

**MINUTES**  
**ST. ALBANS CITY DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NO. MAIN ST.**  
**6:30 PM MONDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2021**

*Approved 9.7.2022*

**Board Members Present:** Rebecca Pfeiffer, Chair (Zoom); Denis LaPointe, Vice Chair (Zoom); Dick Thayer; Tanner McCuin (Zoom).

**Board Members Absent:** Emily Biron; Matthew Preedom.

**Staff Present:** Chip Sawyer, Planning and Development Director; Sara Gabaree, Property Services Manager; Angela Bernard, Minute Taker.

**Members of the Public Present:** Robert Farrar; Marty Manahan (Zoom); Mark Williams (Zoom); Thomas Johnson (Zoom).

A. **OPEN MEETING - R. Pfeiffer called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.**

1. Pledge of Allegiance - pledge was recited
2. Assignment of Alternate(s) - none
3. Consider any additions or deletions to agenda - none

B. **DEVELOPMENT REVIEW SEGMENT – PUBLIC HEARINGS**

1. **Case #2021-015 / Blue Bear LLC / 90 Fairfield Street / Parcel # 14031090.** Applicant seeks Sketch Plan Review. This property is located in the High-Density Residential Zoning District.

**R. Pfeiffer opened the hearing at 6:35 PM.**

R. Pfeiffer introduced the case and asked if there were any conflicts of interest from the board. None were noted.

**R. Pfeiffer administered the oath.**

S. Gabaree introduced the application and entered the city staff report into the record.

S. Gabaree explained that the applicant wishes to take the lot at 90 Fairfield Street and subdivide it into three lots. S. Gabaree reported that the applicant has not given the city an updated plan and that the plan they received is several years old (from 2016) and outdated. There are several things missing from the plan as presented, including an updated list of abutters. Accurate property markers are also not present. S. Gabaree

reviewed the city's case about potential issues with the property, the proposed lots, and the plans as presented.

R. Pfeiffer opened the floor for questions for city staff from the board. She expressed gratitude for the review of the outstanding issues and said it was helpful. R. Pfeiffer then asked if the city had already alerted the applicant to the issues. S. Gabaree explained that the city staff report was sent to the applicant with noted concerns ahead of time.

R. Pfeiffer invited the applicant to testify.

M. Williams testified on his own behalf. He explained that there is one building on his lot and he would like to divide it into three lots.

R. Pfeiffer asked the board if they had any questions for the applicant. D. LaPointe noted that the applicant said he doesn't have any planned construction at this time, but D. LaPointe expressed that the plans as he sees them shows that there is. He asked the applicant if he was prepared to go back and address the issues in the city staff report.

D. Lapointe then mentioned that it would be helpful to have a plan that is more recent than 2016. M. Williams said if it's required, he would do that. He explained that the plans would have to have been started over completely and would require a new site survey, which he could do it, but it would be expensive.

R. Pfeiffer said for the board to approve the plan, it would have to be compliant with city rules and regulations. She said her concern is the existing conditions that are currently attached to the property, including fencing. She said the board would not be able to move it forward because it is not compliant with existing regulations and would have several issues that would need to be resolved. M. Williams said some of the requirements listed on it have been addressed since the plans were drawn up.

R. Pfeiffer asked how the applicant wants to move forward. M. Williams said he would do whatever was easiest and asked the board what he should do. R. Pfeiffer said he would have to decide.

D. Thayer brought up parking for the building. He said the existing building has five units, each of which have a required number of parking spots, and he said the plans that have been presented do not take into account the number of parking spots that would be necessary and required. M. Williams said the plans as presented show buildings but that there are actually no buildings being proposed as of right now, the plan is just to show the lot lines.

D. LaPointe then noted that, currently, all vehicles for the lot pull into and out of Fairfield Street, but this plan shows it on an adjoining street. C. Sawyer said the current condition for the site that has all traffic in and out of the lot using Fairfield Street is linked to the previous approval, but that if a new lot is approved, it would change. Only the current building and lot are required to exit onto Fairfield Street.

