



The City of Worcester

Executive Office of Economic Development

Planning & Regulatory Services

Planning Board

Albert LaValley, Chair

455 Main Street

P | 508-799-1400 F | 508-799-1406

Planning@worcesterma.gov

www.worcesterma.gov

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

Wednesday, February 5, 2025

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

Board Members Absent: Anthony Dell'Aera

Staff Present: Michelle Smith, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)
Victor Panak, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)
Olivia Houle, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)
Sean Quinlivan, Department of Public Works & Parks (DPW&P)

Call to Order

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

Mr. Moynihan read requests for continuances, postponements, and withdrawals into the record.

Item 1: 120 Washington Street (Lot 3B) (PB-2025-006) – Special Permit & Definitive Site Plan

Request to Continue the Public Hearing to February 26, 2025

Extent the Constructive Grant Deadline to March 20, 2025

Item 3: 125 Northeast Cutoff (PB-2024-085) – Definitive Site Plan Amendment

Request to Postpone the Public Meeting to February 26, 2025

Extent the Constructive Grant Deadline to March 20, 2025

Item 8: 19-21 Waban Avenue (PB-2025-013) – Definitive Site Plan Amendment

Request to Postpone the Public Meeting to February 26, 2025

Extent the Constructive Grant Deadline to March 20, 2025

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan seconded by Mr. McCormack, the Board voted 4-0 to grant the postponement and LTW requests.

New Business:

Item #4 was taken out of order.

4. **216 & 221 Chandler Street (PB-2024-096)**
 - a. Public Hearing – Special Permit
 - b. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

Joshua Lee Smith, attorney on behalf of the applicant, Polar Views, LLC, described the location of the proposed development site. He stated that the applicant seeks to construct a new multifamily building containing 21 new dwelling units with 15% of the units being affordable under the inclusionary zoning requirements. He described the offsite parking that will be provided at 221 Chandler Street, the relief they are seeking through the Special Permit, and the improvements that will be made to the existing offsite parking lot. He noted that this area has been neglected in terms of development and this project will address the needs of an underserved neighborhood.

Jesse Hilgenberg, architect for the project, went over the proposed renderings and how the building was designed to provide close access to the offsite parking lot and capture the intention of the CCOD. He described the design elements of the proposed structure.

Victor Panak of DPRS stated the applicant is seeking Definitive Site Plan review due to the number of units as well as Special Permits related to parking dimensional relief and landscaping requirements. He described the location of the site and the surrounding area. He stated the applicant seeks to resurface and restripe the existing parking lot at 221 Chandler Street and described the relief the applicant is seeking through the Special Permits. He discussed the DPRS recommended conditions of approval.

Sean Quinlivan of DPW described the DPW recommended conditions of approval.

No public comment.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Moynihan stated this project is addressing a need in the area and that he takes no issue with the relief requested due to the positive elements this development will provide.

Mr. McCormack stated this is a great infill development project and that he does not have any issues with the relief requested in the Special Permits or the overall site plan. He asked the applicant to clarify where crosswalk improvements will be done to provide safe access to the offsite parking lot.

Mr. Lee Smith stated a dual-sided flashing beacon will be added to the existing crosswalk right in front of the building along with other streetscape improvements.

Mr. King stated this seems like a well-considered project and is happy to support.

Mr. LaValley applauded the shared offsite parking arrangement opposed to constructing new parking, the bike parking, and the affordable units.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 4-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 4-0 to approve the Special Permits and Definitive Site Plan with staff recommended conditions of approval.

