

**MEETING MINUTES
ST. ALBANS CITY DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NORTH MAIN STREET, ST. ALBANS, VT
6:30 PM MONDAY, MAY 3, 2021**

Approved

Board Members: Rebecca Pfeiffer, Chair; Denis LaPointe, Vice-Chair; Dick Thayer, Tanner McCuin, Emily Biron

Board Member Absent: Matt Preedom

Staff Members Present: David Southwick, Planning & Permitting Administrator; Tammi DiFranco, Property Services Assistant, taking Minutes

Public Present: Pat Kennedy, Robert Hemond, Mary Anne Duell, Thomas Johnson, Jamie Seeholzer, Ashley LaCross

- A. OPEN MEETING R.Pfeiffer opened the meeting at 6:30 PM
1. Pledge of Allegiance – The Pledge was recited
 2. Assignment of Alternate- not necessary
 3. Consider any additions or deletions to agenda –
 - i. Agenda item 1 from other business moved up.

Motion by D.LaPointe that the procedure that they have been using for the last several months of having an automatic recess in case anyone could not connect to the Zoom meeting electronically be discontinued. If any recess is required, it would be moved to the next regular DRB meeting. Second by D.Thayer and approved with all in favor.

B. DEVELOPMENT REVIEW SEGMENT – PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. **Case #2021-006 / Jamie Seeholzer / 1 Brown Avenue / Parcel #14014001** Applicant seeks approval for a Conditional Use - School, Certified/Licensed. This property is located in the Low Density Residential (LDR) Zoning District.

R.Pfeiffer gave a brief introduction to how the meeting works.

R.Pfeiffer invited the applicants and public to come forward and swore in those wishing to submit testimony.

D.Southwick introduced the application and submitted the staff report for the record.

R.Pfeiffer asked if D.Southwick had considered the limitations on zoning for certain uses and one of them is for public and private schools and other educational institutions certified by the state department of education. She stated that she is aware that the applicant has yet to receive it's certification, but was wondering if there had been any conversations around the topic. D.Southwick stated that the applicant is prepared to discuss the credentialing for the school that she has.

R.Pfeiffer invited the applicant, Jaime Seeholzer, to introduce the project and any other information.

J.Seeholzer explained that she started Brightality in 2014 and gave some background about the services she currently provides. Their services fill the gaps in education and services between what the school systems provide and what human services provide. She currently offers one-on-one services at her current location on Swanton Road near Walmart. They are now taking the next steps to be a state sponsored educational school. They propose to use 1 Brown Avenue as a day school that will be open year round; closed on weekends and holidays. The school will be open Monday-Friday, with the staff being present 7:00 am-5:00 pm and the students on campus from 8:00 am-3:30 pm. It will be a rolling drop-off from 8:00-8:30 am so that the students do not all show up at the same time. The pick up and drop off location will be in front of the sidewalk on Brown Avenue. The school will have a home like setting that many of the students do not get to experience. They will incorporate household responsibilities into their curriculum. The student body is small and a targeted population of not more than 15 students. The school will start even smaller and then work their way up to the 15 students. They will start with the current 4 staff members and work their way up to 8 staff members as the school grows to the 15 student limit. There could possibly be a few part-time students. The student to teacher ratio will be between one-to-one and no greater than five-to-one. The central location of 1 Brown Avenue will give the students an opportunity to be more engaged in the community. The ages of the students will be middle and high school, so there should not be the noise level that is expected from a younger group of students. For staff parking Mark Williams, who owns 92 Fairfield, is willing to rent them parking spaces.

R.Pfeiffer asked for questions from the board members.

D.LaPointe asked if 15 students is the maximum that she expects at this location, or do they have ambitions to grow larger. J.Seeholzer stated that she wants to keep it at 15 students at this location. D.LaPointe asked if the 15 students will be present right from the opening of the school, or is this a number she intends to grow into. J.Seeholzer stated that they will start smaller and build up to the 15 student capacity. D.LaPointe asked how much staff will be present for the school. J.Seeholzer stated that there are currently 4 staff, which will grow to 8 as the school grows. D.LaPointe asked how many parking spaces Mr. Williams is willing to rent them. J.Seeholzer stated that he will rent them 7 parking spaces. D.LaPointe asked the applicant what the garage on the property will be used for. J.Seeholzer answered that it will be used for parking cars and storing lawn tools and stuff to take care of the building itself. D.LaPointe stated that the applicant had also mentioned using the city's public garage. J.Seeholzer stated that it is a possibility to rent a few spaces in the city garage if it is needed. D.LaPointe asked if the

neighbors request fencing, is the applicant willing to accommodate that request. J. Seeholzer stated yes.

R. Pfeiffer stated that according to the city regulations, parking needs to be on an adjacent property. She asked if across the street meets this requirement. D. Southwick stated that across the street is considered an abutting property.

