

**ST. ALBANS CITY DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
6:30 PM MONDAY JULY 2, 2018  
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NO. MAIN STREET**

**MINUTES**

**Board Members Present:** Rebecca Pfeiffer, Vice-Chair; Jackie DesLauriers; Dick Thayer; Owen Manahan; Judith Leonard (alternate); Denis LaPointe (alternate)

**Board Members Absent:** Megan Manahan-Bliss, Chair

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

1. **Call to Order** – Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm
  - a. **Pledge of Allegiance**
  - b. **Consider any additions or deletions to the agenda** – Case #2018-017 has been withdrawn.
  - c. **Assign Alternates (as necessary)** – Both Judith Leonard and Denis LaPointe were named as alternates.
  
2. **Development Review Segment– Public Hearings:**
  - a. **Case 2018-012 / 170 Federal Street / Parcel # 22033170 Major Site Plan Review – Requests approval for a Major Site Plan to include the addition of a greenhouse.** No Board member has any conflict with this case. Mr. Southwick reviewed the case including the staff comments and relevant previous Zoning Actions. The case has been publically warded with certified letters to the abutters. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked why the DAB recommended a different location. Mr. Southwick stated that the DAB had concerns with the lack of sunshine in the current proposed location. Jacob Holzberg-Hill, Technology Instructor was present as applicant. He stated that part of his curriculum includes outdoor work such as street tree planting, drainage etc. This would be joint effort with the culinary program. The culinary program is excited about getting students to learn how to grow herbs not just prepare them. The greenhouse is a prefab model. The school administrators thought that a kit would be a good first step. It has a 10 year warranty. It would not have plumbing. The plan is to run a hose from an outdoor faucet. The water use doesn't necessitate a drain. There would only be the loss of one parking space. There was an addition of three feet for winter plowing and door swing accessibility. Member LaPointe asked if the indicated location was the ideal spot for the growing of plants. Mr. Holzberg-Pill stated that this location was the only one that was offered by the school administration. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked if the proposed greenhouse would be on a foundation. Mr. Holzberg-Pill stated that the greenhouse is attached to a metal frame that would be bolted to the ground.  
**Lily Gamache** – she asked what the growing season would be and what would be done for the runoff. Mr. Holzberg-Pill stated that one of the purposes of the greenhouse was to extend the growing season. If they are lucky, they would make it to Thanksgiving as it

is not heated. It would be about an eight month growing season. Mr. Holzberg-Pill stated that the parking lot and the roof are both impervious surfaces so the run off would go where it normally does. The plants in the greenhouse would be in boxes and done by drip irrigation and by hand so he does not see excessive runoff.

- b. **Case 2018-016 / Martha's Kitchen/ Parcel # 23049139 – Requests approval for a Conditional Use for the operation of a soup kitchen.** No Board member has any conflict with this case. Mr. Southwick reviewed the case including the staff comments and relevant previous Zoning Actions. The case has been publically warded with certified letters to the abutters. Bob Begley, Guardian administrator for Martha's Kitchen was present as the applicant. The kitchen wants to move from the current location on Main Street to Lake Street. They have 15 churches supporting them and serve 9,000 to 24,000 meals. They open up seven days a week. Over last year to two years, they have seen a 45% increase in the number of meals served. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked what the purpose of the move was. Mr. Begley stated that they needed more space and would be moving to a location that they own instead of rent. Member Manahan asked if they planned to continue with the outdoor seating that had been approved previously by the DRB. Mr. Begley stated that they do not plan to do that. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked what the hours of operation were. Mr. Begley stated that they are open from 11:00 – 12:30 for lunch and 8:00 – 9:00 for breakfast. They are open 365 days of the year. Christmas and holidays they are open all day. Jason Wetherby, Board member of Martha's Kitchen gave information on how this move might impact the community. He stated that most of the traffic is foot or public and public transit so it should not increase the footprint substantially. Sober living is to the East and Northwest Medical Center is to the west. There is a residence behind the building but there is a fence to separate the properties. This has been sufficient in the past. Community has expressed a desire to move Martha's Kitchen from Main Street. Member Leonard asked how many can Martha's Kitchen seat. Mr. Begley stated that, currently, they could seat 45 and that they are not planning to increase that number at the new location. They can serve from 75-80 but they must come and go.
- c. **Case 2018-017/ 36 Brainerd Street / Parcel # 11013036– WITHDRAWN Requests approval for a Major Site Plan for the re-construction of a multi-family (3 unit) dwelling.**
- d. **Case 2018-018 and 019 / 85 No. Main Street / Parcel # 14063085; 89 No. Main Street / 14063089; 99 No. Main Street / 11063099; 8 Congress Street / 11022008; and 8-10-12-14 Maiden Lane – Requests approval for Conditional Use for residential dwelling units at a density greater than 1 per 2,000 square feet in lot space and for swelling units on the first floor.** No Board member has any conflict with this case. Mr. Southwick reviewed the case including the staff comments and relevant previous Zoning Actions. The case has been publically warded with certified letters to the abutters. Vice Chair Pfeiffer opened the hearing for both cases simultaneously. Dominic Cloud, City Manager represented City Hall. He started by stating that there are four boxes that this

