



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

Wednesday, January 3, 2024

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
Adrian Angus (*Participated Remotely*)
Conor McCormack
Brandon King (*Participated Remotely*)

Board Members Absent:

Staff Present: Michelle Smith, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)
Victor Panak, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS) (*Participated Remotely*)
Rose Russell, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)
Olivia Holden, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)
Richard Saltrick, Department of Public Works & Parks (DPW&P)
Alexandra Kalkounis, Law Department

Call to Order

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

Item 1: Brandt Lane, 4 Brandt Lane & 0 Grafton Street (PB-2023-094) – Definitive Subdivision Plan

Request to Postpone the Public Hearing to January 24, 2024
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to February 8, 2024

Item 2: Burnside Court Extension (12 & 30 Federal Street and 30 Myrtle Street) (PB-2023-095) – Definitive Subdivision Plan

Request to Postpone the Public Hearing to January 24, 2024
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to February 8, 2024

Item 4: Brookline Street Subdivision aka 175 & 177-192 Brookline Street (PB-2023-097) – Definitive Subdivision Amendment Plan – Extension of Time

Request to Postpone the Public Hearing to January 24, 2024
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to February 8, 2024

Item 9: Powers Court ±260 feet South (ST-2023-011) – Discontinue & Remove a Private Way from the Official Map

Request to Postpone the Public Hearing to February 2, 2024
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to February 29, 2024

Item 12: 3 & 4 Carson Court (ST-2023-012) – Zoning Map Amendment

Request to Postpone the Public Hearing to February 2, 2024
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to February 29, 2024

Item 13a: 57 Mount Avenue - AN-2023-056

Request to Postpone the Public Meeting to January 24, 2024
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to February 8, 2024

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan seconded by Mr. McCormack, the Board voted 5-0 to grant the postponements.

New Business:

- 3. 24 Simone Street (aka 70-72, 74-76 Valmor Street & 21-23, 25-27 Maranda Street) (PB-2023-096)**
 - a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

Donald O’Neil, attorney on behalf of the applicant, JAE Worc LLC, recapped the project before the Planning Board and the regulatory approvals the project has already received. Mr. O’Neil discussed staff recommendations for approval and waiver requested. Mr. O’Neil reviewed staff recommendations and how they will be addressed. Mr. O’Neil also discussed staff concerns regarding the stormwater report and stated there are no groundwater issues and soil conditions are understood to be acceptable for infiltration.

Ms. Smith stated relief was already granted by the ZBA to develop on the lot and the project is now before the Planning Board for site plan review due to slope and number of units. Ms. Smith then described staff recommendations which include that the project fully mitigates runoff and that the project team submits an updated stormwater report prior to issuance of approval for the project. To avoid creating a heat island, staff would also like to see at least one tree per lot planted to reestablish cooling that was removed during a partial clearing that took place. Field conditions relative to soil data and ground water offsets for the stormwater system need to be reviewed so they can avoid the need to file an amendment down the road.

Mr. LaValley asked Ms. Smith to comment on the DTM memo; Ms. Smith stated she can read the recommendations into the record and try answer any questions as best as possible.

Mr. LaValley stated Ms. Smith can hold off on reading DTM comments into the record and asked Mr. O’Neil if the team is amenable to continue the hearing in order to address staff comments; Mr. O’Neil stated they are amenable to a continuance.

Ms. Smith stated DTM is recommending the installation of a sidewalk along the frontage of the property and a detailed CMP; Mr. O’Neil stated there aren’t sidewalks on the surrounding streets so it seems unreasonable to have sidewalks at this location; Mr. LaValley stated the Board is generally in favor of sidewalks.

No public comment.

No Board discussion.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 5-0 continue the item to the January 24, 2024 meeting.

Old Business

5. 15-17 Mountain Street (PB-2023-098)

- a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

Philip Silverman, attorney on behalf of the applicant, Munro Associates LLC dba The Vault, recapped the project before the Planning Board which is to amend a Special Permit initially granted in 2021. The business has been doing well and they are seeking to transform the company to an employee-owned business. To do that they need to change the company from an LLC to a Corporation. They are also seeking to change the name of the company from “Munro Associates LLC” to “The Vault MA, Inc. dba The Vault”. Management will remain the same for both the business and the employee ownership stock trust. Mr. Silverman added that the applicant has no concerns with staff recommended conditions.

Ms. Russell provided a recap of the application before the Board and stated staff is not recommending any new conditions of approval since the original approval issued in 2021.

No public comment.

No Board discussion.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 5-0 to approve the amendment with DPRS recommended conditions of approval.

6. A portion of 3 Oriol Drive, 0 Benson Avenue Extension (PB-2023-100)

- a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan Extension of Time

Joe Rotti, on behalf of the applicant, Bluestone Residential Inc., recapped the project before the Planning Board which is a request for extension of time on a site plan approval previously granted by the Board. The project is currently held up while the sale of land goes from one party to another and there are not any proposed changes for the project.

Ms. Russell added that they are looking to extend for 2 years through January 2026 and staff recommends that if the Board approves, they should grant the approval with the same conditions they had issued for the original approval.

No public comment.

No Board discussion.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 5-0 to approve the extension of time through 1/11/26.

7. 16 Laurel Street & 73 Merrick Street (PB-2023-101)

- a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan Extension of Time

Joshua Lee Smith, attorney on behalf of the applicant, Plumley Village, LLC, summarized the project before the Planning Board which is a request for extension of time on a site plan approval previously granted by the Board in 2022.

Ms. Russell stated this is a 2-year extension request while the applicant seeks funding for the project and staff recommends retaining all original conditions of approval.

No public comment.

No Board discussion.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 5-0 to approve the extension of time through 12/21/25.

