



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: Kenneth A. Mix, Planning and Community Development Coordinator

SUBJECT: Site Plan Approval – 1340 Washington St, North Country Neurology

DATE: July 24, 2012

Request: Site Plan Approval for the construction of a 6,000 square foot addition to a medical office building at 1340 Washington Street, parcels 14-21-102 and 14-21-105

Applicant: LUNCO Corporation

Proposed Use: Medical office with sleep lab

Property Owner: Sundus and Sarah LLC, Jane J. Zimmerman

Submitted:

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

SEQRA: Unlisted

County Review: No

Zoning Information:

District: Limited Business	Maximum Lot Coverage: None
Setback Requirements: 20' front, 5' side, 25' rear	Buffer Zone Required: 5-15' along S and W lines

Project Overview: The applicant is requesting approval of plans for the construction of a 6,000 square foot addition to the North Country Neurology building on Washington Street. The project will also involve the reconfiguration of the parking area, and the demolition of an existing house at 1346 Washington St.

Parking: The total building size will be increased to 9,960 square feet. Medical offices are required to have 5 parking spaces for each 1,000 square feet of floor area, rounded up. The building includes 500 square feet of storage and utility space, and thus code requires a total of 48 parking spaces.

The applicant has provided only 38, with the argument that the 2,000 square foot sleep lab will only be occupied at night, when the rest of the office is closed. Unfortunately, there is no provision in the code for allowances based on the timing of the potential parking load. Further, the applicant has not provided a detailed floor plan which depicts the size and configuration of the sleep lab. Thus, the applicant will be required to seek and obtain a Variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals in order to construct the building as shown.

Shifting the refuse shed away from the property line (explained below) may remove an additional space. Thus, the variance application should probably request that the parking requirement be reduced by 11 spaces.

Pedestrians: The applicant has not provided a connection from the building entrance to the public sidewalk. A walkway should be installed between the front entrance and the Brook Drive sidewalk.

Lighting: New light poles are proposed on the south and west edges of the parking lot, and in the soffit of the addition. No photometric plan was provided. The Board should require photometric data due to the close proximity of the proposed light poles to residential land. Spillage across property lines should not exceed 0.5 foot-candles at ground level.

Utilities: Add a note to the plans stating the following: “All water main and service work must be coordinated with the City of Watertown Water Department. The Water Department requirements supersede all other plans and specifications provided.”

Drainage & Grading: The existing parking lot area is graded east to west so that runoff flows to a narrow grass strip along the rear property line. The proposed grading plan also drains east to west, and shows a grass swale being extended along the new parking area. The adjacent properties on the west side are lower in elevation than the applicant’s property. To minimize the amount of runoff passing onto the adjacent properties, the applicant must ensure this grass swale is constructed such that water will be contained within the swale and allowed to infiltrate into the soil.

Landscaping: The applicant plans to remove nine spruce trees that currently comprise the residential landscape buffer to make space for the addition. The proposed plan shows two new maples along Washington Street, and groupings of shrubbery along the south and west property line and surrounding the building.

Two existing maple trees along Washington Street are in very poor health, and one near the corner is missing entirely. These trees should be replaced in the configuration recommended by the Landscaping and Buffer Zone Guidelines. Care should be exercised to choose a combination of species other than maple that will better tolerate roadside salt conditions.

In addition to the proposed fence and shrubbery along the residentially zoned area, the Buffer Zone guidelines require tree plantings in the buffer area. The plantings can be spaced at different intervals depending on whether the trees are small or large maturing trees or whether they are deciduous or coniferous. The plans should be modified to meet the requirements of the Landscaping and Buffer Zone Guidelines. In addition to the buffer planting along the new portion of the site, trees should be extended along the entire western property line as trees proposed for that area as part of the original site plan approval were never planted.

A 3 foot tall picket fence is proposed along the southeast corner of the property. City Code restricts the transparency of fences to a maximum of 50% within 20’ of the street line, and to a maximum of 80% within 5’ of the street line. Further, the Fences ordinance was revised last winter—the maximum height within 20 feet of the street line is now 4 feet, rather than the previous standard of 3 feet. A separate fence permit must be obtained from Code Enforcement.

Miscellaneous: The proposed addition will be built partially on land that is currently a separate parcel. The applicant has indicated that they intend to purchase and assemble the lots, but nonetheless it should be a condition of approval that the lots be combined via a deed filed at the County Clerk’s office.

The proposed refuse shed is approximately 12’ feet from the property line. Refuse containers cannot be placed within 15’ of a property line, as stated in § 161-19.1 of the City Code.

The applicant must provide a stamped and signed copy of the boundary and topographic survey for both involved parcels.

The applicant must revise the note on sheet C101 to say “EXISTING CURBING AND CONCRETE APRON TO BE REPLACED PER CITY SPEC’S AT ABANDONED DRIVEWAY”.

The applicant must obtain the following permits prior to construction: Sanitary Sewer Permit, Water Permit, Building Permit, Fence Permit, and General City Permit to work in the City Right-of-Way.

Summary:

1. The applicant shall acquire a Variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals to reduce the number of required parking spaces.
2. The applicant shall provide a pedestrian walkway between the building entrance and the Brook Drive sidewalk.
3. The applicant shall provide a lighting plan with photometric data, ensuring that spillage across property lines does not exceed 0.5 foot-candles at ground level.
4. The applicant shall ensure to the satisfaction of the City Engineer that drainage will be contained within the swale to the west of the parking lot, and allowed to infiltrate rather than running off onto neighboring properties.
5. The applicant shall add a note to the plans stating the following: “All water main and service work must be coordinated with the City of Watertown Water Department. The Water Department requirements supersede all other plans and specifications provided.”
6. The applicant shall remove the two dead/dying maple trees along Washington Street, and plant a new row of 5 trees in a similar configuration to that depicted on the site plan, and in general conformance with the Landscaping and Buffer Zone Guidelines.
7. The proposed landscaping along the entire southern and western property lines shall be supplemented with tree plantings that are in conformance with the buffer zone standards found in the Landscaping and Buffer Zone Guidelines.
8. The applicant shall combine parcels 14-21-102 and 14-21-105 via a deed filed with the County Clerk.
9. The applicant shall shift the location of the proposed refuse shed so that it does not lie within 15 feet of a property line.
10. The applicant shall provide a wet-stamped copy of the boundary and topographic survey, with original seal and signature.

Cc: City Council Members
Robert J. Slye, City Attorney
Justin Wood, Civil Engineer II
Michael Lundy, Lundy Development, 35794 US Rte. 126, Carthage, NY 13619