

**MEETING MINUTES  
ST. ALBANS CITY DESIGN ADVISORY BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NO. MAIN ST.  
6:30 PM MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2021**

**Board Members Present:**, Elizabeth Reed, Stephen Poston, KarenMarie Peltier, Chair; Evan Champagne, Vice-Chair

**Board Member Absent:** John Morrie

**Staff Members Present:** David Southwick, Planning and Permitting Administrator; Tammi DiFranco, Property Services Assistant, taking minutes.

**Public Present:** Chris Galipeau, Tim Vallee

**A. Open Meeting – KM.Peltier called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM**

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Consider any additions or deletions to agenda- None

**B. Design Review – Consideration of the following applications:**

1. **Case #2021-002 / RL Vallee / 138 Lake Street / Parcel #26049138 Applicant seeks recommendation for a Site Plan Review. *This property is located in the Business 1 (B1) Zoning District and the Downtown Expansion (DR-2) Design Review District.***

KM.Peltier invited the applicants, Tim Vallee and Chris Galipeau, to describe the application.

T.Vallee gave a brief overview of the history of the property. The last update was completed in 1993 and they are ready to present a new proposal for the property.

C.Galipeau, from Civil Engineering Associates, described the proposed project. He started by showing the existing conditions, and then presented the proposed project. When designing a project, they look at the character of the neighborhood when coming up with a proposed layout. They look at the character of the adjacent buildings, pedestrian access, and proximity of surrounding buildings to road frontages. In this instance the buildings are up against the front set back. We are proposing a 51 foot wide by 100 foot deep building. Both of the existing buildings would be removed and the kerosene tanks would be removed. The new building would be positioned right next to Lake Street, with a nice sidewalk, pedestrian access, and plantings. The canopy will run north to south with 5 MPD's (Multiple Product Dispenser), parallel to the building. They will maintain the Lake Street curb cuts and the curb cut onto Houghton Street. There is passenger parking around the perimeter and 6 new Electric Vehicle fueling

stations for future use. They are also proposing a new enclosed dumpster. The elevations drawings were then presented. They are working with Antonio Leo Architects to design the exterior. The brick is to match the character of the area, the red matches the other R. L. Vallee locations, and there is a lot of glass. The glass adds to the aesthetic appeal and also adds safety benefits in that the Police can drive by and see what is going on inside the store. Utilities will all go on the second floor in the back; it keeps them out of the weather and looks better. C.Galipeau also described the 5000 square foot floor plan. On the exterior of the building, there will be a cupola on the roof, two building mounted signs, and gooseneck downcast lighting.

S.Poston asked if there is a signage and lighting plan for the canopy. T.Vallee stated that the existing canopy is branded Mobile and that will remain. We will extend the canopy back for pumps 4 & 5. The current lighting is fluorescent; it will be replaced with LED lighting. The blue band will be slightly smaller. C.Galipeau pointed out another change to the canopy. Currently there are 2 MPD's at the column. They are proposing a single MPD between each column, instead of 2. They will also wrap the lower level of each column in brick. There will be a tree in the green space island in front of the canopy. There will also be greenspace and plantings added around the entire property. T.Vallee added that the rear building will be removed and just the left is where they will be adding future Electric Vehicle charging.

S.Poston stated that he appreciates the focus on public safety and access. He asked if there would be enough snow storage on the property with all the additional parking spaces. He suggested eliminating a few parking spaces to add more green space for snow storage. He also has concerns about the EIFS (Exterior Insulation and Finish System) around the bottom portion of the building, stating that it does not hold up well over time. It tends to get pitted and look pretty bad quickly. He would suggest replacing it at the lower ends towards the ground with brick. He likes that the dumpsters are in the back, but would recommend something aesthetically pleasing as a surround. He really likes the flow of the building and space; it is safer for pedestrians and traffic.

C.Galipeau answered that they will look into replacing the EIFS under the windows with brick. T.Vallee agreed that they will consider brick on the front under the windows so that salt will not deteriorate the cement board.

In regards to the snow plowing and snow removal, C.Galipeau stated that they have some snow storage shown on plan C1.1. Depending on the storm event, they very likely will not have sufficient snow storage. They often use some of the parking furthest away from the building to temporarily store snow, and it is then trucked away to an approved snow storage facility. KM.Peltier added that they have the same issues with snow removal in the winter. When there is a lot of snow, they have to give up a few parking spaces until they can have it removed.

C.Galipeau added that the large size of the parking lot also helps the tracker trailers turn into the parking lot.

C.Galipeau stated that they will look into the dumpster enclosure. They can dress up the dumpster area and make it look nice since it is very visible. In most instances it is a chain fence with the colored vinyl tabs inserted.

E.Reed stated that she does have a concern with the amount of glass windows being used. Her concern is with people taking advantage of it; there are not too many buildings in the neighborhood that are glass prominent. It helps her concern to know that the police will be monitoring it and that they can look inside easily to see what is going on. C.Galipeau added that he has heard from many communities with the same project that have had the same concerns. Afterwards they find that the glass is a deterrent to thefts. They also do not cover the glass with advertisements. T.Vallee added that the largest portion of glass is in the seating and restroom area. It gives customers good visibility looking out to their vehicles.

