

WATERTOWN PLANNING BOARD

DATE: November 14, 2018 PLACE: Town Council Chamber TIME: 7:00 PM COMMENCED: 7:00 PM
PURPOSE OF MEETING: Regular Monthly Meeting
PRESENT: Jeff Brown, Chairman; Payson Whitney; Janet Buck; Jason Cohen; Gary Shaw
Ingrid Marchesano, Clerk to the Board; Gideon Schreiber, Senior Planner

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Janet Buck motioned to approve Minutes of the October 10, 2018 meeting.

Payson Whitney seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0 In Favor

Payson Whitney motioned to continue the 195 Mt. Auburn Street & 485 Arsenal Street petitions to the next meeting of the Planning Board.

Janet Buck seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0 In Favor

CASE PENDING

- **36 Arden Road; Mark & Doreen Dawson – Special Permit Finding**

Doreen Dawson, this is a request to replace an existing rear deck with a larger one maintaining existing non-conforming northerly side yard setback of 6' where 10' is required. This request was approved previously.

Gideon Schreiber, the project was approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals, but the approval expired. The petitioner is now coming back with the same request to replace existing 8'x11.5' deck with a 16'x16' deck. Staff recommends an approval of the proposal with conditions.

Gary Shaw, why the second set of stairs ?

Doreen Dawson, there is a dramatic slope, the second set of stairs will make access easier. Neighbors are in support of the request.

Jason Cohen, the 6' setback is to the deck not the stairs, which would be about 3'.

Janet Buck motioned to recommend to the Zoning Board of Appeals approval of the Special Permit Finding under Section 4.06(a) based upon the finding that it meets the criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, subject to conditions set forth in the staff report.

Gary Shaw seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0 In Favor

- **36 Arlington Street/570 Arsenal Street; 36 Arlington Street LLC – Special Permit/Site Plan Review**

Gideon Schreiber, this petition consists of 2 separate parcels but it is being treated as one project with 2 votes.

Steve Winnick, Atty, the site at 36 Arlington Street is the former Super Fitness – the Gym it site. The petitioner is leasing almost ½ of the first floor building space as a health and fitness facility. About 600 s.f. of the first floor is occupied by existing tenant, Boston Sports Therapy which is a medical office. The Gym it site is located in the RMUD district, formerly I-1 zone. The 68,000 s.f. lot has a 2-story 45,000 s.f. brick industrial building, remainder being paved parking area and very little landscape. Super Fitness operated on the site for 20 years, there were constant problems with parking. Part of the application is shared parking with the abutting Marriott. The petitioner will have private leasing agreement. The Zoning Ordinance encourages shared parking and a shared parking plan is proposed with the hotel. A traffic expert is present tonight.

Steven H., VHB, the changes to the site are minimal. There are 83 existing parking spaces, we are proposing 85. Landscaping and 4 bicycle racks will be added.

Randall Hart, VHB, there will be a minor change during peak hours with no direct impact and no significant delays. Parking analysis of Gym it site and the Marriott hotel have been submitted. Up to 30 spaces that are not desirable for hotel guest will be used.. We have provided parking counts for during the week and on weekends for both sites. Parking at the hotel is now underutilized, 5 pm is a critical hour for Gym it. There is a possibility of retail, such as Dollar Tree. UPS employees park illegally on our site, we have added signs that parking is for Gym it use only. 102 spaces are required on Saturday. We do not provide credit to people who walk to the facility. We are proposing to implement parking management for special events – valet or parking attendants.

Steve Winnick, shared parking plan is a very good solution. The site has adequate capacity during most time. The parking spaces on the hotel site are underutilized. Staff report recommended a condition that if changes happen the petitioner has to come back. This proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive plan and RMUD zone. The project meets all the criteria for granting of Special Permit.

Gideon Schreiber, a substantial amount of detail was provided by the applicant. We recommend that all original approvals for the site be removed. The site is now mixed use which is more realistic. It is in keeping with warehouse/retail/fitness center. It is an appropriate location that provides mix of uses. The site requires 93 parking spaces, 85 are provided. Additional uses are compatible with existing Gym it. Conditions included are to require TDM plan with analysis for shared parking. Previously approved industrial warehouse is removed. The impact on the neighborhood will be reduced. Proposed landscaping will improve the industrial impact. Pedestrian zone will be created, substantial barriers removed. The adjacent hotel parking lot was designed for shared parking. Signage and lighting will be permitted in separate process. There are 10 Site Plan Review criteria. Final planting plan will be submitted to DCD&P staff. Open space has been added, circulation conditionally met, curbing areas added. The site has not been altered, any future site work will trigger additional review. Snow storage on or off site has been identified. Existing building will not be substantially renovated. Potential installation of solar panels on site. Exterior lighting will be shielded, multiple conditions regarding screening for trash and solar assessment.

Payson Whitney, shared parking is important. Traffic counts of Dollar Tree in other communities showed weekday and Saturday counts. Could a higher fire hydrant be placed to give better visibility? Will signage regarding the shared parking be added?

Mark Harrington, Gym it, flyers will show the shared parking area and how to get there, We will try to educate members. Renting the upper level will be huge help, the site will always be known as Super Fitness.

Jeff Brown, will there be a pedestrian connection between the two parking areas? Will it be handicap accessible?

Janet Buck, will the warehouse space be associated with the retail? Will both tenants use the loading dock?

Gary Shaw, what are the parking demands for the hotel?

Jason Cohen, did the counts include the hotel at high occupancy? Where is the location of the Boston Sports Medicine therapy office?

Mark Harrington, on the day of the study, the hotel occupancy was 100%. Many customers use taxi/Uber service. The Boston Sports Medicine Therapy office is located within the Gym it portion of the building that is accessed by the main entrance.

Janet Buck motioned to recommend to the Zoning Board of Appeals approval of the petition for Special Permit/Site Plan Review at 36 Arlington Street under Sections 5.01.3(a), 5.01.3(b), 5.01.3(f)2, 5.01.5(h) to partially convert former Fitness Center to include Retail, Business, Fitness and Warehouse Use based upon the finding that it meets the criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance subject to conditions set forth in the staff report.

Payson Whitney seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0 In Favor

Jason Cohen motioned to recommend to the Zoning Board of Appeals approval of the petition for Special Permit at 570 Arsenal Street under Sections 6.01(b), 6.01(c), 6.01(f), 6.01(g) to allow Shared/reduction in P and off-site shared parking based upon the finding that it meets the criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance subject to conditions set forth in the staff report.

Payson Whitney seconded the motion.

Vote: 5-0 In Favor

Jeff Brown adjourned the meeting and public hearings at 8:10 PM.

MEETING ADJOURNED: _____ MINUTES APPROVED: _____
For more detailed Minutes see the DVD dated 11/14/18 which is available in the DCDP office.