E. Biron asked if the applicant expects that all the students will be dropped off at the same time. J. Seeholzer stated that it will be a rolling arrival so that the students can arrive any time between 8:00 am and 8:30 am. E. Biron asked if people would be pulling into the driveway to drop off or if it would be a drive by on Brown Avenue. J. Seeholzer answered that the driveway is on the Fairfield Street side, so they will be dropped off on the sidewalk on the Brown Avenue side.

R. Pfeiffer stated that parking was the biggest concern for her. Having the parking across the street addresses that. Also, in order to issue a conditional use, the setbacks in low density residential needs to be 15 feet from the side yard. D. Southwick stated that the setback is from the building and there is 15 feet from the building to the setback on each side. The garage also meets the 5 feet setback requirement. R. Pfeiffer also asked if there are any proposed changes to the landscaping. J. Seeholzer stated that they are thinking of doing raised beds at some point. R. Pfeiffer asked the applicant if she has given any thought to screening for 5 Brown or the house on Fairfield Street, either with planting trees or a fence. J. Seeholzer stated that her preference is for whatever makes the neighbors the most happy and comfortable. R. Pfeiffer stated that the noise issue had been addressed and that the school would have set hours; she asked if there would be any potential evening activities. J. Seeholzer stated that the school does not currently have any plans for evening activities. R. Pfeiffer stated that accessibility has been addressed with the applicant's plans to add a handicap ramp to the entrance from the driveway. R. Pfeiffer also stated that the applicant had mentioned that she is working on her license but she does not currently have it. J. Seeholzer stated that all of her applications have been submitted to the state. The state is not currently authorizing the walk through of the schools to complete that step.

R. Pfeiffer asked for public comment.

Pat Kennedy, of 5 Brown Avenue read from her submitted statement. At this time, the garage usage is no longer part of request. She does not want her private driveway used for parking or as a turnaround by anyone using the school. She is also concerned about the use of the outdoor space which is adjacent to her property. She would like to request either a hedge or fence around the space that will be used. She prefers a 4 foot high hedge, but would also be happy with a 4 foot fence. R. Pfeiffer asked the applicant what her plans are for screening. J. Seeholzer stated that she does not have a preference.

Mary Anne Duell, of 8 Brown Avenue, had concerns about parking on Brown Avenue. She asked if the parents will be parking up and down the street waiting for the students and will it create a traffic jam. She is concerned about people using their driveways to turn around. She also asked if there would be any SSTA buses used for transportation. J. Seeholzer stated that she has not given much thought to the pick-up process. Most students are dropped off by a taxi that is provided by the school and there have been no

students that have used the SSTA bus. They can stagger the time for the end of the day for different students based on their individual plan and they can also come up with a plan to make things go smoothly. MA.Duell stated that she has looked over their website and it states that they have students of all ages and abilities. She asked the applicant to define what the ages of the students will be. J.Seeholzer stated that at their current office, they do work with adults. They will be keeping those services at the current location. Legally, in terms of students, if they have a special education plan they can be in high school up to the age of 21 before graduation. MA.Duell asked if anyone would be living in the building. J.Seeholzer stated no. MA.Duell asked for the plan for waste storage and removal. She prefers not to look at a dumpster. J.Seeholzer stated that they currently use Casella Waste Management for waste removal services and they use the canisters that most residential homes use.

No other public present had a comment.

No additional questions or comments from the board.

R.Pfeiffer stated that the applicant should be aware that there may be a condition for screening at the property boundary for Mrs. Kennedy.

Motion by D.LaPointe made a motion to close the hearing for Case #21-006. Second by T.McCuin and approved with all in favor.

With no further comments, R.Pfeiffer closed the hearing.

Motion by T.McCuin for a 5 minute recess to allow public to exit. Second by E.Biron, and approved with all in favor. Reconvene at 7:36 PM.

C. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Review and Discussion of Automatic Recess Protocol- moved to item 3 in open meeting.
2. Planning & Development update
 - i. There will be some changes in the Planning Development Office in the upcoming months. Tammi will be finishing up at the beginning of August. Dave will be moving to part-time in the fall. A new full-time employee will be hired.
 - ii. The scanning project is just about complete. There are a few larger property files that still need to be scanned.
 - iii. Chip is looking at ways to tie the GIS capabilities with Zoning.
 - iv. Arbor Day was successful. The city hosted a planting at BFA and at City School. In the fall there will be 40-50 additional trees planted.
3. Enforcement update- no updates
4. Approval of March 1, 2021 Meeting Minutes – D&V

Motion by D.Thayer to approve the minutes from March 1, 2021. Second by D.LaPointe and approved with all in favor.

5. Approval of March 4, 2021 Meeting Minutes - D&V

Motion by D.LaPointe to approve the minutes from March 4, 2021, as edited. Second by D.Thayer and approved with all in favor.

6. Confirm next meeting date and time. **Monday, June 7, 2021 6:30 PM**
7. Other- no comments

D. PUBLIC COMMENT- no public comments

E. ENTER DELIBERATIVE SESSION – D&V

Motion by D.LaPointe to move into Deliberative Session. Second by T.McCuin and approved with all in favor at 7:45 PM.