WATERTOWN PLANNING BOARD

DATE: September 11, 2019 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; Gary Shaw; Jason Cohen
Ingrid Marchesano, Clerk to the Board; Gideon Schreiber, Senior Planner

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Janet Buck motioned to approve Minutes of the 7/10/2019 Planning Board meeting.
Payson Whitney seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0 In favor

Payson Whitney motioned to approve Minutes of the 8/14/2019 Planning Board meeting.
Janet Buck seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0 In favor

PUBLIC HEARING

- **Assisted Living Overlay District:** Amend two parts of the Assisted Living Overlay District Section 5.11 to add language clarifying the *Intent and Purposes,* and to change the affordable housing requirements to be consistent with Section 5.07 of the Watertown Zoning Ordinance (WZO).

Gideon Schreiber, this is a request by the Town Council to review Section 5.07 that was changed in December 2018 by adding new requirements for private projects with more than 10 units. The owner of the former Parker school stated that he cannot comply with the requirement to set aside 10% of units as affordable in Assisted Living Overlay District. To make the project work 5% affordable set aside as it is in all other zoning district.

Gary Shaw, why not include health care venues for Watertown residents to be able to stay in Watertown. It seems that the changes are driven by one project only.

Gideon Schreiber, if the Board would like to add another bullet it can be added at the Town Council hearing. We cannot exclude people from housing. Assisted Living Overlay District was created for Brigham House, since than Assisted Living was created for few other sites. Parker School does not have this Overlay in place. Brigham House is private/public partnership.

Jason Cohen, could we say local residents?

Vince Piccirilli, Town Councilor, adding inclusionary zoning to Assisted Living Overlay District, adding 5% is the #1 goal to make it consistent. We are concerned with historic preservation. Assisted Living is not just for elderly, not just for Watertown residents. It is important that low income people have access to Assisted Living facilities. Certain structures bear to be converted, it needs to be economically viable. Affordable component has to include rent and services. Language needs to be more inclusive, we need to preserve notable buildings.

Gideon Schreiber, the intent is to allow significant buildings in zones that do not allow any housing, this amendment to Section 5.11 would allow it, by preserving significant structures.

Isabella DiCarlo, preservation appeals to me, this would preserve apartments, I am in support of this amendment.

Janet Buck motioned to recommend to the Town Council to amend Section 5.11 as submitted with additional language to the first bullet of a after the word encourage to say “Assisted Living Option in Watertown”, .

Payson Whitney seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0 In Favor

- **Section 8.00 Removal of Soil:** Amend Section 8.00 to add new language regulating the removal of ledge when performed by a vehicle mounted hydraulic jackhammer.

Gideon Schreiber, this proposal is in response to concerns by a number of residents regarding removal of ledge from a construction site that created excessive vibration and machinery noise. The revised language would require community meeting.

Payson Whitney, the language is very specific, is it too limited?

Gary Shaw, the language needs to be more defined.

Janet Buck, somebody needs to be able to make a judgement call, needs to tell the neighbors.

Vince Piccirilli, Town Councilor, there is a ledge everywhere. It can be removed with proper machinery. The problem is they bring in hydraulic equipment, that is very noisy and disruptive. Proper notification to abutters is needed.

Jason Cohen, is community meeting going to solve this problem?

Gideon Schreiber, it is more about discussing the timing to minimize the impact. Both sides need to be aware.

Janet Buck, there is lots of room for abuse, it would invite people to make rules. It would be better to send a letter that would include phone # to call if there is a problem.

Lisa Feltner, Town Councilor, we had full discussion with staff and residents. It is a unique situation, more sensitivity is needed. This is an opportunity to address everyone's concern.

Jeff Brown, how wide a circle of abutters will be notified, 300 feet might not be enough.

Janet Buck motioned to recommend to the Town Council to approve changes to Section 8.00 including additional language after the word work to add: The meeting will then be followed by a letter to abutters with the agreed upon process. Include after Director of DCD&P in writing.
Payson Whitney seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0 In Favor

CASES PENDING

- **49 Phillips Street;** Ronald Goode II – **Special Permit**

Ron Goode II, this is a request to add second unit to an existing single family unit. The existing house is 1,800 s.f. with a footprint of 22' wide by 46' long. The proposed addition is 2 stories with a footprint of 27'x34'. The historic house is located in a SC zone on an 8,400 s.f. lot. the design is a historic farm house with a front porch. All zoning setbacks have been met, ample open space will be provided.

