

**ST. ALBANS CITY DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
6:30 PM MONDAY APRIL 01, 2019  
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NO. MAIN STREET**

**Meeting Minutes - with DL Corrections**

**Board Members Present:** Megan Manahan Bliss, Chair; Rebecca Pfeiffer, Vice-Chair; Dick Thayer; Owen Manahan; Denis LaPointe

**Board Members Absent:** None

**Staff Members Present:** David Southwick, Planning & Permitting Administrator; Wendy Coy, Minute Taker

**Public Attendance:** See Sign-in Sheet

1. **Call to Order** – Meeting called to order at 6:35 pm
  - a. **Pledge of Allegiance**
  - b. **Consider any additions or deletions to the agenda** – None
  - c. **Assign Alternates (as necessary)** – No alternates
  
2. **Development Review Segment– Public Hearings:**
  - a. **Case 2019-007 / Cadillac Motel, LLC / 213 South Main Street / Parcel # 26079207 Request for Site Plan Amendment** - No Board member has any conflict with this case. Mr. Southwick reviewed the case including the staff comments and relevant previous approvals and Zoning changes. The case has been publicly warned with certified letters to the abutters. Chair asked when the original site plans were approved. Mr. Southwick stated that there are no approval signatures on file. Armand and Bonnie Turner were present as the owners. Chad Branon with Fieldstone Land Consultants was present with the Turners. He presented the plans to the Board. He stated that this would be a redevelopment of the Cadillac Motel property. The updated plans are very similar to the original plans. There will be five buildings. The Main site which will be the motel section. It will have the managers apartment with 20 overnight stay units. The Vista on the Hill buildings 1 and 2 will be on the North and Eastern sides of the property. The Vistas will be bi-level extended stay units with 7 two-bedroom units in each building. The Annex, located on the southern border of the property nearest to the main site, would have 7 extended stay one-bedrooms units. Dominion Flats would be a new building built on the southern border of the property nearest to the road. It would have 8 units total, 4 two-bedroom units and 4 one-bedroom units. Mr. Branon stated that they have the majority of State permits and close on receiving the Act 250 permit. Currently there is no stormwater management on site and the existing utilities are outdated. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked if the abutters had been notified. Mr. Branon stated that it is notified locally so he wasn't sure. He states that they had been notified as part of the Act 250 permit. He reviewed the demolition plan. Existing entrance will be maintained. The Main site, the Annex and the existing Hill building, design Vista Hill 1

would not be demolished. The main structures would be used and updated. The pool area would be demolished and an infiltration basin would be constructed in its place. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked when Act 250 was notified. Mr. Branon stated that it was notified in November 2018. There are many improvements being proposed to the site. There will be construction of walkways and ADA access to buildings. Pedestrian access and safe adequate sidewalks will be added to each of the buildings. The buildings will be brought up to code. As part of the utility plan, there will be nine safe and appropriate LED dusk to dawn photocell pole mounted lights that meet the City requirements. The light will have no impact on the abutting properties. There will be no light pollution. Each doorway will have a switch controlled sconce on the front. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked if the utilities on the utilities profile were the proposed changes? Mr. Branon stated that they were. State permitting process wants to see the updated utility profile. It is part of getting a construction permit. There is currently no stormwater management on-site. Grading and stormwater improvements are in the plans. Swales will be on the site and a partial drainage system. The drainage will be constructed on the front of the site as the topography has the water running towards the front of the property. All drainage and stormwater will be controlled. It went through an extensive review process with the State. The proposed stormwater management will improve the environmental impacts. The owners are days away from getting the wastewater permit. There will be landscape improvements on the site and in the stormwater management areas. The plans incorporated DAB feedback into the plan. Everything will be an improvement on what exists now. The Department of Transportation reviewed the plans and determined that there was no need for a transportation study. All of the plans have been given to the local City departments and they have not received any negative feedback from the local departments. Design changes were made after comments from St. Albans City Fire Department. A hydrant will be added to the site and access width will be extended to accommodate the width of the fire vehicles. The owners have worked with the abutters to alleviate their concerns and have agreed to put a fence on the back of the property. Member Manahan asked if the fence would be around the entire boundary? Mr. Branon stated no. Member Manahan asked what material was proposed. Mr. Turner stated that it would be six foot stockade on eastern side of the property and chain link on the northern side. The existing four foot chain link fence would stay on the southern side as the owners own that property. and southern side. Chair Manahan Bliss asked about the names of the abutters on the site plans. There are several names that are not correct. All parking requirements have been met. All requirements of Article 5 have been met. Chair Manahan Bliss asked Mr. Branon to review the bedroom numbers. Mr. Branon complied. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked if any of the buildings were currently residential. Mr. Branon stated that all were transitional. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked if the annex would be only building that would be extended stay. Mr. Branon stated that the Annex would be extended stay units for corporate visitors. Chair Manahan Bliss asked if the owners were still going with the plans submitted to the DAB in 2015. Mr. Branon stated that the only change was that a patio would be added to the master bedrooms. The patios were not on the original plans. The plans have three dumpster locations. Chain

