

WATERTOWN PLANNING BOARD

DATE: May 19, 2008 PLACE: Lower Hearing Room TIME: 7:00 PM COMMENCED: 7:00 PM

PURPOSE OF MEETING: Public Hearing
Zoning Amendments

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

Chairman John Hawes called the public hearing to order at 7:00 PM.

John Hawes, at tonight's hearing the Board will review proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance in regards of Drive-thru and Pleasant Street corridor.

SECTION 5.01.4(E) TABLE OF USE REGULATIONS, OPEN-AIR OR DRIVE-IN RETAIL AND SERVICE

Greg Watson, this is a proposal to allow drive-through restaurants in the LB, Industrial-1, Industrial-2 and Industrial-3 districts in Watertown. The proposed change would allow such a use by Special Permit.

John Hawes, it was decided previously that such a use should not be allowed in Watertown. I am asking that residents, who wish to speak in favor of the proposal, make their comments first.

Frank Destino, 63 Jensen Road, southern states have many drive-through restaurants. To allow this use would create more jobs, help businesses and add to the tax base.

Arsin Kozelian, owner/petitioner, we are proposing to raze the existing building and build new structure to improve the site.

John Hawes, I will now ask for comments against the proposal, please do not repeat your comments. Any project for the site would still have to come to the Board for a Special Permit.

Pam Piantedosi, 188 Waverly Ave, the Zoning Ordinance is for the entire town. This change will affect all of us. The owner of this property is also the petitioner who is requesting this change on behalf of a corporation that is interested in buying this property. The reasons against this proposal are traffic and safety. Middle school is only 100 yards away, such a use should not be allowed at this location.

John Hawes, Mr. Clyde Younger submitted a letter regarding this petition in front of the board stating that he is not unduly influencing the Board. A letter against the petition was submitted from Deanna Dement Myers, 276 Waverly Ave, John Airasian, 43 Bailey Road, Alice & Joseph Holt, 76 Standish Road, Jim & Kelley Becker, 67 Bemis Street, Kathleen Maldonado, 50 Bates Road, Edward Sugrue, 203 Orchard Street, Patti Vincent, 14 Prescott Street; Deborah King, 39 Warren Street. A letter from District A Councilor Angie Kounelis in opposition was also submitted.

, 23 Quincy Street, this is a congested and dangerous intersection. The proposed use would be a magnet for kids from the Middle School. We are trying for children to eat healthy food.

John Hawes, tonight's discussion is not about specific project, but about a town wide issue. We need to focus on why not to have such a use in the entire town. Any project would still require a special permit.

Jim Bean, when the issue of a specific location comes up, the public can come back with their comments.

Watertown Planning Board

May 19, 2008

Page Two

Eileen McCluskey, 66 Hull Ave, I have a daughter in the Middle school located nearby this site. Watertown should set example and promote walking not driving. This location that is near the school is unacceptable.

Marilyn Petitto Devaney, 98 Westminster Ave, Jack in the Box that was located in the east part of town caused traffic. Drive-through does not fit into this small Town. Middle School is nearby, more traffic in this area is unacceptable. It was a wise decision to prohibit drive-through then.

Cliff Cook, 21 French Street, drive-through does not fit in this Town. It would change the character of the Town. Such use would encourage car trips.

Harvey Steiner, 18 Marshall Street, people already double park at Dunkin Donuts, drive-through would back up cars onto the street.

Mark, 77 Riverside Street, I have taken part in the River clean up. We have picked a lot of fast food trash. To allow drive-through will add to it, people toss containers out of car windows.

Sandra Hoffman, 16 Middle Street, traffic and congestion already exists, drive-through does not fit into this Town.

Maria Ruggeri, Hilltop Road, such use will cheapen the Town, it is inappropriate for this Town.

Vincent Piccirilli, I have received many letters from residents regarding this proposal and all have been submitted for the record.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned that the Planning Board recommend to the Town Council not to approve the proposed amendment.

Jack Zollo seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0 In favor

PLEASANT STREET CORRIDOR

Greg Watson, the proposed amendments have been edited and Draft #3 is in front of the Planning Board tonight.

John Hawes, the Board has discussed these amendments on April 29, 2008. Draft #3 will reflect that discussion.

