

WATERTOWN PLANNING BOARD

DATE: January 9, 2008 PLACE: Lower Hearing Room TIME: 7:00 PM COMMENCED: 7:00 PM

PURPOSE OF MEETING: Regular Monthly Meeting

Public Hearing

PRESENT: John Hawes, Chairman; Jack Zollo; Linda Tuttle-Barletta; Jeff Brown

Chairman John Hawes opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Jeff Brown motioned to approve Minutes of 12/14/07 meeting.

Jack Zollo seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0 In favor

CASE PENDING

80-82 Forest Street; Giovanni Cimino & Ari Koufos - Variance

Giovanni Cimino, my partner and I would like to apologize for not having a permit for building of the 2 dormers. We did not realize that the house was nonconforming. The house was purchased as a 4 family and if kept as such, a sprinkler system would have to be added, which would have been very costly. We have decided to downsize to 3 units and received many compliments from the neighbors. The electrical and plumbing systems have been upgraded.

Danielle Fillis, the staff has evaluated the request for a variance. A building permit was issued on November 5, 2007 to remodel 4 bathrooms and kitchens, install vinyl siding and new roof. The petitioner partially demolished the interior of the structure and builds 2 dormers. Staff believes that the dormers would not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood. The density will be decreased and required parking provided. Not all criteria for granting of variance were met and staff cannot recommend an approval, leaving it at the Boards discretion to grant the requested relief.

Giovanni Cimino, the dormers will not provide additional living space, just more space to move furniture.

John Hawes, is the Board satisfied to grant the variance? The original building permit is for remodel only.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta, we do not like when construction is done before granting of relief. It does help that the house is being downsized to 3.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to recommend to the Board of Appeals approval of the Variance under Section 5.04 based upon the finding that it meets the criteria set out in the Zoning Ordinance subject to conditions set forth in the staff report.

Jack Zollo seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0 In favor

Shant Broukian, 81 Forest Street, as an abutter we are concerned with parking. Will there be sufficient off street parking during winter months?

Giovanni Cimino, 8 spaces can be provided, we only need 6.

Chairman John Hawes opened the public hearing at 7:15 PM.

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PUBLIC HEARING

140 Pleasant Street; Claudio Coppola – Amendment to Zoning Map classification from T (Two Family) to I-3 (Industrial 3)

Theresa Jones, on behalf of Claudio Coppola, this is a request under Section 9.21 of the Zoning Ordinance to change the zoning of the 7,819 s.f. portion of the above property (Lot #16) from T (two family) to I-3 (industrial 3). This will match the existing 6,623 s.f. that is already I-3. The lot is abutting Lot #27 and Lot #8 that are also zoned I-3. The property is used for landscaping business.

Danielle Fillis, the staff is in favor of the proposed zoning amendment. Both parts of the lot are under common ownership and should be identical in zoning.

Greg Watson, a family home that was located on the property was razed years ago.

Jeff Brown, how long has the lot been used for business?

Linda Tuttle-Barletta, is the petitioner trying to expand the business to both parts of the lot?

Greg Watson, the part of the lot zoned T cannot be used for business now. The merger of the property occurred in 2005.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to recommend to the Town Council that the property at the above address be rezoned from T (two family) zone to I-3 (industrial 3) zone.

Jeff Brown seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0 In favor

552 Main Street; Town of Watertown – Site Plan Review of Municipal Facility

Greg Watson, a new process will be undertaken tonight. Specific criteria have been outlined in the staff report. The Town enacted this Ordinance to open up the Site Plan Review process to the community and to give everyone the opportunity to ask questions. This is a proposal to redevelop the former Brown School property to a Police station. The presentation will consist of the architect comments, comments from staff and the Board, and finally comments from the Building Committee and the public.

David McKinley, Kaestle Boos Associates, we are proposing to raze the unused school and build a new structure. Half of the site will be kept for public use. We are trying to hide as much parking as possible. A view from Main Street will show a little plaza. Front rooms will be used as a conference space. The main entrance will be on the side of the structure. We are trying to give the building a residential feel. Visitors parking will be provided in the front, cruisers will be fenced in on the side in the rear. Generator and transformer will be screened by vegetation. There will be a pedestrian walkway along the structure leading to the playground. The Historic Brown House is near the west part of the property.

Danielle Fillis, there are 10 criteria for Site Plan Review.

1. Preservation of Landscape – the topography of the rear part will not change, the front of the property will change substantially. Some trees will be removed and other added
2. Relations of Buildings to Environment – the size and the scale of the building are appropriate, the design will not have negative effect on the abutting residential neighborhood.
3. Open Space – some onsite space will be used as a passive public space. A park area with pedestrian connection between Main and Acton Streets will be provided.

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4. Circulation – a concern regarding cruisers entering/exiting the sally port and pedestrian circulation. Will there be directional signage? Will portion of the parking area be available for playground parking?
5. Surface water drainage – only 4% increase in impervious surface. The topography will remain unchanged, turf blocks should be expanded.

