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

September 18, 2013

WORCESTER CITY HALL - LEVI LINCOLN ROOM

Planning Board Members Present: Stephen Rolle, Vice Chair

Satya Mitra, Clerk Robert Ochoa-Schutz

John Vigliotti

Planning Board Members Absent: Andrew Truman, Chair

Staff Present: Luba Zhaurova, Division of Planning & Regulatory

Services (DPRS)

Marlyn Feliciano, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services

Katie Donovan, Department of Inspectional Services Chris Gagne, Department of Public Works & Parks

Michael Traynor, Law Department

Alexandra Haralambous, Law Department

Amanda Gregoire, Office of Economic Development

BOARD SITE VISITS

REGULAR MEETING (5:30 PM)

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Stephen Rolle called the meeting to order at 5:45 P.M.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

The minutes for July 17, 2013, August 7, 2013 and September 4, 2013 were held since they were not ready for the Board's review.

REQUESTS FOR CONTINUANCES, EXTENSIONS OF TIME, POSTPONEMENTS, WITHDRAWALS

1. 184 Highland St and 2 Einhorn Rd – More than One Building on Lot (PB-2013-012B)

Ms. Feliciano stated that staff received a postponement request to October 30, 2013. Upon a motion by Mr. Ochoa-Schutz and seconded by Mr. Vigliotti, the Board voted 4-0 to approve the postponement to October 10, 2013.

List of Exhibits.

Exhibit A: Definitive Site Plan Application; received 3/4/2013; prepared by D. E. Realty

LLC.

Exhibit B: Definitive Site Plan; dated February 28, 2013; last revised 6/28/2013; prepared by

Land Planning, Inc.

Exhibit C: Floor Plans; dated 1/4/2013; prepared by R. C. Searles, Associates.

Exhibit D: Memorandum from the City of Worcester Division of Planning & Regulatory

Services to the Planning Board; re: 184 Highland Street (PB-2013-012) -

Definitive Site Plan; dated May 31, 2013; revised June 21, 2013.

Exhibit E: Memorandum from the City of Worcester Department of Public Works & Parks

to the Planning Board; re: 184 HIGHLAND STREET; Definitive Site Plan-PB-

2013-012; dated April 18, 2013.

Exhibit F: Request to postpone the meeting to July 17, 2013 and to August 7, 2013.

Exhibit G: Stormwater Report for 184 Highland Street and 2 Einhorn Road; dated June 27,

2013, prepared by Land Planning, Inc.

NEW BUSINESS:

Public Hearing

2. Hygeia Street (between Arctic and Plastics streets) – Removal of a Private Street from Official Map

Mr. Howland of JH Engineering Group, LLC, representing DOK Realty, stated that the petitioner would like to request the removal of Hygeia Street between Arctic and Plastic Streets. Mr. Howland stated that DOK Realty or its subsidiaries own all five of the parcels that abut Hygeia Street. Mr. Howland stated that three of the parcels have Hygeia Street addresses while two have Arctic Street addresses. Given DOK Realty owns and controls all of the parcels he would like to request that Hygeia Street be removed from the official map. Mr. Howland also noted that DOK Realty has already petitioned the Zoning Board of Appeals for the approval of a full scale development that encompasses this street. Mr. Howland noted there is a City waterline that runs down Hygeia Street that will need to be relocated, but in the meantime they will provide an easement.

Mr. Gagne, stated that the Department of Public Works has met with the applicant and approves of the plan to remove the street as long as they supply a utility easement for the existing waterline.

Ms. Zhaurova stated that this is a public hearing and that only direct abutters to the street subject to the petition are invited to the hearing and if any of the abutters object, the Planning Board cannot approve the request, though that does not appear to be the case. Ms. Zhaurova stated that from a planning perspective the proposal does not negatively affect the abutting lots because all of the abutting lots have alternative frontages along Arctic and Plastic Streets except for one Hygeia Street, which is owned by the petitioner. Ms. Zhaurova stated that Staff recommends the approval of the request with the conditions that the petitioner record at their own expense the plan depicting the entire street removal of Hygeia Street in accordance with the Registry of

Deeds Rules and Regulations and that the petitioner provides evidence of such recording to the Division of Planning & Regulatory Services.

