



**TOWN OF WATERTOWN**  
**Zoning Board of Appeals**  
Administration Building  
149 Main Street  
WATERTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS 02472

Melissa M. Santucci Rozzi, Chairperson  
David Ferris, Clerk  
Christopher H. Heep, Member  
John G. Gannon, Member  
Kelly Donato, Member  
Neeraj Chander, Alternate Member

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MINUTES

On Wednesday evening, **July 27, 2014** at 7:00 p.m. in the Richard E. Mastrangelo Council Chamber on the second floor of the Administration Building, the Zoning Board of Appeals held a public hearing. In attendance: Melissa Santucci Rozzi, *Chair*; David Ferris, *Member*; John G. Gannon, *Member*; Kelly Donato, *Member*; Neeraj Chander, *Alternate Member*. Also Present: Steve Magoon, Director, Community Development & Planning; Gideon Schreiber, Mike Mena, Louise Civetti. Absent: Christopher H. Heep, *Member*.

Chair Santucci Rozzi opened the meeting, introduced the board and staff and swore in the audience.

**Member Ferris read the legal notice for Item #1**, however, the applicant asked to postpone the item since his architect had not arrived yet. The Chair stated that the Board would move on to Item #2 on the Agenda and come back to Item #1 afterward.

**Member Ferris read the legal notice for Item #2:**

"4-6 Sexton Street

Walter T. Ciccolo, 11 Maple Circle, Newton, MA 02458, herein requests the Zoning Board of Appeals grant a Special Permit in accordance with Watertown Zoning Ordinance §9.05; Special Permit: Conditions for Approval and in accordance with §5.05: Notes to Table of Dimensional Regulations where the FAR greater than .50, so as to raze existing two-family structure to construct a new two-family with an FAR of .625, requiring a Special Permit. T (Two-Family) Zoning District ZBA-2014-016-SP."

Mr. Paul Bernard, representative and responsible contractor for the project described the project before the board as a demolition of an existing two-family dwelling and the construction of a new two-family dwelling. He also stated that project had been reviewed by planning and zoning staff consisting of many project revisions. The project had also been reviewed by the Historical Commission. The applicant is happy with the currently proposed project.

Member Gannon stated that the area has been neglected in the past and a new project would only enhance the area.

Member Ferris asked whether the trees shown on the plans would be retained; whether the landscaping shown on either side of the driveways would be implemented; asked for clarification regarding the architectural treatment, "faux" canopy as shown on a revised plan would be constructed; and lastly, asked what the public improvements would be along the frontage of the property (i.e., sidewalk, curb/gutter).

Mr. Bernard stated that there was a condition to retain the trees and he would retain and preserve them to the maximum extent possible. He also confirmed that all the landscaping shown on the plan would be provided and that the faux canopy over each entryway would be constructed.

Town Staff stated that the town's ordinances require sidewalk, curb, gutter, and planting strip in front of all new development; however, given the narrowness of the existing street the requirement would be subject to the Department of Public Works (DPW) discretion.

Chair Santucci Rozzi wanted to clarify that the project is only related to a Special Permit for a two-family with a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) greater than 0.5 and what the proposed FAR would be.

Mr. Bernard and Planning Staff stated that the proposed FAR would be 0.58.

The Chair also stated that the landscape plan submitted should be revised and a professionally prepared plan should be submitted to staff. Member Gannan also requested that a plan be submitted to show the details of the improvements to be made along the frontage of the property. Chair Santucci Rozzi went on to ask about the zoning analysis table information not filled out on the application; whether the dry-wells shown on the plans were for roof drainage; asked about the lack of details for the dry-wells; and, asked about the grading, retain wall heights, and protection to ensure vehicles would not drive over the retaining walls at the end of the driveways.

Mr. Bernard stated that he already has a landscape plan being prepared and would submit a copy to staff for their review. Town Staff indicated that the plans prepared had sufficient information to conduct a zoning analysis and therefore, the table on the application was not necessary.

Mr. Bernard went on to state that the dry-wells would meet standard engineering requirements and be sized sufficiently to meet all drainage and holding capacities.

Chair Santucci Rozzi asked that the permit be conditioned that a detail plan be submitted for the dry-wells and that barriers be placed appropriately at/along the retaining walls for safety, as needed. Planning Staff stated that the condition limiting the length of the driveways may also help address any safety concerns the Board may have.

Member Gannon asked whether Sexton Street was a Public or Private Street and was additionally concerned about the delivery and placement of the pre-fabricated home to the site given the narrowness of the street.

Mr. Bernard and Staff indicated that there would be up to 5 "boxes" or sections of the home delivered to the site. The "boxes" would be retained at an off-site location and delivered one by one during a single day. Staff also clarified that a police detail would be required to address traffic and circulation during the delivery of the "boxes."

Chair Santucci Rozzi then opened the meeting for Public Comment.

Maria Stanizzi of 58 Cottage Street (abutter) spoke regarding the concern of parking for the future occupants of the new two-family dwelling and stated that the street is currently impacted by parking from tenants of non-occupied homes in the area. Ms. Stanizzi also stated that she had a hard time understanding the plotting of the new house and driveways and wanted to know what FAR meant.