Gideon Schreiber, the design will preserve the integrity of the original structure. The design is not maximizing the site, any conversion in the SC district requires Special Permit. All condition for the SP have been met. Many of the houses in the district are nonconforming. The design is appropriate for the site, there will not be adverse effect on the neighborhood. The submitted plot plan needs to be updated, plans need to show dimensions. Driveway cannot be more than 22' in width. DPW review is required, staff recommends approval of the petition.

Jason Cohen, the proposed addition is not overwhelming the existing structure. There is no landscape plan?

Ron Goode, the original house is 3 feet from property line, the proposed setbacks are 10 & 12 feet. The whole driveway will be repaved, 4 foot buffer will be provided.

Lisa Feltner, Town Councilor, people are confused with the design, front yard parking is not allowed. We are concern with the materials, the addition is proposed with door in front not on the side. The petitioner has a landscaping business, vehicles are blocking driveways.

Ron Goode, I do not store equipment on my property, I have not received any complaints. This design is more appropriate for this historic district, aesthetically pleasing, making the structure look like a farmhouse.

Gideon Schreiber, the petitioner met with the planning staff to talk about this historic structure.

Janet Buck motioned that the Planning Board recommend to the Zoning Board of Appeals approval of the Special Permit under Section 5.01.1(b) 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

CASES PENDING

- **3 Belknap Terrace;** Mark & Jamie Conti – **Special Permit Finding**

Norman Karloff, Architect, this is a proposal to extend 2nd story by increasing the square footage from 400 to 745 s.f.. A shed dormer will be built in the rear and a shed dormer in the front. Building height will not change, any of the nonconforming setbacks will remain the same, footprint of the house will remain the same as well.

Mark Conti, we are proposing to expand our home by adding second floor. We are lifelong residents of Watertown.

Gideon Schreiber, this is a request for Special Permit Finding, it is a unique property. The small area in the front complies with the Zoning Ordinance. The petitioner is not maximizing the attic space. The design is in keeping with the neighborhood and will have minimal impact on the neighbors.

Janet Buck, this is an appropriate way to add space. There are 2 bathrooms proposed, both with showers only. Bathtub is very important when there are kids.

Gideon Schreiber, the Board has requested for all plans to show dimensions.

Janet Buck motioned that the Planning Board recommends 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

OTHER

- **The Arsenal Yards Signage request**

Tom Wilder, Wilder Companies, we have received feedback at the last meeting of the Planning Board, now we are back with new design.

Chris ….., Design Group, presently the sign for Arsenal Park is very low and dark. We are proposing 4 banner tenant signs on the garage and 13 banners under that with the Arsenal Park logo. It is the best way to get most brand logo. The second option is letters attached to the garage.

Jeff Brown, the monument sign is too small and too low. The second signage looks like a drive in. The Arsenal Park signage seem to be hidden, this is a major item on the site.

Gideon Schreiber, we have standards, the Park is Town property. The monument needs to be larger, it needs to convey that it is municipal property.

Gary Shaw, this is a gateway to the park announcing where the park is. None of us saw this proposal until tonight. It is a requirement of the Master Plan. The Park banners are smaller than the tenants. This is not a minor amendment, is this appropriate? The reason for this discussion is an amendment to allow the 4 tenant banners.

Payson Whitney, the commercial signage is overpowering the Arsenal Park signage. Cars will not see this signage.

Lisa Feltner, Town Councilor, this is the main entrance to the Arsenal Park, which is the jewel of the Town. The commercial signage is not a minor amendment.

Janet Buck, we can approve the 4 large banners and approve the Arsenal Park signage later.

Gideon Schreiber, the staff does not agree with this proposal, this is not a minor change. If there is need for temporary signage, we can review it.

Payson Whitney, the monumental sign needs to be total with Arsenal Park on top, and bellow that small signage with arrow pointed to the parking garage. We cannot vote on this proposal tonight because nothing was provided to Staff or the Board prior to the meeting. We need time to review in advance of meeting.

Andrew Capelotti, Boylston Properties, what is a definition of temporary signage? We have 30 months of construction ahead of us, only one retail is in the building. The Board should visit the site to get better understanding. We would like to receive individual comments from the Board members after that.

Gideon Schreiber, the temporary signage permit can be extended. We need to find package that would work for the developer and the Town. This is the main corridor for the Park and the petitioner is adding commercial signage. The old Marshalls signage is too low, not very visible.

Janet Buck, the proposed signage is not making this corridor civic space. This will allow people to drive to the garage and off Arsenal Street.

Gary Shaw, the developer can provide temporary signage for Marshall

Jeff Brown adjourned the meeting and public hearings at 9:30 PM.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 9:30 PM MINUTES APPROVED:_____
For more detailed Minutes see the DVD dated 9/11/2019 which is available in the DCDP office.