

## WATERTOWN PLANNING BOARD

DATE: January 11, 2006 PLACE: Town Council Chamber TIME: 7:00 PM COMMENCED: 7:00 PM

PURPOSE OF MEETING: Regular Monthly Meeting

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

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

### CASE PENDING

**54 Arsenal Street;** Elie Rivollier, Jr., Trustee/MSI Realty Trust – Special Permit Finding, Amendment to Special Permit Finding, Amendment to Special Permit & Amendment to Variance

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to continue the petition to February 8, 2006 meeting.

Jeff Brown seconded the motion.

VOTE: 3-0 In favor

### CASE PENDING

**163-165 Hillside Road;** Arman Manoukian – Special Permit Finding & Variance

Arman Manoukian, we have purchased this 2-family house in November and are planning to live on the second floor. We have 2 children and the second floor is too tight. We are proposing to expand the attic space to allow for additional bedroom, bathroom, TV room and study. The total livable area would be 595 s.f. where 547 s.f. is allowed. A rear deck of 100 s.f. is planned in the rear.

Mary Crain, the staff visited the site and reviewed the plans. The nonconforming height will be maintained. It is difficult to see the hardship and the staff recommends that the study area will be reduced to keep half a story at 50% where the petitioner is requesting 54% of the third floor built out. Staff recommends that the variance is denied.

Arman Manoukian, the area that we are requesting is exactly the half of the third floor. The extra square footage is because of the rear deck.

John Hawes, the size of the bathroom and the study can be reduced and more use made out of the circulation space in the center. The dormer would be more aesthetically appropriate. The Board would allow the dormer on the north site or the petitioner can choose to remove the rear deck. The plans will have to be revised for the Zoning Board meeting.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to recommend to the Board of Appeals approval of the Special Permit Finding under Section 4.06(a) based upon the finding that it meets the criteria set out in the Zoning Ordinance subject to conditions set forth in the staff report.

Jeff Brown seconded the motion.

VOTE: 3-0 In favor

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to allow the petitioner to withdraw the request for a Variance under Sections 5.04 & 2.7(b).

Jeff Brown seconded the motion.

VOTE: 3-0 In favor

## CASE PENDING

**69 Grove Street;** Donald Mayer, President/Atrium School - Special Permit Finding, Special Permit & Variance

Jonathan Bockian, Arty, this is a preexisting nonconforming building located in I-3 district. There are 2 structures on the site, the metal structure will be torn down. The other commercial building of 28,520 s.f. will be converted in 2 phases, the existing loading docks will be taken down. The entire site is now paved. The parking area of 42 spaces will have 8 foot buffer, a variance is needed for a small area of 25 feet without the required buffer. The design of the site is based on children safety.

Donald Mayer, President, Atrium is a small independent school that for the last 18 years occupied the Brown School. The K-6 school has 113 students and we will add 7 and 8 grade in coming years, with a

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total of 150 students. The design of the playground and car separation from the children are very important.

Jim Newman, Chair of the Atrium School Building Committee, the building was formerly used as a warehouse. Cars will be entering from Crawford Street and exiting onto Grove Street. Half of the students get picked up after the end of the school, other throughout the afternoon. Cars will not pass through the play area. This is a more relaxed system than public schools, some children come in early and leave late, the school starts at 8:15 AM. We are trying to create a healthy environment for the students. Neighborhood meeting on Monday was attended by 40 people. Some residents expressed their concerns with the traffic, parking in the neighborhood, and traffic effect on the intersection of Arlington and Grove Streets. The traffic memo indicated that the total trips will be reduced but that the morning trips will increase by 50 cars. The traffic count was done before the holiday, additional count was done yesterday and today, but we do not have the final numbers yet. The site was underutilized and the neighborhood was used to lesser traffic... 100 families will have children attending the school and only about one third of the parents will come through the Arlington/Grove Street intersection.

Mary Crain, we have visited the site. The reduction of side yard setbacks will not hinder the emergency access. The loading docks will be demolished and much needed landscaping and improved drainage added. The neighborhood will benefit from the improvements. We are awaiting the traffic information, we want to make sure that it will not overwhelm the neighborhood. 33 parking spaces are required and 42 will be provided. HVAC units, existing and new, will have to be screened. Staff is in support of the proposal contingent on receiving the traffic report.

Jeff Brown, how many children are from Watertown? Are the areas that are not used sealed off? Will there be a security on the site?

Jim Newman, our primary concern is to contain the children within the site. We will have much better overview at this site than at our current location. 18-20% of the children are from Watertown, others from Jamaica Plain, Lexington, Arlington, Weston, etc. The areas not used will be closed off.