The Chair and Town Staff confirmed that the amount of parking proposed for the site met the town's requirement. Mr. Bernard showed the proposed plans to Ms. Stanizzi explaining the parking provided on-site. Chair Santucci Rozzi went on to explain the definition of FAR and how it is applied.

Councilmember Kounelis spoke on the project, stating that she supports development which would enhance the area without impacting abutters. The councilmember went on to reiterate the concerns regarding the delivery of the prefabricated home given the steepness and narrowness of the street and her concerns regarding parking. The councilmember wished everyone road bikes but that it was not a reality. The councilmember also stated that the town could not guarantee that the units would remain owner occupied.

The Chair asked and Staff confirmed that there was sufficient parking provided to meet the town regulations.

Chair Santucci Rozzi closed the Public Hearing, noting there was no one else wishing to speak. The Chair restated the additional conditions to: require and new/revised landscape plan, preserve the trees on-site, submit plans detailing the proposed dry-wells, provide a public improvement plan for the frontage of the property, and that a barrier or rail be placed on the retaining walls for safety, as needed.

Member Farris motioned for approval of the project with the stated conditions. Member Gannon seconded the motion.

The Board voted and the project was approved with a 5-0-0 vote.



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#### **Member Ferris read the legal notice:**

"11 Yukon Avenue

Eben Kunz, Kunz Associates, 38 Greenwich Pk., Boston, MA 02118, for owner, George Ford, herein requests the Zoning Board of Appeals grant a Special Permit Finding in accordance with Watertown Zoning Ordinance §4.06(a), Alterations to Non-Conforming Structure; Front and Side Yard Setbacks, so as to construct a third floor dormer, within the existing 10 foot Front Yard setback, and the existing Westerly 12 foot Side Yard setback. The required Front Yard Setback is 20 feet, and the required Side Yard setback is 25 feet. I-1 (Industrial) Zoning District. ZBA-2014-15"

Mr. Kunz, representative of the owner and architect for the project, stated that the proposal is to construct a 3<sup>rd</sup> floor dormer in order to allow more living space and enhance the character of the existing dwelling.

Member Ferris asked whether the siding and windows would match the existing dwelling and, whether there was currently sufficient parking on-site.

Mr. Kunz confirmed that the new materials would match those of the existing dwelling and that there was an existing driveway and parking area on the site.

Chair Santucci Rozzi wanted to confirm that the Special Permit Finding was only related to the change to the structure within the non-conforming setbacks and was not a change to the use. Staff confirmed that the use was not changing and the Finding was only for the modification to the structure.

Councilmember Kounelis spoke on the proposal stating that she, again, commends property owners who want to enhance their property so long as it does not impact neighbors or the neighborhood in general. The Councilmember also asked if the improvement would require additional parking. Staff responded that the proposal would not require additional parking.

Dennis Duff, resident of Watertown, asked what the square footage of living space would be on the attic floor and asked whether it exceeded the town ordinance, remembering that there was a limit on square footage (50%?).

Chair Santucci Rozzi responded that there was approximately 650 square feet proposed on the upper floor with the exception of a bathroom, closet space, stairs, and area for mechanical equipment. Staff stated that there was a calculation for a "half-story" however, the fact that the site is in an Industrial Zoning District it did not come into play with the current project.

Chair Santucci Rozzi read into the record a letter received from an abutting neighbor which reflected support of the project. The Chair requested a condition that the parking be verified prior to issuance of a Building Permit.

Member Ferris motioned to approve the project with the added condition. Member Donato seconded the motion.

The Board voted and the project was approved with a 5-0-0 vote.



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#### **Member Ferris read the legal notice:**

“570 Arsenal Street

570 Arsenal Street: William McQuillan, Manager, BP Watertown Hotel, LLC, 800 Boylston Street, Suite 1390, Boston, MA 02199, herein requests the Zoning Board of Appeals grant a Special Permit with Site Plan Review in accordance with Watertown Zoning Ordinance §9.03, §9.05, §9.06 and subject to §5.01.1(i), Hotel Use, and §5.03(12), so as to raze former Saab Dealership to construct a 6-story, 148 room hotel with 121 parking spaces. I-1 (Industrial) Zoning District. ZBA-2014-17”

Bill McQuillan, Owner and Developer, provided a brief history of the project site and the intent to build a Marriot Residence Inn hotel. Mr. McQuillan stated that he had been working with staff since spring 2013 and a zoning amendment was recently approved to permit a hotel to move forward through the Zoning Board of Appeals process. The design of the project was developed with community input at neighborhood meetings and with staff. The proposed project was modified after the Planning Board meeting per their request to eliminate two stacked parking spaces and increased landscaping and storm water management per staff comments.

The applicant's project team of architects, engineers and traffic consultants went through the project in more detail.

Town Council President, stated that he and the town were anxious about getting a hotel for the town and that the use would be a benefit to its residents and business. He also stated that he hopes the Board would look favorably on the proposed hotel project.

