

**MEETING MINUTES
ST. ALBANS CITY DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL AND VIA ZOOM
6:30 PM MONDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2021**

Approved November 1, 2021

Board Members Present: Rebecca Pfeiffer, Chair (Zoom); Denis LaPointe, Vice-Chair; Tanner McCuin (Zoom); Matthew Preedom (Alternate / Zoom)

Board Members Absent: Emily Biron; Dick Thayer

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

Public Present: Heather Gonyeau; Ed Putzier; Tina Machia; Stephen Tetreault (Zoom); Jane Suder (Zoom)

A. OPEN MEETING - R. Pfeiffer opened the meeting at 6:31 PM

1. Pledge of Allegiance - the pledge was recited
2. Assignment of Alternate - M. Preedom was named alternate via Zoom
3. Consider any additions or deletions to agenda - None

B. DEVELOPMENT REVIEW SEGMENT – PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Case #2021-010 / Heather Gonyeau / 21 Huntington Street / Parcel #22046021

(CONTINUATION) Applicant seeks to appeal the Zoning Administrator decision to dis-allow a parking space in the front setback. This property is located in the Low Density Residential (LDR) Zoning District.

R. Pfeiffer opened the hearing for H. Gonyeau.

R. Pfeiffer read the title of the hearing item and made note that it is a continuation from the previous month's meeting, and that no testimony or evidence was presented in that meeting.

There were no conflicts of interest stated by board members.

R. Pfeiffer administered the oath.

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

During questions from the board for city staff, D. Lapointe questioned if the city knew why the homeowner wanted to expand their existing driveway. It was explained that the homeowner says the width of the current driveway is not large enough for multiple vehicles.

R. Pfeiffer asked city staff to elaborate on the difference between an access point and a driveway per regulations. C. Sawyer explained the regulation and what makes something a driveway vs. what makes it access.

H. Gonyeau testified on her own behalf. She explained to the board that the current driveway is on the property line, and they wanted to move it a foot off the property line. They would like a flare added at the base to 18 feet wide so that cars could get in and out easily and side by side. She explained that other homes on the street have a similar driveway design.

R. Pfeiffer inquired about a part on the picture that was used for the application and questioned who scratched out part of the original request. H. Gonyeau explained that the permit was not granted for that original drawing and that former city Property Services Administrator Dave Southwick was the person who crossed out that portion of the drawing.

R. Pfeiffer asked if the flare would be in front of the house or on the property line side. H. Gonyeau said it flares in front of the house where the driveway meets the road. She explained that D. Southwick had previously told her widening the entire driveway all the way to the road in front of the house would be too much, and that he was the person who so recommended the flare.

D. Lapointe asked homeowner about the space in front of a garage that is located in the rear of the house and if it is large enough to allow for moving cars back and forth easily. H. Gonyeau said there is no room at the top near the garage for two cars to be side by side.

R. Pfeiffer asked if they are trying to widen the entire driveway and shift existing driveway. H. Gonyeau explained that there is 14 feet of space between property line and house, and therefore the widening would occur further down, closer to the road.

H. Gonyeau then submitted documentation and pictures of their current driveway setup and other homes in the neighborhood that have a similar parking setup as they're looking for.

R. Pfeiffer then closed the hearing at 7:03 PM and explained that the board has 45 days to make a decision.

C. Sawyer then mentioned that there were other people present and there might be need for a public comment section.

A motion was made by M. Preedom to reopen the hearing. The motion was seconded by T. McCuin, voted with all in favor, and the hearing was reopened at 7:04 PM.

Public comment was opened to floor. No one present had comment to make.

With no further comments, R. Pfeiffer closed the hearing at 7:06 PM.

2. **Case #2021-012 / Jane Suder / 46 Congress Street / Parcel #11022046** Applicant seeks approval for a Final Plan and Plat Review for a Sub-Division. This property is located in the High Density Residential (HRD) Zoning District.

R. Pfeiffer opened the hearing for J. Suder.

Under the comment section for conflicts of interest, R. Pfeiffer disclosed to the board that she had a conversation about this case before the meeting in which she asked city staff about a procedural regarding whether a formal warning was needed once the application was deemed complete. C. Sawyer explained this has been warned as a final plan approval and that all

abutters received their notifications. If the DRB then determines that the app is not complete, they can recess this warned hearing and continue it later.