8. 378 Plantation Street (PB-2024-001)

a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

Chris Anderson, on behalf of the applicant, UMass Memorial Health Care, Inc., summarized the project before the Planning Board and stated the site plan has not significantly changed but they are looking to amend the original approval to add an addition to match the height of the existing building.

The project's architect, Jeffrey Connelman, stated the extension is a shell space that is designed to meet future hospital needs to allow for flexibility of healthcare as well as enhance the overall environment and access for patients and staff.

Ms. Russell stated this was originally approved last fall and reiterated that the site layout and circulation will not change and added that staff was looking to understand the intended use of the 3-story addition; this was addressed by the architect. Ms. Russell stated the site currently has a surplus in parking and asked if the shell space will be used for beds and for the applicant to discuss their timeline.

Mr. Anderson stated the hospital is planning for future growth so they are constructing this now for beds and flexibility in the future; Ms. Russell stated that staff would like to see evidence from ISD that any additional parking for the shell space will be covered under Dover amendment when they are ready to develop the space.

Public Comment:

Richard Pascarelli, abutter of property, stated he and neighbors are concerned with the construction of the building being only 10' from the property line and feels the project is moving too far ahead of itself by building up with no real use for the addition at this time. Mr. Pascarelli also expressed concern regarding the sunlight that will be cut off from abutting residential properties during daylight hours and toward the water that is running off from the site and into the lake.

Board Discussion:

Mr. LaValley stated that while he understands the concerns of the abutting property owner, these things happen as the city continues to develop and UMass has the right to develop on property that they own. While sympathetic to comments from the abutter, this does not change the decision of the Board as there aren't any changes from the previously approved application relative to the criteria in their purview.

Mr. Moynihan and Mr. McCormack agreed with Mr. LaValley's comments and stated they ultimately need to follow the bylaws outlined in their purview.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 5-0 to approve the site plan with DPRS recommended conditions of approval.

10. 4 Brandt Lane & 0 Grafton Street (ZA-2023-010)

- a. Public Hearing – Zoning Map Amendment

Stephan Madaus, on behalf of the applicant, gave an overview of the zone change proposal and introduced the members of his team. The property is currently split zoned and the owner would like the entire property to be encompassed into the BG-2.0 zoning district. The owner eventually plans to subdivide the property which has historically been used for dumping. Single zoning will allow the area to be cleaned up and developed into a multi-family residential complex, bringing much needed new housing to Worcester.

Ms. Smith reiterated the area to be re-zoned is an extension of the BG-2.0 district and gave an overview of other zone changes that have taken place in this area. Ms. Smith explained the uses currently allowed and what would be allowed in the with the proposed zone change, the dimensional requirements across the existing and proposed zoning districts, and the current density in the area. The zone change will allow the owner to develop the property more densely than what would currently be allowed only by seeking special permit. If re-zoned, the portion in the RL-7 would allow many business uses by right as opposed to many business uses that would not be allowed at all or only by special permit in a limited capacity.

No public comment.

Board Discussion:

Mr. McCormack stated this is a reasonable request given the location along Grafton Street and it is in line with the upcoming Now | Next Master Plan for the city.

Mr. King and Mr. Angus echoed Mr. McCormack’s comments.

Mr. Moynihan asked staff to clarify if this is linked to another project they’ve discussed; Ms. Smith stated she believes he is referring to the preliminary subdivision approval which had some abutter contention regarding contaminants on site.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 5-0 to close the public hearing

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 5-0 to recommend in favor of the proposed amendment.

11. 47 Hermon Street (ZA-2023-011)

- a. Public Hearing – Zoning Map Amendment

Donald O’Neil, on behalf of the applicant, provided a summary of the proposal to the Board. The owner of the property is looking to renovate the building on the lot and would like to expand the AROD to include this property so it can be converted for residential use.

Ms. Russell stated this is a historic property last operated around 2007-2011 and has been vacant for many years. Ms. Russell added that other properties in the area that were previously used for manufacturing have been re-zoned to include the AROD for the allowance of residential use and that there aren’t any dimensional changes between the MG-2 district and the AROD. Ms. Russell also stated that staff recommends extending the

AROD to the center line of the street which was not initially included in the petition and that the petitioner is amenable.

No public comment.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Moynihan stated the re-zone seems appropriate for the area and would allow for much needed housing development.

Mr. McCormack echoed Mr. Moynihan's comments.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 5-0 to close the public hearing

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 5-0 to recommend in favor of the proposed amendment.

Other Business

13. Approval Not Required (ANR) Plans

- a. AN-2023-056 – 57 Mount Avenue (Public)
- b. AN-2024-001 – 0 Tyson Road (Public)
- c. AN-2024-002 – 2 Otto Road (Private)
- d. AN-2024-003 – 4 Barrows Road (Public)
- e. AN-2024-004 – 157 Massasoit Road (Public)
- f. AN-2024-005 – 186 Dana Avenue (Public)

Ms. Russell described the ANRs before the Board.

On a motion Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack, the Board voted 5-0 to endorse the ANR for items 13 B, C, D, E, and F.

14. Board Policy and Procedures

- a. Proposed modifications to the Subdivision Rules & Regulations related to More than One Building on a Lot

Ms. Smith stated City Council elected to require ADUs to be owner occupied. Staff also recommends exempting ADUs from the MTOB approval requirements in order to eliminate the barrier it will create for residents to construct ADUs.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 5-0 advertise a public hearing to amend the rules and regulations on 1/24/24.

15. Communications

No discussion.

16. Approval of Minutes - 7/26/2023; 11/1/2023; 11/15/2023; 11/22/2023; 12/13/2023

No discussion.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan, seconded by Mr. McCormack, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 6:55pm.