Attorney John Altomare, representing Graphics Group Realty Trust located at 33 Arctic Street, stated that his client objects to the petition. Attorney Altomare stated his client utilizes 40 onstreet parking spaces and is concerned about the effects the development will have on the availability of parking. Attorney Altomare stated his client supports the development overall but given DOK Realty's petition seeking relief for 278 parking spaces, they would like further information on how parking will be addressed in the neighborhood.

Mr. Traynor stated that Graphics Group Realty Trust is not technically a party of interest because they do not abut the street, therefore the Planning Board is not precluded from taking action.

Mr. Rolle asked about the status of the Zoning Board of Appeals' decision. Ms. Zhaurova stated the hearing is scheduled for September 30, 2013 and relief has not yet been granted but that this matter may be more appropriate for the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Mr. Rolle stated that the decision should be made based on access and travel functions of the street and not the on-street parking, keeping in mind that on-street parking is for public use and not meant for specific individuals or businesses. Mr. Rolle recommends approving this petition and to allow the Zoning Board of Appeals to consider the parking issue. Mr. Mitra and Mr. Vigliotti stated they agreed with Mr. Rolle.

Upon a motion by Mr. Ochoa-Schutz and seconded by Mr. Mitra, the Board voted 4-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon motion by Mr. Ochoa-Schutz and seconded by Mr. Vigliotti, the Board voted 4-0 to approve the petition to remove Hygeia Street from the Official Map with the conditions as noted in the DPRS memo and the condition that an easement be provided for the water main.

List of Exhibits.

Exhibit A: Removal of Hygeia Street Petition; dated August 3, 2013; referred to Planning Board on August 20, 2013; prepared by Din On 'Tony' Kwan.

Exhibit B: Memorandum from the City of Worcester Division of Planning & Regulatory Services to the Planning Board; re: Hygeia Street – Hygeia Street (between Arctic and Plastics streets) – Removal of a Private Street from Official Map; dated September 13, 2013.

Exhibit C: Certified Abutters List and Map

Exhibit D: Abutter Notification and Legal Advertisement for street removal.

Exhibit E: Letter from John N. Altomare, Esq., representing Graphics Group Realty Trust, owners of 33 Arctic Street to Andrew Truman, Chair, Planning Board; re: Public Hearing Notice\Removal of Hygeia Street (between Arctic Street and Plastics Street); dated September 18, 2013.

3. 1097 (aka 1099) Pleasant Street – Zoning Map Amendment (ZM-2013-003)

Mr. Allyn Jones, owner of 1097 Pleasant Street, requested a postponement.

Mr. Traynor stated that public hearing can only be postponed to a date certain. If the petitioner would like to change the petition, the petitioner must withdraw the petition and submit a new petition with City Council.

Mr. Jones stated he would like to withdraw.

Mr. Traynor stated the recommendation from the Planning Board to the City Council will be to allow withdrawal without prejudice.

Upon a motion by Mr. Vigliotti and seconded by Mr. Mitra, the Board voted 4-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Mr. Mitra and seconded Mr. Vigliotti, the Board voted 4-0 to approve the leave to withdraw without prejudice.

List of Exhibits.

Exhibit A: Zoning Map Amendment Petition; undated; referred to Planning Board on July

16, 2013; prepared by Allyn Jones.

Exhibit B: Map of Proposed Zoning Map Amendment for 1097 (aka 1099) Pleasant Street;

created September 13, 2013.

Exhibit C: Planning Board report re: 1097 (aka 1099) Pleasant Street – Zoning Map

Amendment submitted to the City Council on November 12, 2009

4. 1 Tiverton Parkway - Zoning Map Amendment (ZM-2013-004)

Mr. Allyn Jones, owner of 1 Tiverton Parkway, stated that due to zoning changes made by the City of Worcester, his property, which was previously solely zoned for commercial, is split into two different zones: Business Limited 1 and Residential Limited 7. Mr. Jones stated he has spoken with all of the abutters to the property and requested that the entire lot be zoned BL - 1.

Ms. Zhaurova asked whether the lot was formerly the site of a building which was later demolished as evidenced by a Demolition Delay Waiver issued by the Historical Commission in 2010. Ms. Zhaurova stated that the Planning Department would need further information and history to confirm the applicant's statements, however generally the City looks for uniform delineation when rezoning.