R. Pfeiffer administered the oath.

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

R. Pfeiffer opened the floor for questions from the board for city staff.

R. Pfeiffer asked city staff if they had received an updated site plan. C. Sawyer shared an image of latest plans they received, which were updated with a comment of percentage of lot coverages and dimensions of existing garage.

S. Tetreault represented the applicant. He explained that, in a previous meeting from 9/8/21, the board requested a timeline estimate for the development in question. He then said that there is no timing available, as it depends on when J. Suder can sell the parcel and then on the new owner's timeline.

R. Pfeiffer commented that in the previous hearing for this matter an unusual situation came up regarding the existing garage and future use of the lot by a new owner. The garage is currently used for storage, but once sold the new owner would have to establish a primary use for the land before they would be allowed to use the garage for storage themselves, per regulations.

R. Pfeiffer then asked if the board feels as if it's a complete application at this point, to which all board indicated that the application was complete.

There was no public comment.

R. Pfeiffer closed the hearing at 7:27 PM.

3. **Case #2021-013 / Tina Machia / 39 Huntington Street / Parcel #22046037** Applicant seeks to appeal the Zoning Administrator decision to dis-allow a shed in the front setback. This property is located in the Low Density Residential (LDR) Zoning District.

R. Pfeiffer opened the hearing for T. Machia.

There were no conflicts of interest stated by board members.

R. Pfeiffer administered the oath.

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

C. Sawyer commented that this case revolves around an accessory structure in the front yard. Per regulations, accessory structures are not to detract from the entry of the building.

R. Pfeiffer turned the floor over to board for questions for city staff.

D. LaPointe asked for clarification regarding the correct address for the application and was informed that the correct address is 39 Huntington Street.

R. Pfeiffer then shared her computer screen via Zoom to show the board a map designating the lot in question.

M. Preedom asked if the staff knew where the shed is now. C. Sawyer explained that the shed permit was approved for the backyard of the home, and then denied when the shed was shown to be in the front of the house.

Applicant T. Machia was asked to testify. She explained that the ground around the house is soft and rain runoff sits on the ground near the home. The proposed shed is wood and she's afraid the standing water and wet ground will cause it to rot.

C. Sawyer scanned pictures of the property and emailed to the board. The board reviewed pictures of the property and the grounds.

R. Pfeiffer questioned if it's possible to place the shed in back as planned and put it on cinder blocks or raised fill so that it's up out of the water. Homeowner answered that a vehicle or tractor wouldn't be able to haul it around to the back because of the wet and soft ground.

D. LaPointe asked about the area and the neighborhood. Address is Huntington Street but front of the house isn't street facing on Huntington Street. This home is in the back corner off the road off a private driveway.

R. Pfeiffer asked if there are any other questions.

There was no public comment.

R. Pfeiffer closed the hearing at 7:48 PM.

C. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Planning & Development update

- i. C. Sawyer announced that Arleigh Young has been hired for the Planning & Development Assistant role, starting the week of 10/11/21.
- ii. C. Sawyer explained that S. Gabaree is still transitioning from the City Clerk's office to her new role as Property Services Manager.
- iii. C. Sawyer introduced Angela Bernard as a new City meeting minutes taker.
- iv. C. Sawyer explained to the board that City council has updated regulations for small lot use and parking use and that he will send the updated regulations to the board.
- v. R. Pfeiffer mentioned drafting a template for the board to use for recording decisions. Proposed by S. Gabaree as a method for helping staff keep accurate records. Discussion was made of the merits of creating a template to follow when city staff is not present for deliberative sessions.

2. Enforcement update

- i. C. Sawyer said there are a few follow ups for front setback parking but nothing else right now.

3. Approval of September 8, 2021 Meeting Minutes - D&V

- i. **Motion by D. LaPointe to approve the minutes of September 8, 2021, as presented. Second by T. McCuin. Voted in favor with M. Preedom abstaining.**

4. Confirm next meeting date and time. **Monday, November 1, 2021 6:30 PM**

5. Other - None

D. PUBLIC COMMENT There was none.

E. ENTER DELIBERATIVE SESSION - D & V **Motion by D. Lapointe. Second by T. McCuin.
Approved at 7:59 PM.**