C. Sawyer said the issue would be how to disentangle the site's current, approved plan from a possible approval of the subdivision plan. He recommended a hearing that would address the site plan approval and the rewriting of the existing rules. He said it should be a form from the applicant that lays out his plans for both - how he wants to subdivide and how he wants to address the existing rules. C. Sawyer said it's possible. It would take time but is not something that can be done with the proposed plan as presented for this meeting.

R. Pfeiffer said she wants to see a plan that shows exactly what he wants. She recommended he work with the city and with S. Gabaree to come up with an updated site plan. Then they could warn a new meeting to address all issues. She recommended the board recess this hearing and re-warn it. C. Sawyer said if it's recessed it wouldn't have to be re-warned.

R. Pfeiffer pointed out that the fact that this is a sketch plan approval request and not a site plan approval request means there are no binding decisions that the board would have to make at this meeting.

D. Thayer said he thought they could approve the sketch plan as a rough plan and that would give the applicant six months to come back and show he has corrected all outstanding issues and show that he has enough parking planned. At that point the applicant could then come back with a site plan for approval.

R. Pfeiffer said they could provide a preliminary review and then he could come back. She suggested going through all the existing rules for the property and document reconsiderations.

R. Pfeiffer asked M. Williams if this is how he wants to proceed, with preliminary recommendations. C. Sawyer said staff is always happy to work with the applicant but that one thing they want to see is a refreshed sketch plan but that so far there has been no effort put into revising the plan from 2016.

R. Pfeiffer asked the board if they were ok with doing preliminary recommendations for the sketch plan and then considering a revised site plan in the future. D. Lapointe noted that the city has already done a lot of the work in pointing out where the changes are needed.

The board agreed to issue preliminary sketch approval with conditions.

R. Pfeiffer then recommended exiting the sketch plan phase for this application at this meeting, since none of the comments they would make are binding for this phase. The applicant can then take the recommendations to update the site plan.

R. Pfeiffer opened the floor to public comment.

R. Farrar commented that he wants to secure his right to speak on this issue at future hearings. He expects to be present in the future and he agreed that the plan as presented so far is deficient.

M. Manahan commented that it is an incomplete application at this point. He said he only received notification on front porch forum and asked if notifications by certified mail had gone out to abutters. He said he didn't receive a notice in the mail. S. Gabaree said yes, the notices were mailed out by certified mail.

M. Manahan said the plans and the story for the property change often. He said the previous owner tried to subdivide and wasn't allowed to, and he wants to know what if anything has changed and what the endgame for the property is. Will it be owner occupied? Will it be sold off? He said he plans to attend future meetings on this property and issue as well.

T. Johnson said he received his abutter's letter and was checking in to see what it was about.

R. Pfeiffer moved forward with the plan to close the sketch plan and offer preliminary determinations from the board.

**R. Pfeiffer closed the hearing at 7:19 PM.**

#### C. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Discuss 2022 Meeting and Application Schedule - C. Sawyer reviewed the meeting schedule as presented and explained there are three dates with potential issues because the first Monday of the month falls on a holiday (for example, July 4th). C. Sawyer told the board they would have to come up with alternative dates.

D. Thayer asked what other days of the week the city council chamber is available. It was decided that Wednesdays are good days and the council chamber is free then, and all 2022 meetings that were scheduled to fall on a holiday were rescheduled for the Wednesday immediately following the holiday.

**D. Lapointe made a motion to adopt the revised schedule. Second by T. McCuin. Motion carried at 7:26 PM.**

2. Planning & Development update - None
3. Enforcement update - None
4. Approval of Meeting Minutes -  
**Motion by T. McCuin to approve the minutes of November 1, 2021, as presented. Second by D. Thayer. Minutes approved at 7:27 PM, with D. LaPointe abstaining.**

5. Confirm next meeting date and time. **Monday, January 3, 2021, 6:30 PM**  
New Year's Day observed is on Friday, December 31st. City Hall is open and city staff will be able to put together a packet in time, meeting was kept to schedule on 1/3/22.
6. Other - None

D. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

E. ENTER DELIBERATIVE SESSION -  
**Motion by T. McCuin to enter deliberative session. Second by D. LaPointe. Meeting was moved to deliberative session with all in favor at 7:31 PM.**