

APPROVED

Planning Board Minutes

February 18th, 2021

Time: 7:00 pm – 8:45p.m.

Location: Via Zoom Remote Participation simulcast on Peabody Access TV

Members Present: Dr. Judith Otto, Mr. Dennis Feld, Atty. Peter Arvanites, Mr. Joseph Gagnon, Mr. Roy Simoes, Mr. John Ford, Mr. Thomas Bettencourt, Mr. Matthew Genzale

Members Absent: Chairman Tom Bettencourt

Others Present: Mr. Andrew Levin (City Planner), Mr. Curt Bellavance (Director of Community Development and Planning), Atty. John Keilty, Craig Marchionda, William Nolan, David Lemieux, Atty. Vontzalides, Rob Christy, Ben Perez, Mary Ellen Manning, Councilor Anne Manning-Martin, Councilor Edward Charest

Chairman of the Board Thomas Bettencourt called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and requested a Roll Call for the record.

A. Approval of Minutes:

B. ANR/Land Court:

None

C. Site Building Permit Plan Reviews:

54 PROSPECT STREET

This is an application by David Lemieux seeking a site plan review for the proposed construction of a residential development located at the address listed above. The applicants are proposing the construction of 5 buildings totaling 36 one-bedroom apartments.

Before the Board was Atty. John Keilty, David Lemieux, Craig Marchionda, and William Nolan on behalf of the project.

The representatives began and presented of the project, describing in detail the proposed Plan.

J. Gagnon inquired and brought concern about the potential of a second bedroom being added. The Board and the applicants discussed this concern.

Discussion continued.

R. Simoes inquired about the comment made by DPS regarding the applicants making a curb cut on Essex Road. Atty. Keilty explained that they have reached out to the property owner.

Mr. Levin explained the community developments comments on the project. Mr. Levin made the Board aware of the size of the proposed buildings. Mr. Levin and the Applicant discussed the architecture of the building. Mr. Levin asked for the applicants to include lots of vegetation to work as a buffer for the property. Mr. Levin and the Applicant discussed pedestrian traffic and circulation on the property.

M. Genzale and Atty. Keilty discussed the timeline of splitting the property into multiple lots, along with submitting the revised plans.

J. Ford inquired about the affordability component of the project, Atty. Keilty stated they would meet the requirements.

At this time acting chair, J. Ford allowed two members of the public in attendance to speak.

Councilor Anne Manning-Martin discussed with the Board the public comment process.

Next to speak was Councilor Edward Charest, ward councilor for the proposed project area.

Councilor Charest stated his concern over the potential use of an office as a second bedroom, snow storage location and snow melt drainage, access/egress to the property from Prospect Street, Fire Department access. Councilor Charest, the Board, and the applicant discussed these concerns.

The Applicant explained that the owner will be taking care of the snow storage.

The Board and the Applicant continued to discuss the potential for an egress onto Essex Street.

Atty. Keilty stated that the team will work on and submit revised plans to the Board and come back at a future meeting.

85-87 LOWELL STREET

This is an application by Exordium Capital LLC, seeking a site plan review for proposed improvements to be constructed at the address listed above. The applicant is proposing a total renovation to the building by converting it to a residential building. The application states that the renovations will include the construction of 9 units (eight two-bedrooms, one one-bedroom).

Attorney Athan Vontzalides, Ben Perez, and Chris Crump were present on behalf of the application.

Attorney Vontzalides began by giving a presentation of the project. The project, as explained, includes the internal renovation of the currently existing building at the project location, and constructing nine residential units.

J. Ford asked Atty. Vontzalides to respond to the comments made in the Department of Public Service memo regarding the project. Atty. Vontzalides explained they will pave the street in response to the I&I, will utilize the existing sewer service and 1 1/1" water main, will clean the catch basin

out prior to building permit to decide if it is a leeching catchbasin or connected to the city. Atty. Vontzalides stated these will be apartments.

Dr. Otto inquired about the curb-cut on Lowell Street, discussion took place in regards to the existing curb-cut on Lowell Street. Dr. Otto inquired how the grade change will be managed, Rob Christy explained that the grade will remain as is, but they will be repaving the parking area.

