



**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
PLANNING BOARD OF THE CITY OF WORCESTER**

Wednesday, November 22, 2023

Worcester City Hall – Levi Lincoln Chamber,
with remote participation options available via WebEx online at
<https://cow.webex.com/meet/planningboardwebex> and
call-in number 1-844-621-3956 (Access Code: 2633 685 5101).

Board Members Present: Albert LaValley, Chair
Edward Moynihan, Vice Chair
Brandon King (*Participated Remotely*)
Conor McCormack (*Participated Remotely*)

Board Members Absent: Adrian Angus

Staff Present: Michelle Smith, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)
Rose Russell, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)
Sean Quinlivan, DPW
Todd Miller, Inspectional Services (*Participated Remotely*)
Alexandra Kalkounis, Law

Call to Order

Board Chair Albert LaValley called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

Continuances

Item 2: 912-914, 918-924, 926-928, 930 & 932-934 Main Street, 157 Woodland Street and 1 & 3 Hawthorne Street and part of 151 Woodland Street (PB-2023-087) Definitive Site Plan
Request to Postpone the Public Hearing to December 13, 2023
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to January 4, 2023

Postponements

Item 5: Lot 2A or 34 (aka 52 & 54 Circuit Avenue South) Lakeside Avenue and Lot 2B or 2 Circuit Avenue South (aka part of 17 Garland Street) (PB-2023-091) – Definitive Subdivision Plan & More Than One Building on a Lot
Request to Postpone the Public Meeting & Hearing to December 13, 2023
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to January 4, 2023

Item 7: Burnside Court Extension (12 & 30 Federal Street and 30 Myrtle Street) (PB-2023-095) – Definitive Subdivision Plan
Request to Postpone the Public Meeting & Hearing to December 13, 2023
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to January 4, 2023

Item 8: 24 Simone Street (aka 70-72, 74-76 Valmor Street & 21-23, 25-27 Maranda Street) (PB-2023-096) – Definitive Site Plan
Request to Postpone the Public Meeting & Hearing to December 13, 2023

Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to January 4, 2023

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. King, the Board voted 4-0 to grant the continuance and postponements.

New Business

4. 53 Mason Street (PB-2023-083) *Item taken first*

a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

John Grenier introduced himself to the Board. Mr. Grenier described the site conditions, and stated the existing site is steeply sloped. He described staff comments and the steps that had been taken to address those comments. He stated a turning analysis was provided in response to staff's concerns about the tight driveway, and pervious pavers had been added to reduce some of the impervious coverage. He described drainage; retaining walls and grading on site; proposed landscaping and fences on site. Mr. Grenier stated they are in full agreement with staff comments and conditions of approval.

Rose Russell described some of the changes the applicant had made in response to staff comments; described the site conditions and proposal and stated staff has no outstanding concerns for the applicant to address.

Sean Quinlivan read DPW conditions into the record.

No public comment.

No board discussion.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 4-0 to approve the site plan with DPRS and DPW recommended conditions of approval.

List of Exhibits

- Exhibit A: Definitive Site Plan Application; filed 09/28/2023; prepared by J.M. Grenier Associates Inc.
- Exhibit B: Definitive Site Plan; dated 09/28/2023; revised 11/14/2023, prepared by J.M. Grenier Associates Inc.
- Exhibit C: Architectural Plans; dated 08/18/2023; revised 10/23/2023, prepared by Dixon Salo Architects, Inc.
- Exhibit D: Stormwater Report; 09/28/2023; prepared by J.M. Grenier Associates Inc.

6. 26 Southgate Place (PB-2023-086) *Item taken second*

a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

b. Street Petition – ST-2023-010

Patrick Healy introduced himself to the Board. Mr. Healy described the vacant site; the existing use of the neighboring property and how this development would expand the Table Talk Facility operation. Mr. Healy described the use of the building and the proposal. He stated they are amenable to staff comments; described the retaining walls on site; the added connection to the building at 25 Southgate Street

Ms. Russell described the proposal before the Board; described some of the changes the plan had been through since the original application had been received; described conditions of approval related to pedestrian safety and connection through the two sites.

Sean Quinlivan read DPW conditions into the record. Mr. Quinlivan described flooding in this area as frequent and warned the applicant to take caution.

Public Comment

John Mckeil of 32 Irving Street introduced himself on behalf of Iglesia Casa De Oracion, a neighboring church. He discussed issues between the Table Talk site and the church that have been ongoing for years, including flooding and plowing issues; he described the increase in truck traffic and the issues it has caused during high traffic times of day; and hoped to meet with the owner and discuss potential issues.