Mr. Traynor stated that the petition is to alter zoning, that the prior use is irrelevant, and that the question at hand is whether this should be a split-lot.

Heather Rochford, resident of 9 Pomona Road, stated that she has concerns about what will be done in the future with the property. Mr. Rochford stated she has concerns about noise, and how it will affect the quality of the neighborhood, lighting, property values, and traffic.

Dennis Bombard, resident of 8 Pomona Road, stated he believes the property should be kept residential, noting that there are several empty store fronts in the neighborhood, and that the former building was once a house and the location of a tailor shop.

Candith Gammal, resident of 11 Pomona Road, stated that traffic is already difficult with the existing businesses currently encroaching on the residential neighborhood.

Mr. Ochoa-Schutz asked whether a parking lot is allowed on residential property. Ms. Donovan stated it is not.

Mr. Rolle asked if the lot is split zone, how the appropriate use is determined.

Mr. Traynor stated that some lots may be grandfathered; otherwise they must comply with the current zoning. Mr. Traynor stated there are some provisions for split-lots in terms of parking. Ms. Donovan stated non-accessory lots are not allowed under the current residential zoning.

Mr. Mitra asked the petitioner what the intended use of the property would be.

Mr. Jones stated that the property is approximately a 50/50 split. Mr. Jones stated that the bank has approached him about using his property for parking during construction.

Mr. Vigliotti stated this issued came before the board in 2010 and that the consensus was that encroachment into residential neighborhoods must be stopped. Mr. Vigliotti stated that the parcel in question is off the main commercial corridor and would encroach upon the residential area. Mr. Rolle, Mr. Mitra and Mr. Ochoa-Schutz stated that they agree.

Upon a motion by Mr. Ochoa-Schutz and seconded by Mr. Mitra, the Board voted 4-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon motion by Mr. Mitra and seconded by Mr. Ochoa-Schutz, the Board voted 4-0 to deny the request for a zoning map amendment.

List of Exhibits.

Exhibit A: Zoning Map Amendment Petition; undated; referred to Planning Board on July

16, 2013; prepared by Allyn Jones.

Exhibit B: Map of Proposed Zoning Map Amendment for 1 Tiverton Parkway; created

September 13, 2013.

Exhibit B: Planning Board report re: 1 Tiverton Parkway – Zoning Map Amendment

submitted to the City Council on January 21, 2010.

5. RG-5 (Residential, General) Zoning District - Zoning Ordinance Amendment (Z0-2013-001)

Mr. Mitra recused himself and left the room.

Arthur Mooradian, the petitioner, stated that he proposes to rezone all RG-5 (Residential, General) zoning districts in the City to RG-4 to encourage more housing in smaller lots. Mr. Mooradian stated he was not seeking an answer tonight, and asked that the City address the issue at a later date when the Department of Regulatory Services is properly staffed.

Bill Randell, Member of the Chandler Street Business Association and Worcester property owner, stated he supports the change. Mr. Randell stated that these changes would greatly benefit Main South where numerous lots that used to have three-decker properties are located and due frontage requirements, single family homes cannot be located on these lots. Mr. Randell stated that to attract home ownership in this neighborhood, single family homes need to be built and it would make formerly undevelopable lots developable. Mr. Randell also stated duplex frontage requirements are not as stringent as single family frontage requirements.

Mr. Mooradian stated that there is a major demand for single family homes, however there is a lack of new single-family homes, which would create increased tax revenue.

Mr. Rolle stated that the Planning Board must act on the specific petition in front of them, broadly asking for the change of all RG-5 zoning to RG-4.

Ms. Zhaurova stated that Mr. Fontane reviewed the petitioner's request prior to his departure and therefore the Planning Board can act on the petition with confidence that Planning Staff has reviewed the petition. Ms. Zhaurova further stated that RG-5 zoning districts occupy approximately 11% of the City's land area (~2,630 acres of the ~24,600 acres) but that the petitioner seems to be interested in specific areas in the City and therefore the petition as written would not achieve the goal sought by the petitioner. Ms. Zhaurova stated that staff respectfully recommends that the Board recommends denial of the petition until such time as the administration can develop infill design regulatory standards and other zoning controls related to small lot development.