List of Exhibits:

- Exhibit A:** Definitive Site Plan Application; filed 1/10/25; prepared by Bowditch & Dewey, LLP
- Exhibit B:** Special Permit (IZ) Application; filed 12/2/24; prepared by Bowditch & Dewey, LLP
- Exhibit C:** Special Permit (CCOD) Application; filed 1/10/25; prepared by Bowditch & Dewey, LLP
- Exhibit D:** Site Plans; revised 12/11/2024; prepared by J.M. Grenier Associates, Inc.
- Exhibit E:** Architectural Plans and Renderings; revised 1/8/25; prepared by Dixon Salo Architects
- Exhibit F:** Project Impact Statement; prepared by Bowditch & Dewey, LLP
- Exhibit G:** Transportation Impact Assessment; dated 11/19/24; prepared by Vanasse & Associates Inc.
- Exhibit H:** Parking Demand Study; dated 11/19/24; prepared by Vanasse & Associates Inc.
- Exhibit I:** CCOD Admin Parking Reduction Letter; dated 1/2/25; prepared by the Worcester Inspectional Services Department
- Exhibit J:** Stormwater Management Report; dated 11/5/24; prepared by J.M. Grenier Associates Inc.

Item #6 was taken out of order.

- 6. 17 Pearl Street (PB-2025-010)**
 - a. Public Hearing – Special Permit
 - b. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

Mark Borenstein, attorney on behalf of the applicant, HHM Cube Properties, LLC, showed a video presentation to the Board. Through the video, he stated the applicant seeks to construct a mixed-use development on a lot currently occupied by a surface parking lot. He described the property location and stated the development will consist of approximately 139 new dwelling units, ground floor commercial space, and other on site amenities. Mr. Borenstein described the overall site design and proposed loading zone. He described the improvements that will be made to the stormwater management on site and how the development will align with the neighborhood. He stated the project will include affordable units to meet inclusionary zoning requirements. After the video, Mr. Borenstein requested that condition 1L be struck due to lack of sufficient space for bollards and that condition 1R.vi be revised to read “All internal walkways shall be ADA and MAAB compliant”.

Michelle Smith of DPRS stated the applicant is seeking DSP review due to the scale of the project and that is abutting an NR property and a Special Permit to modify parking requirements. She described the relief the applicant is seeking with the Special Permit. Ms. Smith described the DPRS recommended conditions of approval and highlighted comments received from DTM. She asked the applicant to describe plans for construction management for the modular construction.

Regarding the recommended conditions of approval, Ms. Smith asked the applicant takes any issues with Special Permit condition 3; Mr. Borenstein stated the applicant is amenable to fill any empty tree pits on the southerly side if Pearl Street adjacent to the property.

Ms. Smith stated staff is amenable to eliminating condition 1L and recommended adding “Reflect a curb extension at the proposed crosswalk location adjacent to the main residential entrance on Pearl Street in order to provide adequate room for pedestrians or relocate the crosswalk to an alternate location that is acceptable to the Department of Transportation and Mobility” in its place.

Mr. Borenstein requested that the findings be adjusted to reflect that addition of curb extension will result in a 3-space reduction for on-street parking instead of a 2-space reduction.

Sean Quinlivan of DPW described the DPW recommended conditions of approval.

Public Comment:

Adisson Kahale, resident of Worcester, stated they are in support of the building but is concerned about negative effects from the overhang as this will overhang the fire escape to the abutting property that they own. They also stated they are curious about how many spaces will be left in the Pearl Street garage as their business intends to use this garage as well. Lastly, they noted that the electrical service for the building they own goes through the property under review and asked the applicant to ensure the electrical services to their building is not interrupted and that the applicant works in tandem with them when upgrading electrical as their building needs to be upgraded as well.

Brittany Gesner, engineer for the project, stated the fire escape was surveyed with the property and they do not believe that there will be issue with the fire escape but if there are any issues they would certainly coordinate with the abutting property owner to work through that. She also stated that they are aware the electrical service for the abutter goes through the property and they do intend to relocate it in coordination with the abutter and National Grid.

Mr. Borenstein stated there are over 800 parking spaces in the Pearl Street garage and there is currently exceeds parking in that garage. He stated he believes there is ample parking for guests of the abutter's business and tenants of the building.