Mr. Healy stated they are managing stormwater on site and providing recharge on site to DEP standards; Mr. LaValley asked the applicant to clarify if stormwater issues will intensify; Mr. Healy stated conditions will improve; stated truck traffic will not impact pedestrian traffic and stated he will provide the neighbor a number to contact the owner to resolve issues.

Mr. LaValley stated they try to improve neighbor issues and flooding issues but it is ultimately not the Board's role.

Mr. McCormack stated he hopes the neighbors will reach out and try and solve the issues; Mr. King agreed.

Mr. LaValley asked staff if they should take up the street petition at the same time; Ms. Smith confirmed.

Mr. Quinlivan gave DPW's recommendation on the street petition. Mr. LaValley described the context of the street petition.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 4-0 to approve the site plan with DPRS, DTM and DPW recommended conditions of approval, and to approve the street petition.

List of Exhibits:

- Exhibit A: Definitive Site Plan Application; filed 10/30/2023; prepared by Patrick Healy
- Exhibit B: Definitive Site Plan; dated 9/20/2023, revised 10/26/2023; prepared by Thomson-Liston Associates, Inc.
- Exhibit C: Architectural Plans; dated 10/6/2023; prepared Gregory J. O'Connor Associates, Inc.
- Exhibit D: Photometric Plan; dated 09/22/2023; prepared by Illuminate
- Exhibit E: Stormwater Report; dated 9/28/2023; prepared by Thomson-Liston Associates, Inc.
- Exhibit F: Street Petition; referred to Planning Board on 9/12/2023 by Jim Chacharone
- Exhibit G: DPW&P Memo; dated 11/13/2023; prepared by Jay Mello, P.E.

Old Business

1. 3 Eaton Place (City Square) (PB-2023-086)

a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

Thomas Galvin introduced himself to the Board and described some of the changes that have been made and discussions with the Planning Division since the application submittal and since the last meeting, including bike storage, the public park, fencing height, further activation of the retail storefronts.

Mr. LaValley asked Mr. Galvin to address concerns about public access to the site and the visibility of the site; Mr. Galvin answered; Mr. LaValley asked for further clarification; Mr. Galvin stated they received comments too late to make any plan revisions but did intend to more clearly identify the public entrances.

Ms. Smith described some conditions of approval and changes that had been made since the preliminary approval meeting. Ms. Smith stated DPW and DTM comments had been included in the staff memo. Ms. Smith discussed the potential to remove the two-story portion of the building along Front Street and asked the Board to consider it.

Mr. Quinlivan stated DPW's main concern is getting the grease trap out of the public ROW and other DPW comments have been included in the staff memo.

Mr. LaValley discussed altering the condition regarding the doors on Mercantile Street and suggested proving flexibility to the applicant as long as the doors don't swing outward.

Mr. Moynihan stated he likes the open space the site provides today but is ultimately in favor of the project and asked staff to clarify the motion; Ms. Smith clarified.

Mr. McCormack stated he is in favor of altering the condition to allow recessed doors and liked the option to explore removing the two-story portion of the building to make the garage entrance more visible to the public.

Mr. King stated he agrees with the other Board member's thoughts and asked the applicant to address the possibility of removing the end, townhouse style units.

Mr. Robert DiBenedetto, engineer from Hancock Associates, introduced himself and stated they feel strongly about maintaining the units; Mr. LaValley asked if the change would require an amendment if cannot be done; Ms. Smith clarified and asked the Board to clearly condition it or state their intent.

Mr. McCormack stated he is in favor of flexibility for the applicant if they want to maintain the units; Mr. LaValley agreed and stated he doesn't feel like it's a huge issue that would cause the Board to not approve the project; Mr. King and Mr. Moynihan agreed.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 4-0 to approve the site plan with DPRS, DTM and DPW recommended conditions of approval, with a modification to condition 11.

List of Exhibits:

- Exhibit A: Definitive Site Plan Application; clerked October 18, 2023; prepared by Foresight Capital LLC
- Exhibit B: Definitive Site Plan City Square Eaton Place; dated September 28, 2023; prepared by Hancock Associates
- Exhibit C: Renderings - 1 City Square; dated September 26, 2023; prepared by Lagrassé Yanowitz and Feyl Architects.