link with a weave in the chain link would surround each dumpster location. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked about snow storage. Snow storage is proposed between the Vista on the Hill building and the Main site on the eastern side as well as storage along the perimeter of the stormwater area. The Turners own two acres next to the site that could be used if needed. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked if the changes being implemented in terms of impervious surfaces had been incorporated into the plans. Mr. Branon stated that they had not due to fact that the changes been put in effect when they obtained the Act 250 permit. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked if the residential units would have assigned one space per unit. Mr. Turner responded that parking would be allocated and addressed in legal documents. It would meet the City requirements. Nothing specific has been proposed but the spots would probably be assigned as it alleviated tensions among the residents down the road. Mrs. Turner stated that when the property was purchased it was to develop into apartments or condos. They were not aware of the fixed use zoning on the property. They understand the current property needs improvement but there hasn't been a lot of motivation to do so as they are planning a major renovation. She stated that she understood the neighbor's concerns about the type of tenants that currently occupy the building. She cannot block specific people or profile people requesting access to the property. She stated that there was no intention to continue to operate it the way it is now. She sees the extended stay as corporate housing and the main site 20 units will be overnight motel stays. Chair Manahan Bliss asked what the intentions were for the extended stay rooms. She stated that all of the units would be initially rented but that they would like the option to sell them. The Chair opened the hearing up to public comments.

**Gerard Simard** – He is concerned that the fence is proposed on the northern and eastern side property lines but not on the southern side. For security reasons, he would like a fence on the southern side. He provided photos of the current fence. It doesn't protect the yards of the abutting neighbors. The yards are extremely close to the property. He submitted photos of the property.

**Carol Hodet** – She lives at the property labeled Viens Family Trust on the Site Layout Plan. Her main concern is the sewer septic system. There was an overflow of sewage coming into their home. The blockage was by the street of the Cadillac. The City stated that no one could live in the Hill until the septic was fixed. When they came to look at the septic, they removed fence and trees and plants. She stated that the Turners said they would repair any damage. The fence wasn't repaired. She tried to contact the owners. The septic and sewer hasn't been repaired. She submitted photos showing the fence and the overflow of waste.

**Mr. Turner (Response)** – He met with the owner of the building as it is a rental. A new sewage line will be installed for the motel. The rental property will no longer be connected to the motel's sewage line.

**Elizabeth Jean** – Her property is labeled correctly on the Site Layout Plan. She stated that she has lived at her property for the past 37 years. She has had very little problems with the Cadillac prior to the change in ownership. She has had to add trees and a fence to obstruct the view to the motel. The changing character of this motel has had a very negative impact on the residents and neighborhood. She stated that she wanted the

children in a safe area. She feels that the City created a halfway house to alleviate a housing problem. She stated that this was evident by the current number of calls to police. There were 69 calls in three month period. There is no security fence. Trespassers are continually using the abutting properties to visit the motels. She can see flashing lights in the rooms. There is loud banging to announce visitors in the middle of the night. Several robberies have occurred on the residential properties. She feels that part of the problem is absentee landlords who do not have a stake in this community. She stated that a buffer is required. She read the zoning requirements which she feels would require an eight foot high fence. She submitted photos of her fence and trees and yards proximity to the motel. Last summer, an employee put all his lawn chairs, toys and barbeque on her fence. She moved them to mow. She got a scathing note with a knife stuck in the fence stating not to move his things again. She believes that there are too many people going into the new property. There is no playground or green space for the residents.

**Erich Marn** – He lives at the property labeled Vicki Shepard on the Site Layout Plan. He stated that the backside of the building is not pretty. He understands that there is a lot of bitterness between the residents. He wanted to know if there was a timeline of completion of siding. He also stated that Green Mountain Power came to him and stated that they would be burying a power line on his property. It gets loamed and seeded after the utility work was finished. GMP discussed it with Mr. Marn but there was no follow-up so he wanted to know the timeline of that work.

**Mr. Branon (response)** – The current utility line is coming in from the back and goes overhead. He knows that the utility wants to remove the pole. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked if the utility design finalized. Mr. Branon stated they think it is but won't know until the construction occurs. GMP has not made the property owners aware that they are burying the line.

**Amy Greenia** – Her property is not present on the Site Layout Plan. Ms. Greenia bought the house last June and was not aware of the project. She stated that they probably would not have bought the property if they had known of this. On the border of her property and the motel is a path for the kids to get to St. Albans Town School. She has found hypodermic needles and broken glass along that path. She submitted photos showing the path and the fence. She is also concerned that all of these will be two story buildings that will eliminate the privacy in the back yards of the abutting properties.

**Mr. Turner (response)** – The proposed fence on that portion of the property would block all from the motel to that path.

**Judy Domey** – Her property is labeled correctly on the Site Layout Plan. She stated that there has never been a fence on the back of the property. She has had problems with trespassing on their property. There have been lawn chairs, pools, barbeques in the back of their property as well as used condoms, dirty diapers, baby wipes and empty food containers. She submitted photos of the back of her property.