checks. First long awaited need for a new public safety facility. CCV would come downtown. Second 25,000 square feet of mixed use commercial. The top two floors would be CCV and NWMMC. NWMMC would be administrative space. The bottom floor would be commercial space. There would be a new affordable housing; 30 units owned and operated by Champlain Housing Trust as well as 30 new market rate housing units. All buildings would have parking underneath. He stated that they are doing a two phase approval process. The first phase is conditional use and site plan approval. The second phase is finalized designs. It cannot move forward until the second approval is received. David White with White and Burke Real Estate Investment Advisors spoke to present the overall project. He stated that he has been involved with the City of St. Albans for about seven years. This project covers many different buttons for Downtown St. Albans. He is hoping for the hearing to close tonight as they are on a tight time frame. He understands that the two phase approval is unusual but they welcome the condition that they can't act on the plans until there is approval for the final architectural design. Mr. White reviewed the plans. The City recently purchased 12 Congress and Maiden Lane. On Maiden Lane, there would be two residential buildings that would abut each other with a parting wall. On the corner of Main Street and Congress, there would be one building. The first floor would be about 4,000 square feet and upper floors about 47,000 square feet. There would be an architectural design on the corner of the building on Congress and Main. There would be some sort of screen to hide the parking from Main and Congress. On Maiden Lane, Champlain Housing Trust would be on the northern end of the building with the entrance on Congress. The market street housing would be on the Southeast section of the building with an entrance on Maiden Lane across from the library. Parking would be below the building. There would be no access to the residential building on Main. The 12 Congress building would remain. He reviewed the concerns of the Design Review Board and what they have done to address those concerns. They are proposing a loading zone on Congress by doing a 2 foot curb cut. There would be no delivery truck access on Main Street. The alley that was originally proposed as truck delivery would maybe become a communal green space. The City would operate the parking and own the land. The buildings would not be owned by the City. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer what would be the total number of dwellings. Mr. White introduced Pete Garceau to review the technical points on the site plan. Mr. Garceau stated that four buildings would be demolished and that 12 Congress would remain. He reviewed the site grading plan. There would be a 432 elevation at grade with a sidewalk adjacent to the building. There would be a retaining wall cut down ten feet and then a gradual slope up to the sidewalk that is on the back side of the commercial buildings. There would be drainage that would be picked up at the curb adjacent to the sidewalk. There would be two catch basins that would drain to the existing storm drain on Congress. Due to the age of the drain on Congress, it would be replaced by a larger main line and would meet up with the Main Street trunk line. It would be deeper and have a new manhole. He reviewed the utility plan. Water would connect to the existing water main that runs up and down Congress Street. There would be a hydrant on the Southeast end of the building. He met with the Fire Chief who that approved the plan. There would be two lines that run into the residential

