applied for subdivision approval of Parcel 4-27-402.100 on behalf of the property owner. The Planning Board will consider that subdivision request separately and prior to considering this request for site plan approval.

The applicant should forward PDF files of the entire set of drawings to the City Engineering Department whenever any revisions are made to the drawings.

The property owner shall obtain the following permits prior to construction: a Building Permit and a City Permit for any work within the City right-of-way.

**Summary:** The following is a list of items that should be included in the motion recommending approval:

1. The applicant shall provide a grassed median between the existing edge of pavement and the property line along the entire street frontage of the property, excluding the driveway openings, to delineate the driveway access points and to provide an area for snow storage.
2. The site plan shall be amended to show existing and proposed contours at 1’ intervals and labeled with appropriate spot elevations. Existing contours should be dashed.
3. The applicant shall address all concerns of the City Engineering Department prior to the issuance of any permits.
4. The applicant shall obtain the following permits prior to any further construction: a Building Permit and a City Permit for any work within the City right-of-way.

cc: Robert J. Slye, City Attorney  
Brian Drake, Civil Engineer II  
Ron England, Al’s Siding  
Edward G. Olley Jr., AIA