4. 4. 5 Salem Square (109 Franklin Street) (PB-2023-085)

a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

Thomas Galvin introduced the project to the Planning Board and described the scale of the building, the available parking, the commercial area and potential tenants. Mr. Galvin described the amenity spaces proposed for residents, bike storage, visibility for the commercial space and development of the DPW area including a park for the Notre Dame bell. He stated they have incorporated the same architectural feel of the neighboring building and described the various elevations.

Dan Romero introduced himself as part of the Hancock Engineering team. He described some of the existing site conditions, proposed construction access, stormwater and utility connections and addressed some of the staff conditions/comments.

Ms. Smith gave an overview of the proposed project, described some staff recommended conditions of approval and stated DTM and DPW recommendations have also been included in the staff memo. She described the existing grading on the site and described the changes in the site plan since the prior approval. Ms. Smith asked the applicant address how pedestrian access will be managed, stated staff prefers the signage to be removed, highlighted an increase in the stormwater, and asked if two of the curb cuts on Trumbull Street could be combined.

Mr. Quinlivan read DPW comments into the record and asked the applicant to clarify what size sewer connection will be required.

Mr. Moynihan asked staff for guidance on editing the condition on additional plantings; Ms. Smith clarified.

Mr. Moynihan asked the applicant to address the question about combining the two curb cuts on Trumbull Street; Mr. Galvin stated they are in favor of maintaining the separate curb cuts or at least maintaining the width and merging the two curb cuts. Ms. Smith stated staff is in favor of the applicant exploring other options in this area but added it isn't a critical issue but staff feels there are improvements that can be made; Mr. LaValley suggested conditioning it with flexibility; Mr. Galvin stated they are amenable to seeking alternative options; Ms. Smith suggested a condition to the Board.

Mr. McCormack stated he is agreeable to Ms. Smith’s suggested condition and is happy to see the improvements made from the preliminary plan.

Mr. King stated he is happy to support the project and has no additional comments.

Mr. LaValley stated this is an important project for the City and hopes the applicant continues working with the City. He stated he is excited to see the project progress.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 4-0 to approve the site plan with DPRS, DTM and DPW recommended conditions of approval, with additional condition 1x, and stricken 1u.

List of Exhibits:

- Exhibit A: Definitive Site Plan Application; filed September 27, 2023; prepared by Joseph D. Peznola, P.E., Hancock Associates, Inc.
- Exhibit B: Definitive Site Plan; dated 9/28/2023; prepared by Hancock Associates
- Exhibit C: Architectural Plans; dated 09/26/2023; prepared by Lagrasse Yanowitz & Feyl.
- Exhibit D: Photometric Plan; dated 09/22/2023; prepared by Illuminate
- Exhibit E: Stormwater Report; dated 9/28/2023; prepared by Hancock Associates
- Exhibit F: DPW&P Authorization; dated 9/21/23; signed by Jay. J. Fink, Commissioner

Other Business

9. Street Petitions

- a. ST-2023-008 – Lazelle Street (Convert to Public)

Mr. Quinlivan stated DPW recommended a priority level 4 for item 9a, Lazelle Street.

- b. ST-2023-009 – Sherer Trail (Convert to Public)

Mr. Quinlivan stated DPW recommended against the conversion for Sherer Trail. Mr. LaValley described the engineering difficulties that would be presented if the street were to be converted to public.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 4-0 to recommend a priority level 4 for conversion of Lazelle Street to public to City Council.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 4-0 to recommend against conversion of Sherer Trail to public given the engineering difficulties.

9. Approval Not Required (ANR) Plans

- a. AN-2023-046 - 61 Sunderland Street (Public)
- b. AN-2023-047 – 24 Second Street (Public/Private) *Not properly before the Board.*
- c. AN-2023-051 – 23 Preston Street (Public)
- d. AN-2023-052 – 10-12 Beale Street (Private)
- e. AN-2023-053 – 457 Granite Street (Public)
- f. AN-2023-054 – 423 Cambridge Street (Public)

Ms. Russell described ANRs A, C-F to the Board.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 4-0 to endorse ANRs 9a, 9c, 9d, 9e and 9f.

12. Board Policy and Procedures

13. Communications

- a. Announcement of “Boards and Commissions: Know Your Responsibilities” training on 11/29/2023; 2/9/2024; and 4/24/2024; received 11/13/2023.
- b. Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency (MassHousing) Notice of Intent to Request Relief of Funds – 660 Main Street, Aurora Hotel; received 11/14/2023.

Mr. LaValley gave a brief discussion of the two communication items.

14. Approval of Minutes - ~~7/26/2023, 8/23/2023; 8/30/2023~~ No discussion

Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Angus, seconded by Mr. Moynihan, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:20pm.