

## WATERTOWN PLANNING BOARD

DATE: August 8, 2012 PLACE: Town Council Chamber TIME: 7:00 PM COMMENCED: 7:00 PM

PURPOSE OF MEETING: Regular Monthly Meeting

PRESENT: John Hawes, Chairman; Jeff Brown; Fergal Brennock; Linda Tuttle-Barletta  
Ingrid Marchesano, Clerk to the Board; Danielle Evans, Senior Planner;  
Gideon Schreiber, Senior Planner

### ADMINISTRATION BUSINESS

Jeff Brown motioned to approve Minutes of 7/11/2012.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta seconded the motion.

Voted 4-0 In favor

### CASES PENDING

- **74 Lincoln Street;** Daphne Schneider – Special Permit Finding

....., representing the petitioner, the existing garage is in a bad shape. We will demolish the structure and construct a new attached garage. The 15'11" rear setback will be less nonconforming than the existing 7' setback.

Gideon Schreiber, the existing garage is within the side yard setback, rear yard setback required is 20'. The new garage will improve the nonconformity, staff recommends approval.

John Hawes, we have received an email from Barbara Epstein in support of the project.

Joe Iodice, 67 Lincoln Street, major improvements have been done to the house, the new garage will add to that.

Roberta Vanderkeyl, 71 Lincoln Street, we are in support of the proposal.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to recommend 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.

Jeff Brown seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0 In favor

- **124 Watertown Street;** PL Hingorani, Trustee, Devi Trust – Variance

Maurice Mason, Arty, this is a request to allow a monument type sign of 20 s.f. to help to identify tenants in the existing large building. We are also requesting sign setback of 2' where 7.5' is required.

Danielle Evans, the petitioner is asking for 2 variances to allow monument sign at the former Parker School which was sold in 1983. Staff reviewed the petition, the conditions for granting of a variance have been met, and such sign is allowed bi right in other business zones. Only the largest tenants will get individual sign, staff recommends approval.

Jeff Brown, it is very difficult to see who occupy the building.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to recommend to the Zoning Board of Appeals approval of the Variances under Sections 7.03(a) & 7.04 based upon the finding that it meets the criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance subject to conditions set forth in the staff report.

Fergal Brennock seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0 In favor

- **31 Russell Avenue;** Carrie L. Van Brunt – Special Permit

Carrie Van Brunt, my husband and I purchased the single family home in April. We have owned a 6 family house in Indianapolis, which we have restored back to single family Victorian. We have 2 small daughters. I am proposing to convert the existing detached garage to teach private Pilates sessions. The space will remain the same, a half a bath will be added. The exterior will stay the same, only change is an addition of a door. If sold it will convert back to being a garage. The space cannot accommodate groups, the appointments are 50 minutes, there are no walk-ins and no signage. The conditions in the staff are acceptable.

Gideon Schreiber, the 9,786 s.f. property is located near the corner of Russell Avenue and Mount Auburn Street. House is nicely updated with a long driveway and 2 car garage in the rear. This is an S-10 zone and Special Permit is required to allow Home Occupation. The proposed use will not change the character of the garage, the door will face the yard. No more than 25% of the dwelling will be used for the Home Occupation. The increase in trips is minimal, such a use is not identified as not being allowed in this zone. There will be no adverse effect on the neighborhood. Specific conditions have been added, number of sessions will be no more than 4 per day, 20 per week. There will be a break between sessions, no more than 2 clients per session, Mo-Fri, 7am-8pm, Sunday 8-12. We are proposing that the petition be reviewed in 1 year to consider the impact on the neighborhood. The permit will expire when the petitioner vacates the property.

Sally ....., 68 Russell Ave, I am not against the petition but I am concerned with parking. The driveway is only 1 car wide and often people park on both sides of the street. I want Russell Ave remain residential, this might be a precedent for future proposals.

John Hawes, the property is located in S-10 zone, it is carefully defined that business is allowed by Special Permit only.

Dolores Mitchell, 37 Russell Ave, we are a direct abutter, there used to be a standard fence between our properties, the garage is very visible to us. We were first distressed with the door being on our side and asked for the door being moved to the other side. This is a reasonable compromise.

Susan Steele, 77 Russell Ave, I have mixed feelings about this proposal, I have reservation with the traffic generated by the nearby church and people using the street as a cut through to the High School. I do support people working from home, but not comfortable with buildings being converted. This is the only area in Town that is zoned S-10 and we should preserve it as residential.

Gail Hupper, 27 Stoneleigh Circle, this is a residential neighborhood that has a very special character. It is important to preserve it.

Robert Shay, 139 Russell Ave, have any other home occupations been approved in this neighborhood? I am very concerned if this gets approved.

Gideon Schreiber, 4 home occupation special permits were given in the last 19 years. Psychotherapy at 26 Russell Avenue, 105 Garfield St and 112 Bailey Road. Film office was proposed for 42 Bailey Road but withdrawn. Some might not be active.

Sean Scensor, 25 Russell Ave, we feel the impact that is being generated by the church. Our house is the gateway to the residential area. We have two small children. This business will bring different people to the area daily. I do not feel comfortable with this proposal.

Ralph Fugilo, Bates Road, our yard abuts 31 Russell in the rear. The neighborhood is changing, daycare center has been approved for the area. We have moved from our 2 family home, and the house is rented. I urge the Board to keep the area residential.