Ms. Smith stated that garage has 819 spaces in that garage with many hundreds still available for lease.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Moynihan stated he worked in this area for many years and never had issues with parking in that garage. He added that he is excited about this project and looks forward to the quality use.

Mr. King stated he thinks this a great use of space in an effective location.

Mr. McCormack stated he agrees with his colleagues and he is pleased to see the affordable units and use of existing parking.

Mr. LaValley appreciated the applicant's work with staff to make a great project.

Mr. Moynihan asked if the applicant intends to incorporate the historical elements described by staff; Mr. Borenstein confirmed they will be evaluating in terms of incorporating the post office alley.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 4-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 4-0 to approve the Special Permit and the Definitive Site Plan with staff recommended conditions of approval, striking DSP condition 1L, adding a new condition 1L to read "Reflect a curb extension at the proposed crosswalk location adjacent to the main residential entrance on Pearl Street in order to provide adequate room for pedestrians or relocate the crosswalk to an alternate location that is acceptable to the Department of Transportation and Mobility", modifying DSP condition 1r,vi to strike "parking lots, etc." and modifying the findings to reflect that the addition of a curb extension will result in a 3-space reduction for on street parking.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Definitive Site Plan Application; filed 1/2/25; prepared by Mark A. Borenstein, Prince Lobel Tye LLP

- Exhibit B:** Special Permit (CCOD) Application; filed 1/23/25; prepared by Mark A. Borenstein, Prince Lobel Tye LLP
- Exhibit C:** Site Plans; revised 1/28/2025; prepared by VHB
- Exhibit D:** Architectural Plans, Renderings, and Exterior Treatment Details; revised 1/28/25; prepared by Mistry Design
- Exhibit E:** Fire Access Plan; dated 1/17/25, prepared by VHB
- Exhibit F:** Lighting and Photometric Plan; dated 12/31/24; prepared by Empire Lighting
- Exhibit G:** Shadow Study; dated 12/4/25
- Exhibit H:** Stormwater Management Memorandum; dated 1/2/25; prepared by VHB
- Exhibit I:** Traffic Impact and Access Study; dated 12/31/24; prepared by VHB

Item #7 was taken out of order.

- 7. 37 & 60 Great Brook Valley Avenue, 67 & 69 Tacoma Street (PB-2025-011)**
 - a. Public Hearing – Special Permit Amendment
 - b. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan Amendment

Joshua Lee Smith, attorney on behalf of the applicant, Trinity Curtis Phase Two Limited Partnership, stated the applicant is seeking an amendment to a previously approved site plan and Special Permit. He described the location of the development site, what currently exists there, and the proposed changes since the previous approval. Mr. Lee Smith stated the intention is to update the existing mixed income housing with an overall increase in units totaling to 527 units once all phases of development have been completed. He stated within Phase 2, the project will provide two new buildings containing 150 units, which is the same amount of units previously approved but within a consolidated number of buildings. He described the proposed mixed use “Economic Opportunity Center” building which will include a library and 24 housing units and changes in proposed parking.

Mike Lozano of Trinity Curtis Phase Two Limited Partnership, described where they are at with the project and stated they are on track to complete phase 1 buildings by the beginning of 2026. He stated that funding for this project is in place and as part of obtaining that funding, they’ve incorporated the feedback they received which resulted in the amendment they are seeking.

Victor Panak of DPRS stated the applicant is seeking to amend previous Definitive Site Plan and Special Permit approvals. He described the proposed changes to the site and adjustments to the zoning relief previously granted.

Sean Quinlivan of DPW described the DPW recommended conditions of approval.

No public comment.

Board Discussion:

Mr. Moynihan stated this is an extensive amendment and he has no problems with what is proposed but wants to understand why the library and Economic Opportunity Center are being reduced.

