

WATERTOWN PLANNING BOARD

DATE: December 9, 2020 PLACE: Virtual Meeting TIME: 7:00 PM COMMENCED: 7:00 PM

PURPOSE OF MEETING: Regular Monthly Meeting

PRESENT: Jeff Brown, Chairman; Janet Buck; Payson Whitney; Jason Cohen
Ingrid Marchesano, Clerk to the Board; Gideon Schreiber, Senior Planner;
Larry Field, Senior Planner

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Janet Buck motioned to approve Minutes of November 9, 2020 Planning Board meeting.
Payson Whitney seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0 In favor

Jeff Brown stated, 66 Galen Street and 46 Kondazian Street will not be heard tonight.

Gideon Schreiber, this is a virtual meeting that is televised on Watertown Cable Access Television and can be joined online or by phone as stated in the Agenda.

CASES PENDING

- **202-204 Arsenal Street; Cresset/WS Venture LLC – Special Permit/Site Plan Review**

Ed Nardi, Cresset, presentation was made at the last Planning Board meeting. Some issues were addressed since. We had a conference call with DPW to review some elements and some revisions were made. We will have very short presentation tonight.

John Sullivan, Architect, we will now present updates to the project, specifically along Arsenal Street. Improvements were made to southern edge of the building, tree area has been expanded. Blue bikes stations will be incorporated. ADA ramp improved and existing pedestrian signal relocated. We are proposing very positive pedestrian experience. Building façade has changed, high level quality, horizontal elements have been added.

Jason Cohen, is there a significant grade change?

John Sullivan, there is a 12 to 14 foot grade difference from Arsenal Street to the back of the site.

Gideon Schreiber, the staff report is posted online. This application is an amendment to previously issued permit for a retail project that has now changed to Lab/R&D. This is a request for a 3-story building of which is 87,332 sf Research & Development and 1,240 sf retail component. The footprint and number of parking spaces has been reduced and the height is slightly increased. Adjacent Gables project is 4 stories with possible restaurant. Multi use path is included on-site and publicly accessible open space. Staff received 5 letters of support for the project.

Janet Buck, is the rear area with access drive continuation from the Rain Garden?

Gideon Schreiber, there is a fire lane and pedestrian connector, but it will connect to the Rain Garden and provide access to Doble site.

Payson Whitney, conditions in the staff report have not been updated, #10.4 should be struck, more detail provided in #19. It looks like buildings are getting taller, the Zoning Ordinance should be updated as well.

Jason Cohen, penthouses should be included in building height. This building will be great addition to Arsenal Street scape. Is there enough room for the Blue Bike station?

Libby Shaw, Trees for Watertown, were the right species of trees picked? Is the size of planting/sidewalk sufficient ?

Ed Nardi, we made an effort to enlarge the tree pits, 14'x6' wide, we are mindful of the right soil.

Janet Buck motioned to recommend to the Zoning Board of Appeals approval of the Special Permit/Site Plan Review under Sections 5.01.1(k)2, 5.01.5(e), 5.05(f), 4.10, 6.01(f)(h) Contiguous façade, Exceptions to height/rooftop features, Reduced/Shadow 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: 4-0 In Favor

- **330-350 Pleasant Street;** Bud's Goods & Provisions Corp - **Special**

Brian Grossman, Atty, we have entered into agreement with Town of Watertown and Watermill Development. This is a request for a Special Permit to allow under Section 5.01.5 Adult Use Marijuana Establishment. We will lease approx. 5,000 s.f. in East Building of the complex, 737 s.f. will be sublet to another retail tenant, maybe coffee shop, etc.. The space will consist of 4 main areas, secured lobby with staff, and pre-order pick up area. 50% of guests will order online. There will be short transaction time, guests will proceed into secure retail area and continue to check out station and then exit.

Alex Mazin, President, the retail area will accommodate preorder and retail. Separate area will be for trash. Deliveries will be in the rear, between the buildings, 2 loading spots will be provided.

Brian Grossman, 30% of the employees will be local, existing bike racks are adjacent to East Building. We are proposing soft opening on online ordering only and 7 day coordination with police. Police detail is necessary after that. This will be part of mixed use development. There will be no loitering on sidewalks. Existing utilities are sufficient, there will not be additional impact. Originally we proposed to be open until 10 pm which was changed to 9 pm, which may not be sufficient. As per CCC requirements, there will not be deliveries to residents, which could be changed in the future. As per the requirements, products are not visible from the street, windows will be glazed.

Jeff Brown, who occupies the rest of the building?

Larry Field, there are 99 apartments and 14,000 s.f. of commercial use and projected restaurant has not been identified yet. The staff is proposing conditional approval, condition #9 hours of operation 8am to 8pm, it might change to 9pm. Same business at 48 North Beacon Street hours of operation is 8am-8pm. Watertown Design Guidelines emphasizes street view, CC regulations require opal glazing. Condition #16 TDM Plan – the petitioner shall participate, monitoring of parking is important, are 61 spaces sufficient for staff and clients?

Jason Cohen, why should we grant different operating hours to this petitioner? 8am to 8pm is sufficient in mixed use development. Monitoring and cameras are important. Will the delivery truck at the drop off location block the existing traffic?

Alex Mazin, loading zone is part of the entire complex.

Gideon Schreiber, the driveway is larger, 34 feet, loading will not be done during peak hours. This is the commercial corridor of the center. One of the parking spaces will be marked for the delivery van.

