

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, MARCH 1, 2021

APPROVED

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

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

Public Present: AJ LaRosa, Chris Galipeau, Tim Vallee

- A. OPEN MEETING R.Pfeiffer opened the meeting at 6:31PM
1. Pledge of Allegiance – The Pledge was recited
 2. Assignment of Alternate- not necessary
 3. Consider any additions or deletions to agenda – None

B. DEVELOPMENT REVIEW SEGMENT – PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. **Case #2021-004 / RL Vallee / 138 Lake Street / Parcel #26049138** Applicant seeks approval 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.

R.Pfeiffer invited the applicants to come forward and swore in those wishing to submit testimony. Applicants are Tim Vallee representing RL Vallee, Chris Galipeau from Civil Engineering Associates, and AJ LaRosa from MSK Attorneys.

D.Southwick introduced the application and submitted the staff report for the record (*including the recommendation from the Design Advisory Board (DAB)*). Public works and the Police Department both responded to the request for feedback. Marty Manahan, from public works, had conversations with the engineer and he is fine with the proposal. Chief Lamothe from the Police Department replied that it all looks good.

R.Pfeiffer asked if the new renderings had been sent to the board. D.Southwick stated that they had not, but he would put them up on the screen. The new drawings include the DAB recommendations: bike rack, new dumpster enclosure, changes to the blue band around the canopy, and the stone replacing the EIFS at the bottom of the building under the windows.

T.Vallee introduced all the applicants and gave a brief history of the property since they purchased the site in the 1980's.

C.Galipeau explained the existing conditions of the property. He then gave a brief overview of the proposed site plan. They will be keeping both curb cuts on Lake Street,

but shrinking the size of the easterly one. The front canopy remains the same, and will be expanded towards the rear of the property. The MPD's (Multiple Product Dispenser) will be in a linear fashion from north to south. This will provide access to the pumps where the vehicles will not need to queue. There will be 5 MPD's with one between the canopy posts. The building is being moved to the northeast corner of the property next to the sidewalk. The design complements the neighborhood and gives more parking right next to the building. It's a redevelopment project, so all storm water and grading exists. They will add one additional storm water basin near Houghton Street. They will use the existing water & sewer access. There is proposed parking around the perimeter. Delivery will be on the Southeast corner of the building. They are proposing landscaping around the perimeter of the site. He then presented the building renderings. They came up with a 1 ½ story building to meet the requirements of the B-1 district. Brick enhances the esthetic. The west side has a proposed sign over the entrance with 3 downcast gooseneck light fixtures. The EFIS in the bottom of the windows has been replaced with stone as recommended by the DAB. The dumpster location has a brick bottom with the upper section being siding that will match the building. They are proposing brick at the bottom of the canopy columns on either side of the MPD's. The lighting plan is a redevelopment of the existing site. They will replace all current lighting with LED's. All the new pole mounted lighting will be compliant with the 20 foot height restrictions, LED, and downcast. The canopy lighting will also be replaced with flush mounted LED lighting. He concluded by explaining the floor plan of the store.

R.Pfeiffer addressed the lighting and stated that it looks like there are only 2 existing lights that will remain at the Houghton Street entrance; she asked if the rest are new. C.Galipeau stated that is correct. Since it is a redevelopment project, the intention is that they want everything to be consistent. All the new lights will be verified and conformed to what they are presenting. The poles will remain but they will be probably be replacing the heads to remain consistent. R.Pfeiffer asked if they are all below the 20 foot pole height limit and LED? C.Galipeau confirmed that yes they will be.

R.Pfeiffer asked if there had been any discussions with the two existing property owners at the corner of Houghton and Lake Streets about landscaping. Have there been any requests for screening? D.Southwick stated that he has spoken to both owners. The owner of the barber shop building on the corner was concerned about the impact on street parking. The owner of the building to the rear was concerned if there would be room for them to park their vehicle on the RL Vallee property like they currently do. They were both invited to attend the meeting or to submit their concerns in writing. There were no concerns about landscaping. C.Galipeau stated that they have not had any conversations with the neighbors. They are open to meeting with the neighbors and discussing any landscaping requests and the parking. R.Pfeiffer added that this is located in the B-1 district and the intent of those areas is for dense downtown development with no side setback requirements.

D.LaPointe addressed the issue of parking and stated that the size of the lot would call for 51 parking spaces. He counted up the parking, including the parking at each pump, and came up with 49 spaces which is very close to the requirement. AJ.LaRosa answered that the project is located in the B-1 District and the site of the lot is less than 1 acre, so the parking table in the regulations referenced does not apply. D.Southwick confirmed that there are no parking requirements for this project. AJ.LaRosa stated that they are trying to provide the standard parking without going overboard on the amount of impervious

surface. D.LaPointe stated that they would still be close to the requirement and thanked the applicants for their explanation.

R.Pfeiffer asked for public comment. There was none.

With no further comments, R.Pfeiffer continued the hearing until Thursday, March 4th at 6:30 PM.

C. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Planning & Development update

- i. From now until April 1st, the Property Services Department will be looking at the past years permits and activities and make any necessary updates to the working Grand List.
- ii. All property files from the vault in manila envelopes have been scanned; now it is on to the properties with large files. Staff is has the goal of putting these online for easier access.

2. Enforcement update- None

3. Approval of February 1, 2021 Meeting Minutes – D&V

Motion by D.LaPointe to approve the minutes from February 1, 2021, as edited. Second by T.McCuin and approved with all in favor.

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

Motion by D.LaPointe to approve the minutes from February 4, 2021, as presented. Second by E.Biron and approved with all in favor.

5. Confirm next meeting date and time. **Monday, April 5, 2021 6:30 PM**

6. Other

- i. D.LaPointe stated that the DRB has been doing meetings twice a month for coming up on a year. He would like to suggest that they look into going back to once a month since there seems to have been no problems with anyone connecting. D.Southwick stated that he would look into the state statutes and get back to the board at the March 4th hearing. D.LaPointe stated that it has been a lot to have to attend two times a month; it also means that the applicants and public have to attend a second time. R.Pfeiffer feels that as long as they are continuing in the fully remote environment, it is important to maintain the ability to make sure that they are giving everyone due process. She thinks that they may be able to find a resolution, but they should first look into any legal requirements. D.Southwick added that Saint Albans City is one of the few municipalities that do not require applicants to be at least two months in hearings. He is a big advocate that they should be paving the way for applicants to be successful, but it could take more than one meeting.
- ii. When the DAB was reviewing this particular case, they had concerns with the excessive amounts of parking required for a convenience store. They feel that the general movement in the inner city is to get away from just car transportation. They feel that there could be a tradeoff for more green space and opportunity for snow removal in exchange for parking. The

DAB is planning on bringing this concern to the Planning Commission.
R.Pfeiffer stated that she thinks it is a great point for them to bring up.

D. PUBLIC COMMENT- None

E. ENTER DELIBERATIVE SESSION – D&V

Motion to recess the hearing and close the meeting made by R.Pfeiffer at 7:24 PM.