Mr. Lozano stated the plans have simply developed further and now that the interiors of these building have been designed, they realized they did not need the amount of space they initially proposed. He confirmed that programming and intent has not changed, the space is just being utilized more efficiently.

Mr. Lee Smith stated additional trees and landscaping will be provided due to the reduction of that building's footprint.

Mr. Moynihan appreciates the increased open space and feels this will be an overall improvement.

Mr. King stated he previously supported this project and he's glad to hear funds are secured and the project is moving along.

Mr. McCormack stated he has no issues with the design but asked for clarification on where future home ownership building will go; Mr. Lozano clarified.

Mr. LaValley stated he looks forward to continuing to watch this project unfold.

Mr. Lee Smith confirmed he intends to request the waiver and requested that Definitive Site Plan condition 1B be modified to replace "Phase 2" with "Lots 1 and 5".; Mr. Panak stated that is acceptable to staff.

Mr. Lee Smith request condition 1J be modified to strike "shall be covered"; Mr. Panak recommended keeping the language in the condition as it is.

Mr. LaValley agreed with staff.

Mr. Lozano stated there is interior bike storage within the Economic Opportunity Center for residents and employees and the exterior bike racks are intended for short-term visitors.

Mr. McCormack and Mr. LaValley stated they are amenable to removing the covered portion of the condition given the interior storage that will be available within the Economic Opportunity Center.

Mr. Lee Smith requested condition 1L be modified to strike "4 trees along the southern property line behind the row of parking" due to the slopes on site making it difficult to plant trees here.

Mr. Panak stated that is acceptable to staff.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 4-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Mr. Moynihan seconded by Mr. McCormack; the Board voted 4-0 to approve the Special Permit Amendment and Definitive Site Plan Amendment with staff recommended conditions of approval, modifying Definitive Site Plan conditions 1b to replace "Phase 2" with "Lots 1 and 5", 1j to strike "shall be covered", and 1L to strike "4 trees along the southern property line behind the row of parking".

List of Exhibits:

- Exhibit A:** Special Permit & Variance Amendment Application; clerked 1/9/25; prepared by Joshua Lee Smith, Bowditch & Dewey
- Exhibit B:** Site Plan; revised 1/31/2025; prepared by Weston & Sampson Engineers, Inc. & Copley Wolff Design Group
- Exhibit C:** Architectural Plans; dated 12/23/2024; prepared by DHK Architects
- Exhibit D:** Curtis Apartments Master Site Plan; dated 12/23/2024; prepared by DHK Architects

Mr. Moynihan exited the meeting at approximately 7:10pm.

2. **494 Lincoln Street (PB-2024-084)**
 - a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

Matthew Eckel, attorney on behalf of the applicant, Raising Cane's Restaurants, LLC, stated the applicant is seeking Definitive Site Plan review in order to construct a Raising Cane's Chicken Restaurant. He described the property location and what previously existed there. He described the size of the building, the parking proposed for the new restaurant and other site improvements to be made. He stated the restaurant will have a two-lane drive-thru and will also incorporate pedestrian friendly elements. He described the relief obtained from the ZBA. Mr. Eckel stated they are amenable to all staff recommended conditions and they will request the waiver identified by staff.

Matt Ashley of Bohler Engineering described the proposed building, the traffic study conducted, and how they've worked with city staff to improve the design. He stated soil conditions are not conducive to stormwater infiltration but plantings have been added to facilitate stormwater management.

Victor Panak of DPRS stated the applicant is seeking Definitive Site Plan review triggered by square footage of the proposed business use. He stated the applicant seeks to remove all existing improvements and construct a new restaurant. He described the location and surrounding area. He stated the applicant has worked with staff on several iterations of the plans and staff has no outstanding issues with the layout proposed.

Sean Quinlivan of DPW described the DPW recommended conditions of approval.

Public Comment:

Seth Ward of Worcester, MA stated they live in this area and asked if the traffic study considered the intersection off Country Club Boulevard and asked how it will handle backup of traffic onto Lincoln Street.