Jo Hart, Worcester resident, stated she is against the misuse of land and small housing, and that she was in favor of denser housing.

Stuart Loosemore of the Worcester Chamber of Commerce, submitted a letter of support to the Planning Board, requesting that the Planning Department study the proposal and make the appropriate recommendations to facilitate the creation of new market rate housing.

Mr. Ochoa-Schutz, asked about the difference in requirements between duplexes and single family homes. Ms. Donovan stated that duplexes require 6,000 square feet and 60 feet of frontage, 30 feet of frontage per side, making it larger than single family homes.

Mr. Rolle stated he is uncomfortable recommending a blanket change from RG -5 to RG -4 because it requires significant studying by the Planning Department as part of a comprehensive effort.

Mr. Traynor stated that the Planning Board must make a recommendation about what is before the Planning Board but can include comments to City Council as part of their report and engage with Planning Staff to initiate a zoning change.

Mr. Ochoa-Schutz stated he would like to continue the conversation, but needs further information, and therefore cannot approve the petition as written.

Mr. Vigliotti stated that the Planning Board should take action and deny the petition with comments to the Department of Planning and Regulatory Services to explore what can be done in regards to changing the zoning and develop a separate petition.

Mr. Mooradian stated that he encourages the Planning Board to look at the issue further to accommodate new types of construction in the urban core.

Jo Hart, Worcester resident, stated that Mr. Fontane is correct and that there is not a simple answer to this issue.

Upon a motion by Mr. Vigliotti and seconded by Mr. Ochoa-Schutz, the Board voted 3-0 to close the public hearing.

Upon motion by Mr. Vigliotti and seconded by Mr. Ochoa-Schutz, the Board voted 3-0 to deny the petition with the comment that City Council and the Department of Planning and Regulatory Services further study possible zoning changes to lots zoned RG-5.

List of Exhibits.

Exhibit A: Petition to the City Council by Arthur Mooradian; referred to the Planning Board

on July 16, 2013.

Exhibit B: Current Zoning Map with RG-5 Zoning Districts highlighted; dated September

12, 2013; created by DPRS.

Exhibit C: Letter from Stuart Loosemore, Worcester Chamber of Commerce, to Planning

Board; re: RG-5 (Residential, General) Zoning District - Zoning Ordinance

Amendment; dated September 19, 2013.

Public Meeting

6. 184 Highland St and 2 Einhorn Rd – Definitive Site Plan Approval (PB-2013-012)

This item was taken contemporaneously with item #1.

List of Exhibits.

Exhibit A: Definitive Site Plan Application; received 3/4/2013; prepared by D. E. Realty

LLC.

Exhibit B: Definitive Site Plan; dated February 28, 2013; last revised 6/28/2013; prepared by

Land Planning, Inc.

Exhibit C: Floor Plans; dated 1/4/2013; prepared by R. C. Searles, Associates.

Exhibit D: Memorandum from the City of Worcester Division of Planning & Regulatory

Services to the Planning Board; re: 184 Highland Street (PB-2013-012) –

Definitive Site Plan; dated May 31, 2013; revised June 21, 2013.

Exhibit E: Memorandum from the City of Worcester Department of Public Works & Parks

to the Planning Board; re: 184 HIGHLAND STREET; Definitive Site Plan-PB-

2013-012; dated April 18, 2013.

Exhibit F: Request to postpone the meeting to July 17, 2013 and to August 7, 2013.

Exhibit G: Stormwater Report for 184 Highland Street and 2 Einhorn Road; dated June 27,

2013, prepared by Land Planning, Inc.

7. **690** Grafton Street – Parking Plan Approval (PB-2013-33)

Mr. Mitra rejoined the meeting.

John Skaff, owner of Skaff Auto Inc. and the petitioner, stated that he is seeking to utilize a 39 space parking lot (24 display, 9 service, 3 retail and 3 office spaces) in association with 4,436 SF building for use as a gas station, 3-bay service garage and commercial space. The 39 parking spaces are already in existence and 24 of the spaces would be used to display automobiles for sale.