6. Utility Service – staff is concerned with adequate screening of the generator. How will the equipment noise be controlled?
7. Advertising features – the size of the proposed sign is still unclear, more information is needed. Sign application will have to be submitted.
8. Special Features – fencing will be installed along the property line. Concern with equipment screening.
9. Safety – members of the Building Committee will comment on it.
10. Microclimate – several mature trees will be removed, many new trees will be planted at different locations.

Evaluation for Special Permit under Section 9.05(b) is required. The site is now unutilized, the Police station is appropriate for the site. The use will benefit the neighborhood and the Town. We are concerned with screening since the property is abutting residential neighborhood. 118 parking spaces will be provided and safe passage provided to get to the playground area. The facility is adequate for current and future project needs. Staff recommends that the Site Plan Review and Special Permit be granted.

Susan Falkoff, I am concern with the vehicular and pedestrian traffic. What will happen when many cruisers need to leave at once?

David McKinley, cruisers responding to emergencies are already on the road.

Susan Falkoff, why do we need so many parking spaces if they are already on the road? There might be an emergency, is the entrance/exit wide enough?

John Lawn, Town Councilor and abutter, the playground equipment is very old, it was placed by the Atrium School. The reconstruction of the playground is not part of this project. The playground will be reconstructed under capitol improvement in 2010. The station will be used as the new voting place for Precinct 9.

Michael McKeon, Architect, the community meeting room will be used for meetings, etc. The number of parking spaces will meet the needs of shift changes, staff parking.

Jeff Brown, this is all town owned land. The playground is in disrepair. How many cruisers does the Town have? Why is there a need for such an excessive number of spaces? How big is the daily staff?

, we have 23 marked cruisers, 3-4 unmarked vehicles, service vehicles and general maintenance. There are 20-25 civilians, dispatchers, etc. The capacity of the community room is also counted.

John Lawn, people in the neighborhood will use the parking lot in the winter, as well as Brown House visitors.

John Hawes, how often is the sally port used? It seems to be very close to the edge on east side.

Michael McKeon, the sally port is located in the quiet part of the lot. It will block the light from the neighborhood.

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Angie Kounelis, Town Councilor, I will echo the concerns of Town Councilor Falkoff. How will the parcel be exited if there is an emergency? Is there an access from Acton Street?

Ed Deveau, Police Chief, there is no driveway to Acton Street, just a path. It could be used in a true emergency. We have never had any type of pedestrian accident at our current location. The gate at the new location opens very slowly. We have had a lot of dialog with the neighbors, they are in support of the proposal.

Greg Watson, the current location presents more possibilities and vast improvement of the property.

John Hawes, the building does not look very institutional, there are some questions about a civic building appearance...

Michael McKeon, Architect, this building is coming into residential neighborhood. There will be a municipal image clock tower in the front and the scale of the building has been broken down. We are

trying to provide balance between municipal setting and the residential neighborhood. We will use masonry at the clock tower, the clapboard will be pre-finished at the factory.

Greg Watson, staff suggested enhancing the screening. Noise will be generated from the onsite equipment. There is a potential for passive recreation at the front.

Michael McKeon, acoustic enclosure of the equipment will reduce the decibel level. All the requirements of the noise ordinance will be met. Fifteen foot high lights will be used, many controls will be provided. Directional signage will be lit.

David McKinley, evergreens will be added. The generator is very close to the building. Fence might be added to screen the transformer/generator. A large tree in front of the property will remain. Slope control ground cover will be added.

Marilyn Pettito Devaney, Town Councilor, where and how many handicap parking spaces will be provided? I have requested information about the firing ranges, how many lanes will be provided? How much of the original building will be preserved?

David McKinley, 5 handicap spaces will be at the front entrance, 1 for staff and others for visitors.

Michael McKeon, we do not have any information about the firing ranges. There will be 4 in the basement. The building will be razed, only some parts preserved and used in the new building.

Dennis Duff, 33 Spruce Street, more trees could be placed in the parking area. I would like to thank the Building Committee members who were involved in the long process.

Kathleen McGill, 37 Puritan Road, I am a direct abutter in the rear and a member of the Building Committee, neighbors are very pleased with the process.

Greg Watson, the Historical Commission held 2 hearings in July 2007 and took a vote to allow razing of the structure without delay. It was not practical to try to save the building.

Nancy Scott, the floor plan is showing a training room, where is the community room? What is the capacity?

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Michael McKeon, Architect, the room is above the front entrance, and it can hold 75-80 people comfortable. It can be used for training, meetings, etc...

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned that the Planning Board approve the proposal for the Police Station facility under Section 5.16 Municipal Reuse and Development, Section 9.03 Site Plan Review and Special Permit under Section 9.05(b).

Jack Zollo seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0 In favor

Chairman John Hawes closed the Public Hearing and adjourned the meeting at 8:45 PM.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:45 PM MINUTES APPROVED: _____

For more detailed Minutes see tapes dated 1/9/2008 available in the DCD&P office.