



CITY OF WATERTOWN, NEW YORK

CITY PLANNING BOARD
ROOM 302, WATERTOWN CITY HALL
245 WASHINGTON STREET
WATERTOWN, NEW YORK 13601-3380
(315) 785-7730

MEETING: March 4, 2014

PRESENT:

Sara Freda, Chair
Michele Capone
Larry Coburn
Lin Fields
Lori Gervera
Neil Katzman

ALSO:

Kenneth A. Mix, Planning and Community
Development Coordinator
Michael Lumbis, Planner
Andrew Nichols, Planner
Justin Wood, Civil Engineer II
Teresa Macaluso, City Councilmember

ABSENT:

William Davis

The March 4, 2014 Planning Board Meeting was called to order at 3:08 PM by Planning Board Chair Sara Freda. Mrs. Freda then called for a reading of the Minutes from the February 4, 2014 Planning Board Meeting. Mrs. Gervera made a motion to waive the reading of the Minutes and accept them as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Coburn, and all voted in favor.

SUBDIVISION – 431 BARBEN AVE

PARCEL 14-35-101.300

The Planning Board then considered a request submitted by Lucy Majo for the two-lot subdivision of 431 Barben Avenue, parcel 14-35-101.300.

Mrs. Freda read the notice of public hearing and declared the hearing open at 3:09 pm. No one spoke and the hearing was closed at 3:10 pm.

Mrs. Freda noted that no applicant was present, and asked the board how they wished to proceed. The board agreed to discuss the application in the absence of the applicant.

Mr. Katzman asked if both resulting lots would conform to city standards.

Mr. Mix replied that the only two requirements are 75' of frontage, and a lot size of at least 7,500 square feet. The resulting parcels would meet those minimums.

Mrs. Freda read the questions on the Part II of the Short Environmental Assessment Form, the board answered “no” to all questions.

Mr. Katzman moved to issue a negative declaration of environmental impact. Mrs. Fields seconded, all voted in favor.

Mr. Katzman asked if there were drainage problems in the area. Mrs. Gervera said that there were some issues, but the subdivision would not directly affect the drainage in the area.

Mr. Katzman moved to approve the two-lot subdivision of 431 Barben Avenue, parcel 14-35-101.300, as submitted by Lucy Majo on February 13, 2014.

Mrs. Capone seconded, all voted in favor.

**SUBDIVISION – 108 REAR COURT STREET
PARCELS 7-01-115.000 AND 7-01-134.000**

The Board then considered a request by Gerry Kostyk of Bernier & Carr for the two-lot subdivisions of 108 Rear Court Street, parcel 7-01-115, and 223 JB Wise Place, parcel 7-01-134.

Mrs. Freda read the notice of public hearing and declared the hearing open at 3:17 pm. No one spoke and the hearing closed at 3:18 pm.

Mrs. Freda noted that there were potential abstentions for this project.

Mr. Coburn stated that he is employed by Bernier & Carr.

Mrs. Gervera and Mrs. Fields both stated that they are on the board of trustees for Neighbors of Watertown, the potential purchaser of the divided properties.

Mr. Mix said he would contact the City Attorney for a recommendation on who should abstain. If all three members with potential conflicts abstain, there would not be a quorum for the vote. Mr. Mix left the meeting at 3:20 pm.

Mrs. Freda said that the board could discuss the next agenda item and finish this matter at the end of the meeting.

**SITE PLAN AMENDMENT – NY AIR BRAKE CROSSWALK
748 STARBUCK AVE – PARCEL 4-09-102**

The Board then considered a request submitted by Brian Jones of Aubertine & Currier to allow relocation of a crosswalk and ramp at 748 Starbuck Ave, parcel 4-09-102.

Brian Krieger of Aubertine & Currier was present to discuss the project. He explained that after completing the new loading dock (site plan approved June 2013), it became apparent that the crosswalk over Pearl Street could not be left in its current location as was originally anticipated. The crosswalk would be moved west and a new sidewalk would be

constructed with ADA ramps up to the parking lot. Air Brake had indicated that they would be willing to pay the cost of relocation for the pedestrian crossing light. He mentioned that a traffic engineer had been contacted to perform an analysis of the need for a crossing light.

Mrs. Capone asked who owns the crossing light.

Mr. Wood said that the city currently owns and maintains the light.

Mr. Katzman said that the Planning Board had requested that the brick pavers in the margin along Pearl Street be cleaned up and weeded as part of the June 2013 site plan approval. Since it is covered in snow, there is currently no way to check if this was done. He said he would like to table this amendment to wait for the traffic study and to see if the cleaning had been finished. He also said that he would like the traffic study to address any impact on the 5-point intersection at Main Street East.

Mrs. Capone asked if Air Brake wanted to proceed with moving the crosswalk regardless of the traffic study result, given that the traffic study would determine whether a new light is placed.

Mr. Krieger said that they would.

Mrs. Fields moved to table the application until the next regularly scheduled meeting on April 1, 2014.

Mr. Katzman seconded, all voted in favor.

SUBDIVISION – 108 REAR COURT STREET

PARCELS 7-01-115.000 AND 7-01-134.000

The board then resumed consideration of a request by Gerry Kostyk of Bernier & Carr for the two-lot subdivisions of 108 Rear Court Street, parcel 7-01-115, and 223 JB Wise Place, parcel 7-01-134.

Mr. Mix returned to the meeting at approximate 3:30 pm. He explained that the City Attorney advised Mr. Coburn to abstain due to his employment relationship, but Mrs. Gervera and Mrs. Fields could vote as long as they had disclosed their relationship to the applicant—since they are uncompensated board members, and Neighbors of Watertown is a not-for-profit, the conflict does not warrant abstention.

Gerry Kostyk approached the board to explain the request. He said that Neighbors of Watertown wants to purchase two slivers of land so that access could be provided between their recently acquired Empsall's Plaza and the JB Wise parking lot.

Gary Beasely of Neighbors of Watertown explained that they had recently purchased a vacant lot from the city which abuts JB Wise parking lot, but that they needed to buy the "bridge" area between Empsall's Plaza and 223 JB Wise Place in order to provide access.

Mrs. Freda read the questions from Part II of the Short Environmental Assessment Form. The board answered “no” to all questions.

Mrs. Capone moved to issue a negative declaration of environmental impact. Mrs. Fields seconded. All voted in favor, except Mr. Coburn, who abstained.

Mr. Katzman asked if there would be any impact on the Woolworth parking lot. Mrs. Freda said that it is unlikely because that lot is up the hill near Public Square and it has its own entrance.

Mrs. Capone moved to approve the two-lot subdivisions of 108 Rear Court Street, parcel 7-01-115, and 223 JB Wise Place, parcel 7-01-134, as submitted by Gerry Kostyk on February 20, 2014, subject to the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall revise the map to identify the two combination parcels, “Composite Parcel Safford Lane” and “Composite Parcel – 130 Court Street”, with different hatching patterns.
2. The applicant shall revise the map to identify the two property splits with a heavier line weight (or otherwise differentiate them from existing parcel lines).

Mrs. Gervera seconded. All voted in favor, except Mr. Coburn, who abstained.

THOMPSON PARK CONSERVANCY

Mrs. Gervera described an upcoming subdivision application for a property owned by the Thompson Park Conservancy. She asked the board if they would be interested in holding a special meeting to help expedite the property sale.

After discussing the timeline, the board agreed that staff should attempt to coordinate a special meeting once the application is received.

Mr. Katzman moved to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Gervera seconded, all voted in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 pm.