

MEETING MINUTES
ST. ALBANS CITY DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NORTH MAIN STREET, ST. ALBANS, VT
6:00 PM MONDAY, JULY 1, 2019

Board Members Present: Megan Manahan Bliss, Chair; Denis LaPointe; Owen Manahan

Board Members Absent: Rebecca Pfeiffer, Vice-Chair; Dick Thayer.

Staff Members Present: David Southwick, Planning & Permitting Administrator; Chip Sawyer, Director of Planning & Development, taking Minutes;

Public Present: See Sign-In Sheet

- A. OPEN MEETING Chair M.Manahan opened the meeting at 6:00 PM
1. Pledge of Allegiance – The Pledge was recited
 2. Consider any additions or deletions to agenda - none

Motion by O.Manahan to begin with Case #2019-015, and move Case #2019-013 to the end, since that applicant was not present. Second by D.LaPointe and Approved with all in favor.

B. DEVELOPMENT REVIEW SEGMENT – PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. **Case #2019-015 / Cadillac Motel, LLC / 213 South Main Street / Parcel #26079207**
Applicant seeks approval for a Site Plan Review. This property is located in the Business 2 (B2) District.

M.Manahan invited the applicants to come forward and swore in those wishing to submit testimony.

D.Southwick introduced the application and submitted the staff report for the record, including the recommendation from the Design Advisory Board (DAB).

M.Manahan invited the applicant to present their application. There was a clarification that the DAB had asked that final colors for all existing and proposed buildings be presented, but that the DAB did not necessarily need to see the colors at a future meeting.

Chad Branon introduced himself as the engineer for the project. Bonnie and Armand Turner were also present. C.Branon reviewed the site plan and application. He explained that a “building key” had been added to the plans since the April 2019 DRB hearing. He explained that the plans improved stormwater treatment, utility connections, and pedestrian/ADA access. He stated that a clarified phasing plan had been added since the

April 2019 hearing. He corrected that the second “Phase 2” on the plans should read as “Phase 5.”

C.Branon stated that the project had obtained all required State permits except for the Act 250 permit. The applicants felt that they had addressed all local, staff and DAB comments previously given, including fencing, buffering and landscaping.

C.Branon stated that they had not made any revisions to the architectural elements since the April 2019 DRB hearing. He reviewed the designs. B.Turner stated that the colors for the Vista 1 and Vista 2 buildings ultimately used would not have the same names as were submitted to the DAB and DRB, but that the actual colors would be the same.

C.Branon presented a color elevation on the “Dominion Flats” that had been presented to the DAB in June 2019. B.Turner showed the submitted colors of the siding, shakes, metal wrap and building corners.

M.Manahan asked if the phases of the project would be back-to-back. C.Branon and B.Turner said that the phases would be market driven and dependent on financing and could be accomplished back to back or simultaneously.

O.Manahan asked when the start date was, and A.Turner replied “This fall.”

Answering O.Manahan, C.Branon explained that the proposed fencing would be wooden stockade in the rear and a chain link fence on the northern and western edges. Fences would be six feet from bottom edges, which in turn could be as high as 1 foot. They also stated that the wooden fence would be stained.

C.Branon also stated that all abutter information had been updated on the plans.

M.Manahan invited comments from the public.

Judy Domey wanted to make sure that the fencing would be part of phase 1. That was affirmed.

Brian Domey asked if the fence would be tall enough to block the windows in the back of the motel building. The applicants thought that the windows would be blocked for the most part.

Elizabeth Jean asked if the existing motel would stay as single units. B.Turner answered that it would be operating as single rooms for overnight stays as a motel. E.Jean described a situation in which the police had visited the motel and had to enter her yard. She complained that she already has a fence and can see every bathroom in the motel. She wanted the fence to block all windows. She asked what would happen to the back of the motel during the project and how long it would take that section to be cleaned up. She asked if cameras would be placed behind the motel. B.Turner answered that cameras had not been installed yet, due to wiring issues – it would be part of the project. E.Jean made a comment about some black pipes that had been removed from the back of the motel building. E.Jean also described a situation in which a group of women were

discussing people climbing in windows in the back of the motel. She reiterated the need for a new fence at the beginning of the project.

C.Branon stated that security cameras were part of the project and that they would likely be installed once buildings are improved. B.Turner stated that they have security cameras now in the motel, which are not currently working well, and none behind the building. She could not commit to exactly when cameras would be installed behind the motel. She stated that they would have to have cameras up on “the hill” as that portion of the project started.

B.Turner answered that the back of the motel would likely not be cleaned up until that phase of the project began.