Danielle Fillis, the first change is in Article II: Definitions – Build-to Line and Open Space, Publicly Useable. Next is Section 5.16 (g)(2) Dimensional Criteria, (A) Max FAR for mixed use development 2.0, (B) Min Lot area per dwelling unit, (C) Heights, (D) Building coverage, (G) Credits for Publicly Usable Open Space, (H) Setbacks

(h) Parking requirements (3) Provisions for Parking Requirement Reductions

(i) Design Guidelines

(j) Sustainability Principles – Guidelines

(k) Sustainability Credit (4) Charles River Bike Path (5) Structured/Underground Parking

(See Attached)

John Hawes, we are asking the public to provide comments on the amended portion only.

Watertown Planning Board

May 19, 2008

Page Three

Susan Falkoff, is there a distinction between the river side of Pleasant Street? Are the setbacks taken toward the River or the street?

Greg Watson, it relates to the building line not the setback. Some discretion will be left to the Board, all projects will be reviewed under the Special Permit criteria.

More discussion by the Board members and residents regarding the setbacks, height, followed.

John Hawes, at the last meeting the residents who live in the Pleasant Street area felt that the rules should apply to both sides of Pleasant Street. High buildings on Pleasant Street might cast shadows.

Danielle Fillis, the final Sasaki report did not recommend that a distinction between the 2 sides should be made. The rules might work for one property but not for the other one.

Chuck, 111 Pleasant Street, I have been using the bike path for running, existing buildings such as Riverbank Lofts and Hartz Mason are already high, and they are only 4 stories. I cannot imagine to have more buildings of the same height or higher.

John Hawes, these rules are made specifically for this area, there is a 50 foot limitation at the Riverbank Lofts building.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta, 50 feet or 5 stories would be preferable. The proposed amendment is giving 5 options.

Jeff Brown, I have worked on projects in New York near the water and some structures were quite high. The proposed amendment will give us flexibility//variety. Are we in sync with other towns?

Danielle Fillis, we have looked at other towns where similar rules apply. Building coverage is 50% if underground parking is provided. Reduction of number of parking spaces can be granted if there are sustainability credits.

John Hawes, the use of vinyl siding is not consistent with the Zoning Ordinance requirement, it needs to be taken out. The Board can express their preference, it should not be written. This is all specific to the Pleasant Street corridor.

Greg Watson, we have discussed the use of building materials, this proposal is trying to give the developer guidelines.

Chuck, if you start reducing parking space requirements, people start parking on the street, reduction is not the answer.

John Snipe, developer, our company is trying to redevelop the Hartz Mason property. We do not want to be short of parking, this proposal is in line with what is needed.

Danielle Fillis, there is a list of items to meet in order to get certified. The staff can go through them with the developer to see if they can be certified.

Jeff Brown, most property owners will need guidance to become certifiable.

John Hawes, there are many pieces to these rules. After a year, more fine tuning might be needed.

Watertown Planning Board

May 19, 2008

Page Four

Steve Corbett, Town Councilor, we are going too far too fast with the sustainability guidelines. Once they get imbedded into the Zoning Ordinance they will become obstacle for future projects. Some projects would not be able to go forward in this area.

Danielle Fillis, these are just guidelines but it is our responsibility to follow certain rules.

Greg Watson, many of these rules are being applied already. The proposed amendments will create framework that incorporates our current practices.

John Hawes, the language needs to be soften up, it has to show that these are suggestions not requirements. In the future it could be transferred to other town districts.

Greg Watson, these amendments will go back to the Town Council and they can refer it to their subcommittee. The Council has 90 days to make a final decision.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned that the Planning Board forward the Draft #3 amendments for the Pleasant Street Corridor with the changes discussed tonight to be incorporated.

Jeff Brown seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0 In favor

Chairman John Hawes, tonight is the last meeting for Planning Director Greg Watson who has been with us for 6 years. We want to say thank you and wish him the best in his new job.

Chairman John Hawes adjourned the public hearing at 8:50 PM.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:50 PM MINUTES APPROVED: _____

For more detailed Minutes see tapes dated 5/19/2008 available in the DCD&P office.