

**City of Schenectady
Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
May 26, 2021**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Wallinger called the meeting to order at 5:41 p.m.

Due to the closure of City Hall because of the Covid-19 Virus, the meeting was conducted online via WebEx.

II. ATTENDANCE

PRESENT: Mary Moore Wallinger, Chair; Bradley Lewis, Vice Chair; Ryan Bailey; Randall Beach; Richard Ferro; Andrew Healey; Jason Bogdanowicz-Wilson; Christine Primiano, Principal Planner; Andrew Koldin, Corporation Counsel, Jennifer Mills, Secretary

III. CONFLICT OF INTEREST CHECK

Commissioners Healey and Ferro recused themselves from Item A, the A.M. Johnson application.

Commissioner Beach recused himself from Item B, the Highbridge Broadway LLC Application.

IV. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

None.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. A.M. JOHNSON requests site plan approval pursuant to Section 264-90 M of a proposal to operate a church at 1130 Third Avenue, tax parcel # 49.46-3-22.1, located in an “R-2” Two Family Residential District.

A.M. Johnson presented the proposal.

Commissioner Wallinger briefly reviewed the conditions for site plan approval that had been discussed at the previous week’s Commission meeting. Ms. Johnson stated that she appreciated having until 2023 to complete the sidewalk installation as she had recently obtained some estimates for the work and was concerned that she would not immediately be able to afford it. The Commissioners indicated that they had no objections to Ms. Johnson’s application.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

Seeing no members of the public who wished to speak Commissioner Wallinger closed the public hearing.

SITE PLAN APPROVAL

Motion by Commissioner Beach, seconded by Commissioner Lewis, to accept the proposal with the following conditions:

1. The address will be prominently displayed so that it is easily visible from Third Avenue.
2. Metal roll gates and/or iron bars cannot be installed on any doors or windows at any time in the future.
3. An occupancy limit must be determined by the Office of Code Enforcement.
4. Sidewalks surrounding the site are in poor condition. The sidewalks will be replaced to City standards and a permit must be obtained from the Engineering Department prior to doing the work. The sidewalks will be replaced by July 1, 2023.
5. As noted on the revised site plan, the asphalt that runs along orchard street will be removed, a five-foot strip of grass will be planted, and a five-foot sidewalk to City Code will be installed. In addition to the grass, four (4) large shade trees, evenly spaced, will be planted in the five-foot grass utility strip. The work will be completed with the sidewalk replacement, by July 1, 2023.
6. If the plans for the signage differ from an A-Frame portable sign, not to exceed six square feet, and lettering on the window, not to exceed 20% of each window, the applicant will submit the sign proposal to the City Planner for final approval prior to purchase and fabrication of the sign.

Motion carried unanimously, with Commissioners Ferro and Healey recusing themselves from the vote.

B. HIGHBRIDGE BROADWAY, LLC requests site plan approval pursuant to Section 264-90 I of a proposal to construct a 5-story office building at 356 Broadway, tax parcel # 49.23-2-4.112, 4.3, and 17.1, located in a “C-4” Downtown Commercial District.

John Roth of Highbridge Broadway, LLC, Luigi Palleschi of ABD Engineers, and Luigi Stocchetti of Re4orm Architecture presented the proposal.

Mr. Roth gave a brief overview of the project. Mr. Palleschi then reviewed the site plan details, and Mr. Stocchetti reviewed the building design and elevations. It was noted that the building is set back from the street wall with parking in front of it because of contamination in the ground along the front edge of the site. Mr. Roth stated that they would be seeking area variances for the increased building setback and parking

at the front of the building. Ms. Primiano noted that obtaining the variances should be a condition of site plan approval.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

Seeing no members of the public who wished to speak Commissioner Wallinger closed the public hearing.

The Commissioners discussed the proposed landscaping and it was determined that some taller street trees should be added to the front of the site, and that a different species of shrub should be substituted for the proposed burning bushes, which are highly invasive.

The Commissioners indicated that they did not have any major objections to the plan and it was decided that conditional site plan approval could be granted, with the applicants submitting final revised plans showing the changes discussed at the meeting to City Planner Primiano for final review and approval. It was noted that site plan approval would be conditioned on the City Engineer reviewing and approving the final plans.

SEQR RESOLUTION

Motion by Commissioner Lewis, seconded by Commissioner Ferro, to accept the Negative Declaration.

Motion carried unanimously.

SITE PLAN APPROVAL

Motion by Commissioner Ferro, seconded by Commissioner Wilson, to accept the proposal with the following conditions:

1. The City Engineer must approve the final revised site plans prior to the issuance of building permits.
2. The lot reorganization must be filed prior to the issuance of building permits.
3. The applicants must obtain the necessary area variances from the Board of Zoning Appeals.
4. The final revised site plan, including all changes discussed at the meeting, will be submitted to the City Planner for final approval prior to the issuance of building permits. The plans will include the final landscape design details as discussed at the meeting.
5. If during the course of construction any changes to the approved site plan become necessary the applicant will return to the City Planner for review of the changes, and if the changes are deemed significant enough, they will return to the Planning Commission for further site plan review.

Motion carried unanimously, with Commissioner Beach recusing himself from the vote.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS

The Commissioners discussed the issue of sidewalk replacement in the City and the possibility of the City offering some sort of financial assistance to property owners who must replace their sidewalks. It was determined that Commissioner Wallinger will reach out to the City Council regarding the subject.

VII. MOTION TO ADJOURN

Motion by Commissioner Ferro, seconded by Commissioner Healey, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried unanimously, with Commissioner Beach absent from the vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:42 p.m.