

**City of Schenectady
Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
February 20, 2019**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Wallinger called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

II. ATTENDANCE

PRESENT: Mary Moore Wallinger, Chair; Bradley Lewis, Vice Chair; Ryan Bailey; Kimberly Case; Evan Euripidou; Richard Ferro; Andrew Healey; Jason Bogdanowicz-Wilson; Christine Primiano, Principal Planner; Andrew Koldin, Assistant Corporation Counsel

EXCUSED: Randall Beach

III. CONFLICT OF INTEREST CHECK

Commissioners Wallinger and Lewis recused themselves from voting on Old Business Item A, the Union College application.

IV. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion by Commissioner Ferro, seconded by Commissioner Healey, to accept the Minutes of the January 16, 2019 meeting as submitted.

Motion carried unanimously.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. ROBERT GREGOR requests site plan approval pursuant to Section 264-90 M of a proposal to operate the Stockade Inn at 1 North Church Street and 18 Union Street, tax parcel # 39.63-1-41.1 and 39.63-3-7 respectively, located in an "RH-2" Stockade Historic Residential District.

Robert Gregor presented the proposal.

Mr. Gregor explained that he owns and runs several other small hotels in Maine and Lake George. He stated that he does not plan to make any changes to the business, including keeping the current staff. Mr. Gregor noted that he had received a copy of City Planner Primiano's staff notes, and while he has no objection to immediately replanting the parking buffer and trimming some of the landscaping, he would like to request some extra time to observe the current plantings and formulate a new overall landscaping plan. Commissioner Wallinger stated that this would be acceptable. Ms. Primiano explained that major changes to the landscaping may not be necessary, but her primary concerns are the

parking buffer and foundation plantings around the Inn, which appear to need some trimming and maintenance.

Commissioner Euripidou commented that the Stockade Association is working on a design guideline plan for the Stockade and that they are currently in the process of applying for grants for the project. Commissioner Wallinger noted that the driveway apron and transition area need repair or replacement. She noted that perhaps Mr. Gregor would like to wait and see what the Stockade guidelines and possible funding sources are before completing the repairs. Ms. Primiano agreed that this would be acceptable. Commissioner Case stated that Mr. Gregor should address the landscaping around the kitchen entrance and delivery area to create a better screening of the area from the street. Mr. Gregor agreed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

SITE PLAN APPROVAL

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

1. The address will be prominently displayed so that it is easily visible from North Church Street.
2. Metal roll gates and iron bars cannot be installed on any doors or windows at any time in the future.
3. The dumpsters will be properly enclosed so that they are screened from public view. The applicant will submit the dumpster enclosure plans for review and approval by the Historic District Commission. The dumpsters must be enclosed by June 1, 2019.
4. The applicant will submit a landscaping and tree planting plan to the Historic District Commission for approval prior to upgrading the green spaces. All landscaping improvements will be completed by October 15, 2019.
5. Certificate of Use and Public Assembly Licenses issued by Code Enforcement are required prior to operating the business.
6. If it is not part of the Stockade Streetscape plan, the driveway apron and transition area will be replaced with new concrete, according to City standards, by October 15, 2019. A permit must be obtained prior to beginning the work.

Motion carried unanimously.

- B. DAWN TAYLOR requests site plan approval pursuant to Section 264-90 M of a proposal to operate a barber shop at 128 Erie Boulevard, tax parcel # 39.79-1-10, located in a “C-4” Downtown Commercial District.**

Dawn Taylor presented the proposal.

Ms. Taylor explained that she plans to move her business that she has owned for ten years, the Wedgeway Barber Shop, to this location so that she can expand and add another chair and more employees. She stated that the shop has been in business for almost one hundred years at the current location, but at this time she feels that she must expand and move to remain a viable business.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

SITE PLAN APPROVAL

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

1. The address shall remain prominently displayed so that it is easily visible from Erie Boulevard.
2. Metal roll gates and iron bars cannot be installed on any doors or windows at any time in the future.
3. The proposed exterior attached and window signs are approved as submitted.
4. The trash bins that are currently stored on the side of the building will be moved and stored at the rear of the building to comply with Section 264-49G (1).
5. The applicant will submit a copy of each license of all licensed professionals that will be working at this location to be kept on file in the City Planning office.

Motion carried unanimously.

C. ANJU SUKHAI requests site plan approval pursuant to Section 264-90 M of a proposal to operate a wine and liquor store at 844 Albany Street, tax parcel # 49.33-4-12, located in a “C-2” Mixed Use Commercial District.

Anju Sukhai presented the proposal.

Ms. Sukhai explained that she would like to open a wine and liquor store at this location, which was previously a barber shop. She stated that she does not plan to make any changes to the exterior of the building except to paint the façade and install the planter suggested by City Planner Primiano. Ms. Sukhai presented the proposed sign design and stated that she is not yet certain what the size of the sign will be, but that it will be smaller than the maximum allowed.

