



# CITY OF WATERTOWN, NEW YORK

## CITY PLANNING BOARD

ROOM 305, WATERTOWN CITY HALL  
245 WASHINGTON STREET  
WATERTOWN, NEW YORK 13601-3380  
(315) 785-7741

MEETING: February 4, 2025

PRESENT:

Michelle Capone, Chair  
T.J. Babcock  
Scott Garrabrant  
Maryellen Blevins  
Lynn Godek  
Peter Monaco

ALSO:

Michael A. Lumbis, Planning and  
Community Development Director  
Geoffery Urda, Senior Planner  
Joseph Albinus, Planner

ABSENT:

Linda Fields

Planning Commission Chairperson, Michelle Capone, called the February 4, 2025, Planning Commission meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. Ms. Capone then asked for a motion regarding the minutes from the January 7, 2025, Planning Board Meeting. Lynn Godek made a motion to accept the minutes from the January 7, 2025 meeting as written, T.J. Babcock seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

Ms. Capone asked about the status of the November minutes and Geoff Urda stated that Sharlice Bonello had listened to the recording and was working on potential edits. Ms. Godek made a motion to table the November 5, 2024 minutes, Mr. Babcock then seconded it, and all voted in favor.

### **SUBDIVISION FINAL PLAT APPROVAL – VL ROUNDHOUSE DRIVE PARCEL NUMBER 9-43-101.211**

The Planning Commission then considered a request for Subdivision Final Plat Approval submitted by John Bellanger on behalf of the City of Watertown for a two-lot subdivision of VL Roundhouse Drive, Parcel Number 9-43-101.211.

Ms. Capone read aloud the public hearing notice for the subdivision of VL Roundhouse Drive and opened the public hearing at 6:05 p.m. Hearing no one speak, Ms. Capone closed the public hearing at 6:06 p.m.

Mr. Bellanger attended to represent the request. He approached the stand and noted that he owns the parcel at VL-4 Massey Street South which is landlocked. Mr. Bellanger stated that he plans to assemble the subdivided parcel with his abutting lot, and construct a single-unit dwelling with the potential for more in the future. Peter Monaco asked if Mr. Bellanger purchased the lot without access, Mr. Bellanger replied that he had access via a 20-foot easement off of Massey

Street South. Michael Lumbis stated that Mr. Bellanger's access easement is across several parcels and is accessed from Massey Street South and the Fox Farm Road.

Ms. Capone asked if the applicant would need to reappear in front of the Commission for Site Plan Review for his proposed dwelling. Mr. Lumbis stated that he would not, but if the applicant proposes to build more than one dwelling, Mr. Bellanger would need to apply for another subdivision.

Mr. Babcock referred to summary item five which states that the applicant shall work with the Planning Department to rezone the 0.65-acre parcel from Industrial to Residential. Ms. Capone asked if the parcel would need to be rezoned before the Commission takes action on the subdivision. Mr. Lumbis mentioned that it is best practice to not have split-zoned parcels, but in this situation, the parcel would be split zoned for a brief amount of time until the zone change is finalized.

Ms. Capone then went over summary item one which required the applicant to provide a suggested description of the assemblage of the 0.65-acre portion with VL-4 Massey Street South to the Planning Department. Ms. Capone asked Mr. Bellanger if he could provide that description. Mr. Lumbis clarified to Mr. Bellanger that the City has a description of the 0.56-acre lot, but needs a description of the parcel assemblage. Mr. Bellanger said he would provide the description.

Ms. Capone then read aloud the remaining summary items and referred back to summary item five, noting that the summary item sounded like a good faith effort rather than a requirement. Ms. Capone expressed concerns on how this summary item could be enforced. Mr. Urda clarified that the rezoning of a split-zoned parcel is something that the city can do on its own if Mr. Bellanger did not complete it for some reason.

Mr. Lumbis noted that there are a number of things that are required prior to the applicant closing on the property and noted that the City Council approved the purchase offer for the property. He said the zone change may be completed before the closing on the property occurs.

Ms. Capone again expressed concerns about the lot being split zoned for a while and if rezoning was a required contingency. Ms. Capone noted that she would prefer the applicant to apply for a Zone Change for the March Planning Commission meeting because split-zoned parcels are not good practice. Mr. Lumbis then clarified that the rezoning is not a requirement and that a few split zoned parcels still exist in the city.