E.Champagne stated that he appreciates the changes and reorienting to make the site safer with the dedicated pedestrian entrance. He has similar concerns about the snow storage. His main concern is with the excessive parking being provided. He thinks having more grass and drainage would make for a better project. He asked the applicants how they arrived at the number of parking spaces and if there is an opportunity to reduce it and add green space to the site.

T.Vallee answered that there are 6 parking spots being reserved for future Electric Vehicle parking. They need 4-7 spots for employees. They want to make it convenient for customers to be able to pull up and find a spot. In their opinion, the more parking the better. C.Galipeau added that when there is no space, people tend to park in undesignated areas which causes issues. D.Southwick added that by land development regulations, they need to have 1 parking spot for every 100 square feet plus one per pump. Right now they would be required to have 55 spots. C.Galipeau stated that it appears they have about 47 spaces on the site plan. They will work with David to see what they will need before the DRB meeting next week.

E.Champagne suggested adding a bike rack for 8-10 bikes somewhere near the pedestrian entrance. C.Galipeau asked where they would want a bike rack, in many towns they discourage having bike racks near the sidewalk. E.Champagne stated that he did not think that having it near a sidewalk is an issue. He would suggest having it positioned away from the curb cuts.

E.Champagne asked for confirmation that they will be keeping the signage in the northwest corner. C.Galipeau confirmed. E.Champagne asked if the canopy signage is being replaced. C.Galipeau stated it will be the same, except that it will

be LED. E.Champagne stated that it looks like the only new signage will be on the building. The applicant affirmed yes.

E.Champagne discussed the blue on the canopy. He stated that in areas that are not near the highway and there isn't the need to grab people's attention, we have been trying to get the canopies to complement the building. In this case, the blue Mobile band will not match the building. He asked if there is a way to only have the blue band on the north end and not go around the entire canopy. C.Galipeau stated that they can look into it. The one thing he is not sure of is that sometimes the canopies are governed by the branding. E.Champagne added that some franchises have different branding for historic districts, so they may have some choices. S.Poston added that in the past they suggested this design change to make the projects more pleasing to the neighbors. That may not be the situation here, but it would be nice design wise to have the canopy complement the building.

**Motion by S.Poston to approve the project as presented with the following recommendations. They recommend the addition of a bike rack adjacent to the Lake Street entrance of the building. They recommend reducing the amount of EIFS on the side of the building and replacing it with brick to the height of the bottom of the windows. They recommend finding an aesthetically pleasing fencing or material to conceal the dumpster at the southeast corner of the property. They recommend reducing, if possible, the branding at the sides and back of the canopy, as the canopy progresses southward on the site, to better compliment the building design and aesthetic while maintaining the branding requirements where it is visible from the street. Second by E.Champagne. Approved with all in favor.**

### C. Other Business

1. Approve July 27, 2020 meeting minutes – D&V  
**Motion by E.Reed to approve the minutes with corrections. Second by S.Poston. Approved with 3 in favor, 1 abstaining.**
2. Approve January 25, 2021 meeting minutes – D&V  
**Motion by E.Reed to approve the minutes as presented. Second by S.Poston. Approved with all favor.**
3. Sign Updates
  - a. D.Southwick is currently working with the St Albans Coop. They have agreed to remove all the banners from the fence and we are working on permanent approved areas for banners and advertisements. He is also working with them on the rebranding with the Dairy Farmers of America (DFA). The new building and the production building will be rebranded with DFA signage that should all be able to be handled administratively.

4. Enforcement Updates- None

5. Other

a. Review of 10 Maiden Lane Rooftop Plans

D.Southwick brought up original sketch and showed what had been approved and which part of the terrace would be used for the final project. He then showed a new sketch, P100, with the proposed roof terrace. It will be rectangular in shape and smaller than the approved design.

S.Poston stated that no one is ever going to be able to see the terrace from the street; it is smaller than the elevator tower. The terrace is smaller than what was proposed and he sees no issues with it.

D.Southwick reminded the board that the sketch was being presented at their request. The builder is interested in any suggestions they have to offer. E.Reed restated that they had requested to see the final design and she appreciates that he brought it to them. She is excited to see that he will be going forward with the terrace. The board had no further suggestions or comments.

b. E.Champagne asked if the board could ease the parking restrictions for the Lake Street project. He believes that the requirements are excessive and would like to be able to ease the requirements to a more manageable number and add greenspace. In the long term, he would like to see the requirements change. KM.Peltier added that the applicant did mention the need for turning space for tractor trailers and employee parking, but many businesses of this type manage in much smaller lots.

D.Southwick stated that he will look into the regulations. The DRB can override the requirements. He also added that to get a change in the regulations would require something from the planning commission. He will find out how the DAB can have a voice in those recommendations.

The board decided to submit a letter to the DRB stating that they would approve to have the parking restrictions eased if the applicant wants to reduce their parking to a more manageable.

6. Confirm next meeting date: **March 22, 2021 6:30 PM- Format TBD**

**D. Public Comment- None**

**Motion by KM.Peltier to adjourn. Second by S.Poston and approved with all in favor at 7:47 PM.**