Councilmembers Cecilia Link and Steve Corbett, also spoke in support of the project and hoped for a positive approval.

Dennis Duff, resident of Watertown, stated that he felt this was a good project but need a bit more tweeking. Mr. Duff had concern regarding the long façade of the building given recent projects and discussion before the Board. Mr. Duff also inquired how people would locate the entrance to the site off

of Elm Street when they would be coming from Arsenal Street, requested wider sidewalks, more accessible parking spaces, and inquired whether the building would be a “green” rated building.

Councilmember Angie Kounelis spoke in favor of the project, but also wanted her concerns regarding the intersection of Arlington and Elm Street answered/addressed and would like to see the meeting room of the hotel open for public use.

Board Member Donato, asked whether the driveway onto Arsenal Street from the project would be a right turn only, what type of fencing would be separating from the adjacent residential property, and also requested a condition that trash only be picked up between 7am and 5pm. Board Member Gannon, asked a follow up, as to whether the property owner attempted to purchase the adjacent residential property.

Mr. McQuillan stated that they have coordinated with the adjacent owner and will put appropriate fencing at the property line and that the adjacent owner, when previously approached, was unwilling to sell the property.

Board Member Farris, asked several questions related to the overhead wires along the project frontage, the easement along the rear of the property with the Gym-It lot, material of the roof screening, and the appropriateness of two parking spaces as you enter the site from Arsenal Street.

Mr. McQuillan responded, saying that he is working with the town to place the utility wires below grade along the frontage of the proposed development and is further working with the Town to work on placing the utilities below grade for the remainder of Arsenal Street, but that is a much bigger effort with other property owners. A pending issue. He also stated that the easement was to provide through access to Arlington Street and that there would be a retaining wall to provide for an at grade drive isle through the easement location. Mr. McQuillan also proposed a solution to the parking spaces, that they be coned off and only be used if necessary. Finally, he clarified that the roof screen would be of a metal material to match the building.

Board Member Gannon, stated that he thought the proposed hotel was a good project and follow up with a few questions/comments. Member Gannon asked where the hotel would be “pulling” its clientele from, whether they would be offering shuttle service to Harvard Square and the airport, whether the restaurant on the top floor would be open to the public and, stated that the more the use is open to the public, the better. Member Gannon also inquired whether the project would be LEED Rated, if they intended to lease cellular space on the building, way finding signage for site entry, and asked about the properties to the rear known as Sawins Pond.

Mr. McQuillan responded that the clientele would be from local business, visitors to the various universities, and those seeking accommodations outside the city (wide variety of clientele). He stated that shuttle service would be to Harvard Square but was not including the airport at this point. He also clarified that there was to be no restaurant at the site and that the upper floor space would be for guests only and serve drinks and small plates/food. Mr. McQuillan also stated that he does intend for the building to be “Green” but not sure what rating level the building would be, at this point in time. He also stated that there would be way finding signage.

Staff responded to the question of the Sawins Pond properties and that that owner was working to clean up the site and would be coming to the town for a proposal at some point.

Member Gannon also expressed concern regarding the long stone façade along the southerly elevation of the building. After a full discussion regarding the elevation it was recommended to condition that a significant amount of planters be placed along the building at this location to soften the façade.

Chair Santucci Rozzi asked several questions regarding stacked parking, room rates, whether a sight-line analysis had been done as part of the traffic study, the material of curbing along the project frontage, and participated in the previous discussion regarding planters along the southerly elevation of the building.

Mr. McQuillan stated that the remaining stacked parking spaces would be primarily for employees. The developer's traffic consultant explained that a sightline analysis was done and the project would be safe for both pedestrian and vehicles. He stated that he would supply staff with the study in response to the Chair's request for information.

Member Gannon asked about the parking and whether it would be sufficient. Mr. McQuillan explained the detailed study done to show parking was sufficient and was done as part of the recent zoning amendment for hotel uses.

Chair Santucci Rozzi inquired on the signage proposed and whether it met town regulations. Mr. McQuillan explained that the signage would require a zoning amendment and he would be working with the town on that. Staff explained that current regulation only would permit a total of 2 signs with a total square footage of 200 and only be permitted at 20 feet high or less.

The Chair repeated the specific conditioned and asked to be included in any approval of the project and noting them as: roof top equipment screening, no EAP agreements with the state, allow the public to reserve the hotel's meeting room, provide a snow storage plan, provide a sightline traffic analysis, mimic the traffic monitoring conditions of 202/204 Arsenal Projects, limit trash pick up to 7am-5pm, and increase the amount of planter(s) on the southerly building elevation (at back of sidewalk).

Member Ferris motioned to approve the project with stated conditions and Member Gannon seconded the motion. **The Board voted and the project was approved with a 5-0 vote.**

**Chair Santucci Rozzi noted the last item on the agenda has been continued at the Planning board and will not be heard tonight – 21 North Beacon Street.**

Member Ferris motioned to adjourn. Member Gannon seconded. **Voted 5-0 to adjourn at 9:30 p.m.**