Ms. Capone then directed the Commission to complete Part 2 of the Short Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) for the proposed subdivision at VL Roundhouse Drive. The Planning Commission reviewed and answered each question on the Short EAF answering no to all of them. Ms. Godek moved to issue a negative declaration for the proposed subdivision according to the requirements of SEQRA. Maryellen Blevins seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

With no further concerns raised, Mr. Babcock made a motion to grant Subdivision Final Plat Approval for the request submitted by John Bellanger on behalf of the City of Watertown for a two-lot subdivision of VL Roundhouse Drive, Parcel Number 9-43-101.211, contingent upon the following:

1. The applicant should provide a suggested description of the assemblage of 0.65-acre portion with VL-4 Massey Street South to the Planning Department.
2. The applicant shall revise the map to include the words “Subdivision Final Plat” in the title, add the certification language/signature line, and must modify the drawing to include heavier line weights around the 0.65-acre section of land that is being subdivided, and use normal line weights around the remaining portion of the VL Roundhouse Drive parcel.
3. The applicant shall assemble the 0.65- acre southeastern section with Parcel Number 9-29-101.002 located at VL-4 Massey Street South into a single parcel, by way of a new metes and bounds description that is filed with the Jefferson County Clerk.
4. The applicant shall abide by all of the contingencies and restrictions listed in the signed Offer to Purchase.
5. The applicant shall work with the Planning Department to rezone the 0.65-acre southeastern section from Industrial to Residential.
6. The applicant shall coordinate with the Engineering Department on driveway specifications when the applicant is ready to start construction.

Mr. Babcock seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

**SKETCH PLAN APPROVAL – 848 IVES ST  
PARCEL NUMBER 14-49-118.000**

The Planning Commission then considered a request for Sketch Plan Approval submitted by Kayla Kibling of Barton & Loguidice, D.P.C. on behalf of Ives Country Club 465, LLC for the construction of a 392 square foot storage shed at 848 Ives Street, Parcel Number 14-49-119.000.

Kayla Kibling approached the Commission and explained that she would be representing the application. Ms. Kibling stated that the shed currently exists on the same parcel for which the applicant previously obtained a temporary use permit, which will expire at the end of February. Ms. Kibling explained that there would be no vehicle access, lighting, or landscaping, and the shed will be set back from the road.

A few of the Commission members expressed confusion that there were no summary items. Mr. Albinus then mentioned that the shed was the only proposed item. Mr. Urda then provided clarification, explaining to the Commission that the 1,950 square foot structure that had been previously approved at 848 Ives St at the April 2, 2024 Planning Commission meeting was on an indefinite hiatus and that the existing 392 square foot shed will take the place of the previously approved shed. Mr. Urda noted that Sketch Plan Approval is required to make the shed permeant due to the temporary use permit expiring.

Ms. Capone asked if the original approved 1,950 square foot shed will still be constructed. Jake Johnson, the property owner, stated that there is uncertainty at the moment. Mr. Lumbis then

explained that the owner could still build what had been approved at the April 2, 2024 Planning Commission meeting if they did it within 18 months of the original approval.

Scott Garrabrant asked if the proposed shed is in the same location as the previously approved shed. Mr. Johnson replied in the affirmative.

Ms. Capone asked if the applicant would then be allowed to have two sheds if this application is approved. Mr. Johnson provided additional clarification, mentioning that if he wanted to build the originally planned structure, he would have to remove the shed. That statement was backed by Mr. Urda, who explained that the existing shed sits entirely within the proposed footprint of the previously approved 1,950 SF shed.

Mr. Albinus informed the Commission that the shed was a Type 2 action and didn't need SEQR review.

Ms. Godek made a motion to grant Sketch Plan Approval for the request submitted by Kayla Kibling of Barton & Loguidice, D.P.C on behalf of Ives Country Club 465, LLC for the construction of a 392 square foot storage shed at 848 Ives Street, Parcel Number 14-49-118.000. Ms. Blevins seconded the motions, and all voted in favor.

### **ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT**

The Planning Commission then considered a request submitted by the City of Watertown to amend various sections of Chapter 310, Zoning, of the City Code.

Mr. Urda explained that the Planning Department is submitting the Zoning Ordinance Amendment to the Planning Commission for a formal recommendation of the changes to the City Council and explained that what was submitted to the Commission is verbatim what will be provided to the City Council at their February 18, 2025 meeting, which included related minutes and staff reports as far back as September.

Ms. Capone expressed that she was glad we were going back and tweaking things to make the Zoning Ordinance function better.

Mr. Urda noted that Staff met with a land use attorney to discuss definitions and all other proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance. Ms. Capone asked if there were any issues or concerns that the attorney brought to the Planning Department's attention. Mr. Urda noted that there was some feedback and that Staff incorporated it and gave some examples.

Ms. Capone asked for a motion to recommend the changes to the City Council. Mr. Monaco moved to recommend that the City Council approve a request submitted by the City of Watertown to amend various sections of Chapter 310, Zoning, of the City Code. Mr. Babcock seconded the motion and all voted in favor. At 6:37 p.m., Mr. Babcock made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Godek seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Albinus  
Planner