Ms. Primiano noted that because there is a step down immediately outside the front door, which is not allowed, Code Enforcement might require the installation of a 5' by 5' concrete landing. Commissioner Wallinger asked what the proposed hours of operation are. Ms. Sukhai stated that she would like to be open from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday and noon to 6 p.m. on Sunday.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Rev Philip Grigsby of Schenectady Inner City Ministries, which is located across the street from the property, spoke in opposition to the proposal. He stated that due to the lack of on-site parking the liquor store patrons would inevitably try to park in SICM's lot, which they cannot afford to secure. He added that he does not believe that a liquor store would be the type of business that would be a positive addition to the neighborhood.

Ms. Lois Mitchell, representing the Duryee Memorial AME Church, which is located around the corner from the property, spoke in opposition to the proposal. She stated that since a previous liquor store in the area had closed and other new development had taken place the neighborhood conditions had markedly improved. She explained that having a new liquor store open would result in a significant step backward for the neighborhood. She also noted the potential problems with increased littering, loitering, and traffic that a liquor store would bring.

Leonard Van Slyke, also representing the church, spoke in opposition to the proposal, echoing Ms. Mitchell's concerns.

Greg Davenport, Trustee of Duryee Memorial, also spoke in opposition to the proposal, stating that a liquor store would have a major negative impact on the neighborhood.

Seeing no further members of the public who wished to speak, Commissioner Wallinger closed the public hearing. Commissioner Wallinger noted that a liquor store is an allowed use in this zoning district, and thus the Commission cannot prevent the business just because it will sell wine and liquor. The Commissioners discussed the proposal at length, with Commissioner Bailey stating that he believes that the business would have enough of a negative impact on the area to allow it to be denied on site plan issues alone. Commissioner Case agreed. The other Commissioners expressed that since it is an allowable use, they did not feel that denying the proposal was an option if all site plan issues are addressed. Ms. Primiano noted that the Commission could require that the applicant work with City staff and the Police Department on a lighting and security plan. The Commissioners agreed that this should be required.

SITE PLAN APPROVAL

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

1. The address will remain prominently displayed so that it is easily visible from Albany Street.
2. Metal roll gates and iron bars cannot be installed on any doors or windows at any time in the future.
3. Pursuant to Section 264-49 G, all refuse will be stored at the rear of the building and will be properly enclosed and all cardboard and other refuse must be kept within that enclosure at all times. If a dumpster is needed, the applicant will submit the plans for the dumpster enclosure to the City Planner for final approval prior to installation. The enclosure will be installed by May 1, 2019.
4. The final sign design, size, and location will be submitted to the City Planner for approval prior to the purchase and installation of the sign.
5. The façade will be repainted and matching siding will be installed by May 1, 2019.
6. The applicant will provide a large planter to the right of the front entrance. The planter will be planted with evergreen shrubbery that will remain green and will be maintained year-round.
7. The abandoned projecting sign pole will be entirely removed from the building prior to the opening of the business.
8. The applicant will work with City staff and the Schenectady Police Department on a plan for security cameras and lighting for the property. The cameras and lighting will be installed by May 1, 2019.

Motion carried, with Commissioners Wallinger and Bailey opposed.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. UNION COLLEGE requests revised site plan approval pursuant to Section 264-90 M of a proposal to redevelop the property at 631-645 Nott Street to operate the Union College Campus Safety facility, tax parcel # 39.58-1-11&13, located in a “C-2” Mixed Use Commercial District.

Because Commissioners Wallinger and Lewis recused themselves from the consideration of this item, Commissioner Wilson led the discussion.

Loren Rucinski, Director of Facilities and Planning for Union College, and Emily Kohout of Architecture+ presented the proposal. Ms. Kohout reviewed the revised elevation drawings and highlighted the design

changes that had been made to address the Commissioners' concerns at the January 2019 meeting.

The Commissioners agreed that the revisions improved the appearance of the exterior and brought the design into compliance with the design guidelines. Commissioner Wilson thanked the applicants for addressing the Commissioners' concerns and for working with the Commission and City staff to formulate an acceptable design.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

REVISED SITE PLAN APPROVAL

Motion by Commissioner Healey, seconded by Commissioner Euripidou, to accept the proposal as submitted.

Motion carried unanimously, with Commissioners Wallinger and Lewis recusing themselves from the vote.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by Commissioner Wilson, seconded by Commissioner Bailey, to open the Executive Session.

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Commissioner Wilson, seconded by Commissioner Bailey, to close the Executive Session.

Motion carried unanimously.

VIII. MOTION TO ADJOURN

Motion by Commissioner Euripidou, seconded by Commissioner Wilson, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.