Peter Robertson, 32 Russell Ave, the church is a nightmare. The market for Pilates session is probably after regular working hours, it will bring more noise and traffic to the neighborhood.

Fergal Brennock, it is not appropriate to have sessions Sunday morning. We want to encourage business but it should be in the right location.

John Hawes, we have received several letters and emails expressing their concern: John Airasian, 42 Bailey Road, Marc Meyer, 26 Russell Ave, Lan Ying & Sean Scensor, 25 Russell Ave, Fran Forman, 49 Russell Avenue. A letter of support was received from Hilary Tuttle and Chris Haff of 50 Bailey Road. Lot of activity is happening at this end of Russell Avenue. Extended hours would be a problem. Driveway is right on property line, the garage is grandfathered. There are many conditions, what will happen after 1 year? There is lack of clarity in the Zoning Ordinance definition. I am concerned with the vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Jeff Brown, there is commercial space available in Watertown. If approved, this might set bad precedent.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta, this is a difficult situation. The use is somewhat passive but it can add to the density. Review after 1 year might be too long.

Carrie Van Brunt, I am aware of the problems with the church. The classes are for one person only. All the criteria for Home Occupation have been met.

Fergal Brennock, dedicated space in Town for business would be more appropriate. Cars will have to back out of the driveway, it will become safety issue. Door will affect the neighbor.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to recommend to the Zoning Board of Appeals approval of the Special Permit under Section 2.35 based upon the finding that it meets the criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance subject to conditions set forth in the staff report and additional condition that the property will be reviewed in 1 year...

Jeff Brown seconded the motion.

VOTE: 0-4 Opposed

- **615 Arsenal Street;** Home Depot – Special Permit

Pedro Figueroa, this is a petition to allow merchandise outside of the Home Depot building. We have been in Watertown for 10 years, this is a seasonal request.

Gideon Schreiber, this is a Special Permit request to allow accessory use-outdoor display and storage of merchandise. The use is already occurring without a permit and the petitioner is here to rectify the issue. The use complies with use in I zones. It will not have adverse effect on the neighborhood. Crosswalks from the area to the store where purchases are made will be added. 92 parking spaces will be removed, it would decrease them to nonconformity, and the parking is still in excess. Staff recommends conditional approval to be allowed from April to July.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to recommend to the Zoning Board of Appeals approval of the Special Permit under Section 5.02(j) based upon the finding that it meets the criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance subject to conditions set forth in the staff report.

Fergal Brennock seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0 In favor

- **805 Mt. Auburn Street**; Sprint Spectrum LP – Amendment to Special/Permit Finding

Brian Grossman, Arty, this is a petition to modify previously issued Special Permit/Finding. The petitioner is asking to modify existing equipment by removing 3 antennas mounted with stealth enclosures and replacing them with 3 panel antennas. The existing faux flue will be replaced with faux chimney to conceal the mounting hardware. 9 RRH units will be installed, and existing GPS on the roof will be replaced. Two existing radio communications cabinet will be replaced with a newer cabinet. The maintenance consists of 1-2 trips per months, no heath or smoke is generated by this equipment.

Danielle Evans, staff reviewed the application, the site is located in LB district. The new regulations do not allow such structures on residential building but this project is grandfathered, approval was granted in 1999. All the criteria have been met, there will be no serious hazard or nuisance, no adverse effect on the neighborhood. Adequate facilities are provided, staff recommends approval with conditions.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to recommend to the Zoning Board of Appeals approval of the Amendment to Special Permit Finding #99-13, #10-10 based upon the finding that it meets the criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance subject to conditions set forth in the staff report.

Jeff Brown seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0 In favor

#### OTHER

- **270 Pleasant Street** – Request for Amendment to Elevation

Heather Boujoulian, Criterion Development Partners, this is a request to allow additional storefront windows along Pleasant Street. The windows will be opaque to block view into the garage but will provide a lighter pedestrian edge along the façade. A sketch of the elevation has been submitted to the staff previously and was approved by the staff.

John Hawes, these elevations are very different from what was approved by the Planning Board. The roof scape, the colors, are different.

Danielle Evans, the elevations were submitted to the building inspector, zoning officer and planning staff, and it was approved.

John Hawes, are the approved control plans the same ? The dimensions and materials look different. We will approve the windows but we need to have further discussion regarding the control plans.

Fergal Brennock, the new elevations makes it look like a hospital.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to approve the amended front elevation plans by adding the store front windows with a condition that a new revised elevation plan be submitted.

Fergal Brennock seconded the motion.

VOTE: 3-1 In favor

Linda Tuttle-Barletta opposed

- **Metro West Collaborative Development Inc.** – Modification to previously issued parking lot approval

Jennifer Van Camp, Metro West Collaborative Development, a grant from Metro Boston Sustainable Communities Consortium was won collectively by the Towns of Belmont, Lexington and Watertown to create Housing Production Plans. The document is approved by Mass Department of Housing and will include an assessment of housing needs based on population trends and regional growth factors, number of units produced annually and steps to meet our goals. The plan will help guide development

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to best meet our community needs and possibly prevent unwanted 40B developments. It could also become part of the Comprehensive plan.

Chairman John Hawes adjourned the meeting at 8:50 PM.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:50 PM MINUTES APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
For more detailed Minutes see tapes dated 8/8/12 available in the DCD&P office.