Maureen Finley of Summit Engineering stated that lighting has been added, the retaining wall has been labeled, and two 3 inch caliper trees were relocated based on the conditions of approval at the Zoning Board of Appeals. Ms. Finley requested a waiver from showing 300 feet of abutters around the property lines on the plan, as the plan currently only depicts the direct abutters.

Mr. Rolle stated that because Ms. Finley submitted an updated plan at the meeting, that any vote taken on the petition would still have the conditions recommended in the memo.

Ms. Zhaurova stated that the plans were approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals and that Staff recommends approval with the conditions as stated in the memo.

Mr. Vigliotti asked what would be done along the western side of the site to buffer from the residential area. Ms. Finley stated that there would be a stockade fence and vegetation along that area. Mr. Duquette stated the fence would be maintained by Duquette Service Station.

Mr. Mitra asked about the trucks and tractors that are parked in the lot. Mr. Duquette stated that he is waiting on a letter from the City of Worcester to facilitate the removal of the trucks but promised they will be out by month end.

Upon motion by Mr. Ochoa-Schutz and seconded by Mr. Mitra, the Board voted 4-0 to approve the parking plan subject to the following conditions:

That eight (8) copies of final revised plans are submitted to the Division of Planning & Regulatory Services prior to the release of the decision addressing the following items:

- 1. Update note indicating that the Special Permits requested were approved and list the Zoning Board conditions of approval.
- 2. Correct summary of zoning classification requirements to state "NA" under BL-1.0 minimum frontage required.
- 3. Label the names of owners of properties up to abutters of abutters within 300 feet of the applicant's property lines.
- 4. Label landscaped areas.
 - Provide two 3" caliper trees in the proposed landscaped area along Grafton Street
- 5. Label Rudolph Street as public.
- 6. Provide a summary of zoning classification requirements. Label what is required and what is proposed. Label minimum yard dimensions.
- 7. Correct the parking summary to state:
 - 24 display spaces provided for proposed car sales use: 24
 - Total parking spaces proposed on site: 39
- 8. Label location, size and arrangement of any lighting and/or signs.
- 9. Label fence and retaining wall height/material.
 - a. Screen the dumpster with a six foot stockade fence.
- 10. Label area available for snow storage. Snow storage may not be located in parking buffer areas.

List of Exhibits.

Exhibit A: Parking Plan Application; prepared by Skaff Auto Inc.; received July 16, 2013.

Exhibit B: Proposed Site Plan & Parking Plan; dated prepared by Summit Engineering &

Survey, Inc.; dated July 16, 2013, revised July 24, 2013 and received July 25,

2013.

Exhibit C: Memorandum from the City of Worcester Division of Planning & Regulatory

Services to the Zoning Board of Appeals; re: 690 Grafton Street – Parking Plan

Approval: dated August 21, 2013, revised September 13, 2013.

Exhibit D: Memorandum from the City of Worcester Department of Public Works & Parks

to the Planning Board; re: 690 Grafton Street, Parking Plan – PB-2013-033; dated

August 20, 2013.

Exhibit E: Letter from Renfrew St. Residents to the Zoning Board; re: 690 Grafton Street;

dated August 7, 2013 and received August 9, 2013.

OTHER BUSINESS:

8. Arboretum Subdivision – Phase IV – Compliance Discussion with the Owner

Mr. Rolle stated that the Planning Board sent a letter asking for a status update regarding Arboretum Subdivision Phase IV.

Attorney George Kiritsy, representing Arboretum Village, introduced Stephen Gallo and stated that originally they were having difficulty documenting construction methods that had already occurred on site, so they withdrew their plans. Since that time they began designing a rip-rap slope that is consistent with the original design of 1:1 or 1.5:1 slope which meets local and state regulations in order to detail new construction activities. After hiring a new architect, the new plan was incorrect because the slope began on abutting properties and would require a grading easement. Since then, that plan has been completed and provided to the City for preliminary review. The slope design is being incorporated into a site plan to be submitted to the City by September 26, 2013. In anticipation of the construction activities they have begun transporting rock material to the site.

Mr. Rolle asked whether he was proposing to submit a revised site plan. Attorney Kiritsy stated that was correct because the slope was never designed and specified in the original site plan.

Mr. Gagne stated that DPW&P did receive a plan, but did not have time to review it.