C.Branon stated that the 6 foot fence could be lifted more than 1 feet from the bottom but he did not recommend going too high. Seven feet is the desired height, when taking into account the foot of height at the bottom.

C.Branon clarified that there are no drainage or stormwater pipes behind the motel and he didn't see the rationale for it. He said what had been described might be from washing facilities inside the building, but he was not aware of anything like that. B.Turner stated that a new gas meter had been installed and perhaps gas lines had been moved.

Don Tedford stated that there are no black pipes behind the motel.

C.Branon requested that the Board entertain making a decision on the application this evening.

C.Sawyer asked if there was anything on the plans that would constitute a deadline for the construction. C.Branon conceded that a start date of October 1, 2019, could be used to time out the months given for each phase.

With no further comments, M.Manahan closed the hearing.

2. **Case #2019-016 / City of St. Albans / 85 North Main Street / Parcel #14063085 / 89 North Main Street / Parcel #14063089 / 99 North Main Street / Parcel #14063099 / 8 Congress Street / Parcel #11022008 / 12 Congress Street / Parcel #11022012 / 10 Maiden Lane / Parcel #14066008** Applicant seeks Site Plan Review and a building height waiver for amendments to previously approved site plan. This property is in the Business 1 (B1) District.

M.Manahan invited the applicants to come forward and swore in those wishing to submit testimony.

D.Southwick introduced the application and submitted the staff report for the record, including the recommendation from the Design Advisory Board (DAB). He noted that the date “Dec. 15, 2018” at the top of the applicant’s list of site plan changes was likely a typo and should read “Oct. 15, 2018.”

David White (for the City) explained that City Manager Dominic Cloud had a conflict and regretted that he could not attend tonight. D.White explained that what was being presented was an update of small changes that have come about as project planning has progressed. He asked for a quick decision.

Bill Niquette (on behalf of future owner Grant Butterfield) explained that the request for a height waiver was hereby being withdrawn from the application. He introduced Peter Cross as an engineer for the application and Eric Jutras as the architect.

P.Cross quickly reviewed the list of proposed changes to the site plan and asked if there are any questions. He explained that the retaining wall (item #7) was due to site grading issues. He summarized changes to the footprints of the buildings. B.Niquette explained that the footprint change for the commercial building would not look any different from Congress St. as was originally proposed. He explained that the footprint expansion at the rear of the market rate housing building would be entirely in the air above the parking. P.Cross pointed out where the crushed stone landscaping would be used under buildings or in areas that would not receive ample sunlight. B.Niquette pointed out how bike racks were now located under the residential buildings.

M.Manahan asked for public comment.

David Leahy asked for assurances that at no time would the Maiden Lane driveway for 29 Bank St. be blocked. P.Cross answered that if there is something that blocks the driveway during the construction, the City could give the contact information of the project manager to Mr. Leahy. Mr. Leahy asked for that information before construction begins. Applicant agreed to give the information to him and made arrangements.

B.Niquette explained the design changes for the “market rate” housing building. He explained that changes had been made inside the proposed building so that the addition of a 5th floor did not add a full story to the height as originally proposed. E.Jutras explained that part of the reason for the footprint extension in the rear was to be able to provide recessed balconies along Maiden Lane. He summarized other aspects of the architecture. B.Niquette mentioned that the new design relied more on the brick material than the wood-pattern paneling from what was originally proposed. Cementitious siding was now proposed instead of metal siding.

D.LaPointe stated that the windows of the Champlain Housing Trust building and the market rate building no longer matched. B.Niquette answered that it was important to the applicants that the two buildings be seen as distinct from each other. C.Sawyer added that many buildings in the Downtown did not match up with neighboring buildings in light of their fenestration.

D.LaPointe asked if the DAB had seen these same plans and been made aware that the Champlain Housing Trust building had also been updated. The answer from the applicants was affirmative on both points.

M.Manahan asked for public comment, and there was none.

Hearing nothing further, M.Manahan closed the hearing.

3. **Case #2019-017 / City of St. Albans / 10 Maiden Lane / Parcel #14056008 and 11022012** Applicant seeks Conditional Use review for three additional housing units. This property is in the Business 1 (B1) District.

M.Manahan invited the applicants to come forward and swore in those wishing to submit testimony.

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

B.Niquette (for future owner Grant Butterfield) explained that the request was to expand from the approved 60 units to 63 units. He said that many aspects of the project were not changing from the original DRB approval of the 60 units. He explained that five new parking spaces had been dedicated to the commercial portion of the project in a nearby City lot, and five spaces on the site had been dedicated for the proposed three residential units.