Alex Mazin, we will get a call one hour before delivery and cone will be placed in the parking space to reserve. We are tenants of the building and have the use of the loading zone. There will be 2 deliveries per week which will take no more than 10-15 minutes.

Brian Grossman, we are concerned with security, all camera and monitoring locations have been signed-off by the Watertown Police Department.

Jason Cohen, will this location have the same signage as your other location in Worcester? This is an apartment building, the proposed signage might be too visible and uncomfortable for people living in the apartments. This business is part of the mixed use development, extra care needs to be taken.

Brian Grossman, we will follow the guidelines of the Watertown sign ordinance. We will follow the protocol and guidelines.

Gideon Schreiber, we have signage ordinance but we are not allowed to regulate contents of the signage. Signage has to be in keeping with Design Guidelines.

Payson Whitney, I echo with Jason concerns, does CCC have regulations of hours of operation? Impact on neighborhood is important. There is a zero tolerance for onsite consumption. Community meetings and an available phone number to contact the petitioner if there is a problem is important.

Alex Mazin, 8 am is for medical usage. 8am to 9pm is important and helpful for customers. Watertown wants this corridor to be active. Worcester is 10-10. All transaction reports go back to State, CCC meets monthly. Windows will be glazed. We are proposing monthly community meetings, there will be no adverse effect on the neighborhood.

Janet Buck, will there be a restaurant on the premises, I am concerned that they will need a liquor license. That would represent more danger to the residents than to the store. I am in favor of extended hours.

Lew Berk, 304 Pleasant St, this business will define the neighborhood, it is not desirable amenity. Customers will wait in line, people will be smoking on the street or on the River way. Parking will be

used by people having lunch by the River, 10 parking spaces will not be enough, and the area will become a hazard.

Jason Cohen, I am not opposed to the use, I approved the other 2 facilities. This is different, is there a connection to the River, I share my concerns with Mr. Berk. It should not become a place to congregate.

Alex, we will very closely monitor the area with cameras. The retail main exit is between the buildings. The host community agreement provides the Town with additional 3% in taxes. Our staff will be trained. We want to be good neighbors. Signage will be provided.

Jeff Brown, we have not heard from the property owner. The Board always pays attention to neighborhood concerns. This is a difficult decision, we have not experienced such business near residences.

Payson Whitney, will there be a security personnel monitoring the parking and patrolling the site?

Eugenie Johnston, resident, people are already smoking along the River path. I support Lew Berk comments, there is loitering at the River, people leaving trash.

Janet Buck, is the building occupied? Presently the loitering is happening by the business employees having lunch.

Gideon Schreiber, temporary occupancy permit has been issued for East building, not the West building. This is considered retail use on mixed use site. This use needs additional special permit. Motorcycle & bicycle police control presence is always in the area.

Jason Cohen, is this medical or recreational use?

Alex Mazin, this request is for recreational use only.

Janet Buck motioned that the Planning Board recommends the conditional approval of the Special Permit under Section 5.01.5, 5.16(c), 8.04(b) & 9.05(b) Adult Use Marijuana Establishment 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: 4-0 In Favor

615 ARSENAL STREET; Home Depot USA Inc

Andrew Copelotti, Boylston Properties, this is a request to amend ZBA-2016-16 Special Permit a parking layout on the south side of the Home Depot parking area to add additional 50 parking spaces. Originally spaces were removed in anticipation that Building G was a residential condo Building. It has been changed to Life Science building and a Roche Bros. Market in Building F. Home Depot needs to 50 spaces back. Four landscape islands have been added providing opportunity for additional landscaping. Building F consists of apartments on top of Roche Bros. Path to the River will be provided and pedestrian crosswalk created. Green area is part of the Arsenal Yards project, Home Depot shares parking with us. Walkway is within 200 feet of the River, surface will be handicap accessible. The plan has been presented to the Conservation Commission.

Gideon Schreiber, the final approval of the walkway is with the Conservation Commission. Planning Board is recommending body to the Zoning Board of Appeals, and is encouraging the pathway to be build with a condition that the pathway needs to be approved by the Conservation Commission (CC). The lot is owned by Home Depot. Staff is ensuring that all the plans are finalized and have to be approved by CC.

Andrew Copelotti, we will build and pay for the pathway and relocate the dumpster. The dumpster is now located as shown on the plans. An approval of CC was needed for Building G and discussed the pathway then, the request was tabled. The former Miller House is occupied by Mt.Auburn Hospital and Town of Watertown. We will add additional floor and replace it with Lab space.

Payson Whitney, the parking spaces are straight forward, it should be separated from the pathway.

Jason Cohen, CC will review the landscape of the path and provide approval. I have faith in the review of the Boards.

Andrew Copelotti, crosswalk will be placed away from the dumpster area. We will get everyone satisfied and clean the area up. We will need sign off from Home Depot and Roche Bros. to apply for building permit.

Libby Shaw, Trees for Watertown, I am concerned with impact on the trees Land as ecological buffer should be preserved. Parking lot is difficult for tree growth.

Janet Buck motioned to recommend to the Zoning Board of Appeals approval of the Amendment to a Special Permit ZBA-2016-16 to increase the available parking in the existing lot by adding a net 50 spaces along the southern edge of the property 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: 4-0 In Favor

OTHER BUSINESS

Jeff Brown adjourned the meeting at 10:40 pm.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 10:40 PM MINUTES APPROVED: _____

For more detailed Minutes see the DVD dated 12/9/2020 available in the DCD&P office.