John Hawes, as an Atrium School parent for 5 years, there are times when there will be prolonged pick up and drop-off, and it will affect the neighborhood. Is there enough parking for the 22 faculty members?

Jim Newman, there will be 40 cars on the property at all times. We will make arrangements for additional parking during events, if needed.

Angie Kounelis, EWBA President, Town Councilor, we are delighted that the Atrium School is coming to East Watertown. We have been trying to secure state funding to rehab the Arlington/Grove Street intersection. Many parents will use this intersection to get to Crawford Street. During the neighborhood meeting, all neighbors spoke positively about this addition to our neighborhood. Some are concerned with security and lighting on the property. If the property is purchased by the school the Town will lose tax revenue.

Alan Shapiro, abutter, we are concerned with the traffic generated by the school. The school will have tremendous impact on the neighborhood.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta, as the school expands, can we ensure future parking?

Mary Crain, will the existing parking spaces cover future built-out?

Jonathan Bockian, the parking will be set up to accommodate future growth.

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John Hawes, the approval received tonight is for the project before the Boards now and includes some future expansion. I have worked on the Atrium School Building Committee and am delighted to see this proposal.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to recommend to the Board of Appeals approval of the Special Permit Finding under Section 4.06(a) based upon the finding that it meets the criteria set out in the Zoning Ordinance subject to conditions set forth in the staff report.

Jeff Brown seconded the motion.

VOTE: 3-0 In favor

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to recommend to the Board of Appeals approval of the Special Permit under Sections 5.00(f), 9.03 & 5.05(d) based upon the finding that it meets the criteria set out in the Zoning Ordinance subject to conditions set forth in the staff report.

Jeff Brown seconded the motion.

VOTE: 3-0 In favor

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to recommend to the Board of Appeals approval of the Variance under Sections 6.02(k) & 6.03(a) based upon the finding that it meets the criteria set out in the Zoning Ordinance subject to conditions set forth in the staff report.

Jeff Brown seconded the motion.

VOTE: 3-0 In favor

## CONTINUED CASE

### **230 Main Street; Francis X. Shea – Special Permit Finding**

Ken Leitner, Arty, the 16,250 s.f. property is located in T zone. Dr Shea purchased the property in 1973 and was granted variances to use the first floor as dental/medical offices with office storage in the barn. There are 3 dwelling units on the second floor. 2 years ago the attached barn caught fire and has not been used recently due to its condition. We are now looking for a special permit finding to replace one nonconforming use with other. A dormer is planned in the rear and a new connector will be built. We have appeared before the Historical Commission and they want to include the barn. The attached residence will be built in colonial style and additional dwelling unit added. A new handicapped dental office entrance will be added.

Mary Crain, the staff reviewed the plans. The design was approved by the Historical Commission. This is an appropriate change. There will be a sufficient screening to block the abutting properties from the parking area.

Ken Leitner, we met with the abutters and will replace the stockade fence with vinyl fence to protect the neighbors from the lights. The property consists of two lots, together it has a unique L-shape.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to recommend to the Board of Appeals approval of the Special Permit Finding under Section 4.06(a)(e) based upon the finding that it meets the criteria set out in the Zoning Ordinance subject to conditions set forth in the staff report and with additional condition #7 that the petitioner will provide additional fencing around the rear parking area..

Jeff Brown seconded the motion.

VOTE: 3-0 In favor

### OTHER

Mary Crain, there is a question regarding the zoning placed on the Phillips Church lot at 111 Mount Auburn Street. The lot is divided into LB (Limited Business) in the front and SC (Single Family Conversion) in the rear. Typically, we do not split parcels. The Zoning Enforcement Officer is seeking determination by the Planning Board. The Church would prefer if the entire lot was in LB district.

John Hawes, the sketch does not seem to be accurate. Dimensions would help with the determination.

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Curtis Whitney, the Church feels that the entire property should be in the LB district. Based on the existing map showing that the intent was to have the entire property in LB district. We are entertaining offers on the tenancy, which would help the Church with their finances. It is important that the zoning is clear.

Mary Crain, what is the nature of potential tenants?

Curtis Whitney, the interested parties are yoga studio and children's studio. An antenna company would like to place antennas inside the steeple. Any proposal would come in front of the Boards.

Greg Watson, it is appropriate for the Planning Board to make the determination. After reviewing the sketches, it is clear that LB was intended.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned that it is the determination of the Planning Board that the entire property at 111 Mt.Auburn Street is located in LB district.

Jeff Brown seconded the motion.

VOTE: 3-0 In favor

Chairman John Hawes adjourned the meeting at 8:35 PM.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:35 PM MINUTES  
APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

For more detailed Minutes see tapes dated 1/11/06 available in the DCD&P office.