O.Manahan asked how the spaces on the site would be allocated. B.Niquette said that the parking entry system would limit entry based on a pass system. When asked, he answered that there was no proposed physical designation between the commercial spaces and the residential uses – it would be a matter of who gets passes. He explained that the agreement for the 5 off-site spaces was for a City-owned lot within 500 feet of the project.

M.Manahan asked for public comment, and there was none.

Hearing nothing further, M.Manahan closed the hearing.

4. **Case #2019-013 / St. Albans Shopping Center, Inc. / 133 North Main Street / Parcel #11063139 CONTINUATION** Applicant seeks approval for a Site Plan Review to adjust the parking layout and to install a sidewalk in front of Rite-Aid. This property is in the Business 1 (B1) District.

M.Manahan invited the applicants to come forward and swore in those wishing to submit testimony.

D.Southwick introduced the application and submitted the staff report for the record. His report included a list of typically required items that were not included on the site plan presented tonight. He also included the recommendation of the Design Advisory Board.

Steve Ploesser (for the applicant) said that they did not have building dimensions on the plan at this time and that they did not have time to add the neighboring property owner data to the site plan yet.

S.Ploesser pointed out that the revision date on the table on the site plan was June 25, 2019. He summarized the plan as well as the changes that had been made since the Design Advisory Board meeting.

Answering a question, S.Ploesser confirmed that the Yield to Pedestrian signs would be placed on bollards.

S.Ploesser noted that there was not a construction sequence on the plans, but he stated that this is a 2019 project as soon as it is approved.

M.Manahan asked for public comment.

Tim Hawkins asked if there would be asphalt patching on the project and asked that the DRB require that the entire parking lot be paved. He said that maintenance of the parking lot had been an issue in the past, and that there was normally a list of things that needed to be fixed or addressed. He said the parking lot had some troubling cracks. He noted bollards missing, lights that don't work, bushes intruding into the sidewalk, litter, and random signs in the greenbelt. He said that the empty storefronts could use cleaning and maintenance. He also complained about the issues with the large snow piles over the winter. He noted some gaps in the brick wall of the Planet Fitness building. He asked the DRB to look at the entire site plan and require a timeline for these things to be addressed.

M.Manahan asked about the paving plan. S.Ploesser answered that they take all of their shopping center seriously. He said they had done \$75,000 in paving last year and \$100,000 on the columns, sidewalks and façade of the site. He apologized for the granite bollards and broken posts, and their replacements are on hand to be installed. He said that they are scheduled to paving the lower half of the parking lot, and that there is one catch basin that needs repairing. He said they would stay on top of the litter, at least 3 days a week. They had a letter from the City about the snow piles, and they would look into putting that work out to bid to new contractors to move those piles in a timelier manner. He clarified that he did not know exactly how much they plan to re-pave. He took note about the complaint about the brick wall.

D.LaPointe asked where the bushes were intruding over the sidewalk. T.Hawkins and S.Ploesser pointed them out along the sidewalk on the west edge of the parkinglot along Route 7. S.Ploesser said that those bushes would be trimmed.

D.Southwick stated that last winter, a snow pile had been removed soon after a letter of inquiry had been sent out.

M.Manahan asked if the applicant would be willing to police the signs in the greenbelt. He answered in the affirmative.

Hearing nothing further, M.Manahan closed the hearing.

C. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Planning & Development update

i. Appeal on 295 Lake Street Sketch Plan Decision update

D.Southwick stated that the appeal of the sketch plan had been withdrawn for now.

- ii. 211 Lake Street update
D.Southwick stated that there was no update and that City counsel was keeping the case active.

2. Enforcement update

- i. 133 North Main Street

D.Southwick reported that he and S.Ploesser had done a walk of the shopping center to discuss many site conditions and complaints.

He also reported that City staff were looking out for greenbelt signs being placed by business outside the City.

3. Approval of April 1, 2019 Meeting Minutes – D&V

The minutes presented did not reflect changes that had been handed in to staff last time. The approval was tabled for now.

4. Approval of June 3, 2019 Meeting Minutes - D&V

Motion by D.LaPointe to approve the minutes of June 3, 2019, as edited. Second by O.Manahan and approved with all in favor.

5. Confirm next meeting date and time. **Monday, August 5, 2019 6:00 PM**

M.Manahan said that she would likely not be able to attend but that DRB would stick with the date.

6. Other

C.Sawyer reported that there were three candidates for DRB Alternates.

D. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none.

E. ENTER DELIBERATIVE SESSION – D&V

Motion by D.LaPointe to move into Deliberative Session. Second by O.Manahan and approved with all in favor at 8:12 PM.

Minutes approved at August 5, 2019 meeting. Motion by O.Manahan to approve minutes July 1, 2019, as edited. Second by D.LaPointe and approved with all in favor.