**Lynn Desautels** – Her property is not labeled on the Site Layout Plan. She moved to the property 10 years ago. She stated that it has been fairly quiet where they lived. There has been an abundance of debris. She is concerned about homeless people living at the back of the property. She sees a lot of traffic goes through her lot. She has found used

needles in their backyard which is concerning as she has young children. She would like a reconsideration of a fence on the southern side of the property. Stated that the VT Department of Health will put up needle boxes to help with the needle problem. She asked that the owners consider working with the DoH to install.

**Robert Pachaco** – He lives across the street. His property is not represented on the Site Layout Plan. He likes the idea of the project and, he feels that if they follow the DAB's recommendations, it will look good. He used to work for zoning and planning. He is confused about zoning laws. He knows that it is zoned B2 with non-conforming use. He feels that if it is going to residential there should be a discussion with the community. He stated that he thinks a lot of the problems such as needles, diapers and it being a party site, will be settled with a fence and good lighting.

**Melissa Boucash Viens** – Her property is labeled as Jason & Lisa Curry on the Site Layout Plan. She is concerned that, with the new building, there will be noise issues. She appreciates the proposed fence. She wanted to know what the timeline was for the fence being constructed and what was the maintenance plan for the fence. She also asked for a construction timeline. She submitted a picture of the current fence.

**Jennifer Barrett** – Her property is listed as Randall Lawton on the Site Layout Plan. She is concerned about the placement of the dumpster as well as snow melt into their yard. If the snow is stored on the two acre site next to the property, there will be more snow melt in their yard. They already have issues with the amount of snow melt.

**Chris Domey** – His property is listed under Brian & Judy Domey on the Site Layout Plan. He stated that the employees of the hotel are coming onto their property.

**Armand Turner (response)** – He stated that the majority of the concerns are related to fencing. He believes that there is an unfortunate assumption that all of it is hotel traffic. He has proposed a six foot stockade fence on the entire length of the eastern property line. The southern side has chain link fence around the complete two acres. There is no fence on the Lawton property line. The fence will not go up until construction activities are done. Chair Manahan Bliss asked what the setback was on the property line. From the back of the motel to the property line is ten feet. The Hill building is less than ten feet from the property line. There is not enough room to have a fence and do upgrades. Chair Manahan Bliss asked what the phasing was on the project. The plan is to renovate The Vista on the Hill building then do the fence behind it. Dominion Flats would be next then the Annex building and then the Main site. Chair Manahan Bliss asked what the time frame was between Hill and the Main building. Mr. Turner stated that it could be up to two years. Mrs. Turner stated that they would be putting surveillance cameras on the back part of the property. Chair Manahan Bliss asked who would be monitoring those cameras. Mrs. Turner stated that the owners would be viewing the surveillance tapes. Mr. Turner stated that he can put up a fence for now. Mrs. Turner stated that she had purchased needle receptacles for the rooms and the outside of the building. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked, how many dumpsters were on-site currently. Mr. Branon stated that there were two for the property and one for the restaurant. There is no contract with the State. Member Manahan asked if there was a willingness to go above six feet on the fence. Mr. Turner stated no. He feels that a six foot fence is tall enough. Member Manahan asked if there would be an increase in elevation? Mr. Branon stated

that there wouldn't be. They are working within the buildings that are there now. Member Manahan asked if the whole property will be fenced? Mr. Turner stated that it would and that if there are deficits in the fence they would fix it. The owners cell phone numbers are available at the Main site. Chair Manahan Bliss asked what kind of fence maintenance would be done. Mr. Turner stated that it would be reviewed yearly and stained every couple of years as needed.

**Other Business –**

- a. **42 Federal Street – Review of Plans** – Mr. Keith Taruski was present as the owner of the property and Jonathan Collin of Arnold and Scangas Architecture was present with him. In an effort to address concerns that the Board had, they are making a recessed entry on one side for the apartments and the commercial space. Four windows were added in the stairway to provide light. This entrance will provide access to both the commercial space and the residential space. There will be one main entrance and a secondary entrance.
  - b. **Planning and Development Updates** – Mr. Southwick stated as of April 1<sup>st</sup> there is a freeze on the grand list. They received a ruling on 89.5 Pearl Street case. It went to environmental court. They were denied all requests. The property will return to a single family home.
  - c. **Enforcement Updates** – 211 Lake Street – This has gone to court.
  - d. **Approval of March 4, 2019 Meeting Minutes** – Member Pfeiffer made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Member Manahan seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.
  - e. Confirm next meeting date: **Monday May 6, 2019 6:00 p.m.**
  - f. **Other** – None
3. **Public Comment** – None
4. **Enter Deliberative Session** – Member Thayer made a motion to enter deliberative session. Member Manahan seconded the motion. It passed unanimously at 9:10.

**At August 5, 2019 meeting, motion by D.LaPointe to approve the minutes April 1, 2019 as presented. Second by D. Thayer and approved with all in favor.**