Mr. Ashley stated the traffic study looked at this area and explained how this area will be handled.

Seth Ward noted multiple car crashes at this intersection on Lincoln Street from folks trying to make the light and there are several city bus stops in this area.

Mr. Ashley stated the existing bus stop on Lincoln Street will not be modified. He stated crashes were looked into as part of the traffic analysis as well.

Mr. LaValley stated new developments require several city departmental reviews and the Department of Transportation and Mobility has reviewed this study with a particular eye toward pedestrian safety. He stated the traffic study shows that the development will not make conditions worse in this area and the city cannot require the developer to improve existing poor conditions within city traffic infrastructure.

Seth Ward asked if the entrance/exit from Lincoln Street will remain; Mr. Ashley stated there will be slight modifications but this entrance/exit will remain.

Board Discussion:

Mr. King stated no questions.

Mr. McCormack stated no questions and is happy to support.

Mr. LaValley stated the Board is not terribly supportive of new drive-thru uses but this area seems appropriate for the intended use.

On a motion by Mr. McCormack seconded by Mr. King; the Board voted 3-0 to approve the Definitive Site Plan with staff recommended conditions of approval.

List of Exhibits:

- Exhibit A:** Definitive Site Plan Application; received 1/10/25; prepared by Matthew J. Eckel and Mark L Donahue, Attorneys with Fletcher Tilton PC
- Exhibit B:** Survey; dated 5/23/2024; prepared by Control Point Associates, Inc
- Exhibit C:** Site Plan; date 10/03/2024; revised 1/29/25; prepared by Bohler
- Exhibit D:** Architectural Plans; dated 8/13/2024; revised through 11/4/24 prepared by ADA Architects
- Exhibit E:** Signage Package; dated 9/30/2024; prepared by AGI
- Exhibit F:** Drainage Report; dated 10/3/2024; prepared by Bohler
- Exhibit G:** Geotechnical Report; dated 7/26/2024; prepared by Terracon
- Exhibit H:** Lighting Plan: dated 10/1/2024: prepared by ADA Architects
- Exhibit I:** Drive-thru Equipment and Safety Policies; prepared by Raising Cane’s
- Exhibit J:** Traffic Impact Study; dated October 2024; prepared by Bowman Consulting Group

5. 135 Goddard Memorial Drive (PB-2025-009)

- a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan Amendment

Michael Andrade, engineer on behalf of the applicant, The TJX Companies, Inc, stated the applicant is seeking to amend a prior site plan approval in order to construct a 2,100 SF addition to the existing warehouse building. He stated the addition will provide new security and loss prevention spaces for the building and a portion of the existing parking lot will be reconfigured. Mr. Andrade stated they are amenable to all conditions except for condition 1b which they would like to strike in entirety.

Victor Panak of DPRS stated the applicant is seeking DSP amendment in order to make a small expansion and changes to the parking area. He described what currently exists on site and the proposed changes. He noted that the proposal will reduce overall impervious on site. He described the staff recommended conditions of approval.

No public comment.

Board Discussion:

Mr. LaValley asked how many EV ready spaces the applicant is proposing; Mr. Andrade confirmed that 17 spaces will be EV ready.

Mr. LaValley stated the Board needs to decide whether or not 3 of the 17 EV ready spaces should be operable with EV chargers installed.

Mr. McCormack stated he has no issues with the site plan and feels that providing 17 EV ready spaces is significant since the site does not have any at this time. He stated he realizes that building code does not require for the chargers to be installed so he is not opposed to striking the condition.

Mr. King agreed with Mr. McCormack.

Mr. LaValley stated the demand is probably there for EV spaces and feels it’s not a huge ask for TJX to pull wires to provide the EV spaces.

Mr. Andrade stated this is just not part of the plan for this particular project. He stated they do intend to provide EV spaces in the future but with different funds they are not allocated for this project.