The Board and the applicant discussed the parking lot and existing sidewalk.

Acting Chair called on an abutter, Mary Ellen Manning to speak. Ms. Manning explained she is a direct abutter.

Ms. Manning stated her concerns included access/egress to the property, property lighting, the removal of the existing handicap ramp. Ms. Manning explained she is not in favor of the removal of the handicap ramp.

Atty. Vontzalides addressed Ms. Manning's concerns, stating both curb cuts are being kept, there will be no freestanding light posts, but the building will have security lighting and there are street lights on Lowell Street, in response to the handicap ramp, Atty. Vontzalides explained the ramp is being removed, and that the handicap accessible unit will be on the first floor. Mr. Christy confirmed this.

Dr. Otto stated that she is concerned about having no handicap access to the main level. Mr. Christy explained that there will be no entrance where the existing ramp is now. Ms. Manning reiterated Dr. Otto's concern.

Councilor Manning began by thanking Atty Vontzalides for taking the comments made at the ZBA meeting and adding them to the plans. Councilor Manning explained she likes the project for its reuse. Councilor Manning explained her concern is in regards to the near-by King/Endicott/Lowell Street intersection, mentioning her concern is over the traffic flow.

M. Genzale inquired about a traffic study. Atty. Vontzalides explained there was no traffic study for this project. Mr. Levin stated that the applicants requested a traffic study waiver. M. Genzale asked Mr. Levin if a traffic study is reasonable. Mr. Levin, stated that while he is not a traffic engineer, this is a low-traffic use, in that it is only 9-units, but explained it is up to the Board to vote on allowing the waiver.

Acting Chair J. Ford asked for Councilor Charest to be unmuted.

Councilor Charest thanked the Board for allowing him to speak. Councilor Charest stated his concern regarding the Sawyer Road and Lowell Street intersection. Councilor Charest stated his concerns regarding drivers using the two entrances/egresses as a cut-thru.

The Board, the applicant, and Councilor Charest discussed these concerns. J. Gagnon stated that he is in favor of the two curb-cuts, due to potential of a traffic jam taking place on Sawyer Street.

R. Simoes stated that he is also in favor with there being two curb-cuts. R. Simoes inquired if there will be an affordable unit, Atty. Vontzalides stated there will be. R. Simoes stated that he would like to see a light pole be placed on the property, as well as it has shielding.

Dr. Otto asked the applicants again to rethink no handicap entrance on the main level.

MOTION: DR. OTTO move to recommend to the building commissioner the permit issue for **85-87 Lowell Street** for the construction of nine (9) apartments incorporating the conditions laid out in a memo from the Department of Public Service dated February 12, 2021, with the additional condition That the applicant include a light pole out front in the grass plot to provide more lighting for future residents. **SECONDED:** Atty. Cooper, approved (8-0)

D. Appointments

PROPOSED STONEGATE SUBDIVISION:

Acting Chair J. Ford explained there is a request for continuance in their packets.

MOTION: ATTY. COOPER move to receive a letter from Atty. Keilty, regarding Stonegate Definitive Sub-Division Plan, dated February 11th, 2021 requesting and extension of time to March 25th, 2021, **SECONDED:** DR. OTTO. Unanimously approved

E. City Council:

None

I. Other Matters Properly Before the Board:

M. Genzale discussed with the Board the need to update the Citys Master Plan.

MOTION: M. GENZALE to request the Board write a letter to the City Council, to appropriate funds and work with the City Purchasing Department, soliciting request for proposals for the upgrade of the City's Master Plan. **SECONDED:** Atty. Cooper **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

J. Gagnon inquired about any news of new members. Mr. Levin explained the Mayor is aware and working on it.

Dr. Otto inquired about City Council special permits.

F. Adjournment:

Planning Board: Dr. OTTO. MOVE TO adjourn **Seconded by:** Atty. Cooper **Motion carried:** (8-0).

*Andrew Levin
City Planner*