Ms. Zhaurova stated that in order to review plans in detail the Planning Department would need the plans to scale and on paper

Ms. Donovan asked a report be issued regarding how materials will be removed due to stability issues. Attorney Kiritsy asked whether Ms. Donovan would like a narrative of the construction sequence. Ms. Donovan stated that would be sufficient, as well as information about the type of equipment to be used.

Mr. Traynor stated the City is most interested in getting the work started and that the slope does not need a new site plan to be addressed. Mr. Traynor would like a commitment to address the slope primarily and does not want the lack of a site plan to hold up the addressing of the slope.

Attorney Kiristy stated he is uncomfortable advising Mr. Gallo to begin work without approval from the City first of the slope replacement. Attorney Kiritsy asked how to obtain this approval.

Mr. Rolle stated that the slope does not require Planning Board approval, it needs to be reviewed by staff to determine if the slope design is compliant with theoriginal approved subdivision plans and the regulations

Attorney Kiritsy asked who would review the slope proposal. Mr. Traynor stated that the slope can be approved on an administrative level with coordination among departments.

Attorney Kiritsy stated that the site plan would be submitted to DPW&P and Code. Ms. Zhaurova requested that Attorney Kiritsy submit the plans to the Planning Department for a date stamp and the Planning Department will distribute.

Mr. Mitra stated that he would like to see this moved along.

9. Washington Square Rotary – Discontinuance and Removal of a Portion of a Public Way from the Official City Map (ST-2013-041)

Mr. Gagne stated that DPW&P is in favor of the removal. Mr. Rolle clarifies that this is surplus property and asked what is currently located on the property. Mr. Traynor stated that the parcel is currently empty and that the recommendation is to alter the official map. Upon a motion by Mr. Vigliotti and seconded by Mr. Ochoa-Schutz, the Board voted 4-0 to recommend the Discontinuance and Removal of a portion of the Washington Square Rotary to City Council.

10. Approval Not Required (ANR) Plans:

a. Sarah Drive (private street) (AN-2013-041)

Mr. Vigliotti stated that he has concerns regarding adequate frontage along the property and recommends that they not approve the ANR.

Attorney George Kiritsy stated that this is an ANR of a previously approved subdivision way, making it eligible for approval.

Mr. Traynor said that is correct but asked Mr. Gagne whether Phase V of the subdivision plans removed the road.

Mr. Gagne stated that DPW&P's opinion is that since the Phase V plan has been approved, the ANR plan no longer reflects the most recent subdivision plan because that portion of the road no longer exists in Phase V.

Mr. Gallo stated that the bulb was never reflected on a plan and was not formally abandoned so he is unsure.

Mr. Traynor recommends the matter be continued to October 9, 2013 to gather further information.

Upon motion by Mr. Ochoa-Schutz and seconded by Mr. Mitra, the Board voted 4-0 to continue the matter until October 9, 2013.

b. Greenwood Street (public street) (AN-2013-042)

Ms. Zhaurova stated that the applicant is seeking to split a lot into two lots to construct a duplex subject to 35 feet of frontage for each lot. Based on the plans, lot A provides 50' of frontage and lot B provides 50' of frontage. Planning Staff recommends the approval of the

ANR. Upon motion by Mr. Vigliotti and seconded by Mr. Ochoa-Schutz, the Board voted 4-0 to endorse the ANR.

c. 50 Knapp Avenue (private street) (AN-2013-043)

Ms. Zhaurova stated that the minimum amount of frontage required for a single family home is 65 feet, lot 1 has 60, this plan seeks to transfer parcel A to the lot so that it meets the minimum frontage. Upon motion by Mr. Mitra and seconded by Mr. Vigliotti, the Board voted 4-0 to endorse the ANR.

11. CMRPC (Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission) Board Appointments

Nancy Tran will continue to serve as staff delegate to CMRPC. Upon motion by Mr. Vigliotti and seconded by Mr. Mitra, the Board voted 4-0 to approve the appointment.

12. Signing of Decisions from prior meetings

Decisions signed except for 604 Burncoat Street subdivision plan because a covenant or bond was not yet in place.

ADJOURNMENT:

Upon a motion by Mr. Mitra and seconded by Mr. Ochoa-Schutz, the Board voted 4-0 to adjourn the meeting at 7:41 p.m.