On a motion by Mr. McCormack seconded by Mr. King; the Board voted 3-0 to approve the Definitive Site Plan with staff recommended conditions of approval, striking condition 1b.

List of Exhibits:

- Exhibit A:** Definitive Site Plan Amendment Application; filed 01/09/2025; prepared by Graves Engineering, Inc.
- Exhibit B:** Plans; revised 01/20/2025; prepared by Graves Engineering, Inc.
- Exhibit C:** Stormwater Report; dated 12/17/2024; prepared by Graves Engineering, Inc.

9. 76 & 78 West Mountain Street (ZA-2025-001)

- a. Public Hearing – Zoning Map Amendment

Donald O’Neil, attorney on behalf of the property owners, Jonathan and Carey Nozzolillo, described the proposed zoning map amendment. He stated the front portion of the lot is currently BL-1.0 and the rear is zoned RS-7 and the applicant seeks to extend the BL-1.0 zone to encompass the properties in entirety.

Olivia Houle of DPRS the properties are currently split zoned, partially with the BL-1.0 zoning district and partially within the RS-7 zoning district. She described what currently exists on the properties, the total square footage to be re-zoned if approved, and the types of uses that exist within the neighborhood. She described the different uses allowed in the two zoning districts and the previous zoning history for the properties. Ms. Houle stated that rezoning the properties would allow for the current business use to operate on the entirety of the properties opposed to just the BL-1.0 portion.

Mr. Quinlivan stated no issues with the proposed amendment.

No public comment.

Board Discussion:

Mr. McCormack and Mr. King stated no issues.

Mr. LaValley stated split zoning is an unfortunate consequence of zoning maps when they are redrawn and should be eliminated when possible.

On a motion by Mr. McCormack seconded by Mr. King; the Board voted 3-0 to recommend in favor of the proposed Zoning Map Amendment.

List of Exhibits:

- Exhibit A:** Petition – Donald O’Neil on behalf of Jonathan & Carey Nozzolillo; referred to Planning Board on December 17, 2024
- Exhibit B:** Map of Proposed BL-1.0 Extension at 76 & 78 West Mountain Street

Other Business

10. Street Petitions

- a. ST-2025-001 – Evelyn Street (Convert to Public)
- b. ST-2025-002 – Alden Street (Convert to Public)

Postponed to the 2/26 Planning Board meeting without discussion.

11. Approval Not Required (ANR) Plans

- a. AN-2025-003 – 10 Renfrew Street (Private)
- b. AN-2025-005 – 94 & 96 Burncoat Street (Public)
- c. AN-2025-007 – 18 Beaumont Road (Private)
- d. AN-2025-008 – 3 Sherer Trail (Private)

Olivia Houle of DPRS described the ANRs before the Board and noted that the ANR 3 Sherer Trail is not properly before the Board.

On a motion by Mr. McCormack seconded by Mr. King; the Board voted 3-0 to endorse the ANRs for items 11 a-c.

12. Communications

- a. Housing Production Plan
- b. Community Preservation Act Funding
- c. MBTA Communities – Economic Feasibility Analysis Report
- d. APA Massachusetts Chapter’s 2024 Comprehensive Plan Award in Recognition of Now | Next
- e. Mobility Action Plan
- f. 2026 Meeting Dates

Olivia Houle discussed the communication items on the agenda and asked the Board to take a vote to approve the 2026 meeting dates.

On a motion by Mr. McCormack seconded by Mr. King; the Board voted 3-0 to approved the 2026 Board meeting dates.

13. Board Policy and Procedures

- a. Community Preservation Committee – Representative Appointment

14. Approval of Minutes – 12/18/2024; 01/15/2025

On a motion by Mr. McCormack seconded by Mr. King; the Board voted 3-0 to approve the minutes from the 12/18/2024 and 1/15/2025 meetings.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. McCormack, seconded by Mr. King, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:52pm.