building and a separate line that services the commercial building. In terms of poles, they would be taking out the dormant pole and using the other pole to feed the transformer. The line would be buried. For lighting, they are proposing two lights in the middle of the parking lot. On Maiden Lane, the power lines would be run underground. Member Manahan asked if the runoff would hit the parking lot than the catch basins. Mr. Garceau stated that roof drains would go down the piers directly into the catch basins. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked what would be done with what soil is excavated. Mr. Cross stated that some of the soil is contaminated due to fires and such. He has done a process where they kept the clean soil and hauled off the contaminated soil. Member Manahan asked if there would be a continuous flow through on the parking. Mr. Cross stated that it would flow. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked about the slope. Mr. Garceau stated that the grade is only 2 -3 %. It would be very gradual. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked about snow storage or removal. Mr. Cross stated that it would be removed by the City. Mr. White introduced Mike Willard, landscape architect with DHB. The existing trees would remain on Main. They are proposing two new trees on Congress. They would replace the two that are currently there. Landscape area in parking would have medium shrubs or perennials. They would be all native Vermont species that would be very low maintenance. The South side would have understory planting along the foundation of the building. There would be three new trees on Maiden Lane. There would be a five foot strip between residential and sidewalk that would have shrubs. Member Leonard asked who would be responsible for the care of the landscape. Mr. Cloud stated that the City would maintain the landscape. Mr. White introduced Pete Cross to review the demolition of buildings. The buildings proposed to be demolished are 83 – 87 Main; 89 North Main and 10 Congress. Sue Jameli, an architectural historian, was hired to review the buildings. She stated that 12 Congress was the only building that still had historical significance. The other buildings were either too damaged or have had too many modifications over the years which removed their historical significance. They had an engineering assessment done. It assessed the cosmetic conditions of the buildings and provided cost estimates that compared the costs of building a new building versus reconditioning the old buildings. It showed that it would be expensive to renovate and it wasn't feasible to keep the buildings. The age and variety of buildings would not meet the City's needs. Maiden Lane building was built in the late 1940s. It is considered a newer vintage but over 50 years old. Champlain Housing provided a letter that stated that Maiden Lane was not worth renovating. Maiden Lane is not listed as contributing historical per Sue Jameli. Member LaPointe suggested a plaque marking the historic contributions that these buildings made. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked if any alternative analysis had been done with regard to keeping the buildings and renting them, etc. Mr. White stated that the City has owned the properties for over two years. They have actively tried to find other uses for the property and have not found anyone who wants to use them. They will put a notice in the paper asking if anyone wants to relocate the buildings to salvage them. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked if they had looked at the alternative of incorporating them into the building. Mr. Cross stated that there had been no analysis done. The buildings don't fit the program and are not feasible to renovate. Member Leonard asked if any effort been made to renovate. Mr. White stated that the

City has tried to no avail. Member LaPointe asked how the footprint would be unchanged when 60 units would replace 23 units. Mr. Cloud stated that it would replace subsidized units. The City went to CHT and asked if they would be willing to work with them. CHT has no interest in keeping Maiden Lane. When looking at the site costs, they realized there was leftover land and needed increment came up with the 30 market rate apartments. Mr. White stated that there would be a larger footprint in the same general space. Member Manahan asked how many bedrooms would be in each unit. There would be 18 one bedroom and 12 two bedroom. Mr. White stated that many tenants of the CHT do not have vehicles. They walk or use public transportation. Mr. White introduced David Saladino, Traffic Engineer with VHP who reviewed the parking and traffic analysis. He stated that the busiest times of day were in the morning from 7-9 and in the evening from 4-6. They also looked at how many trips would be generated. The net increase would be 51 in morning and 65 evening with a standard 5% reduction for non-vehicles. So there would be a net increase of 48. They distributed the trips onto Main and Congress and increased by 9% from actual. They compared the numbers at the opening of the facility and then 5 years into the future. He reviewed the table of no build vs. build and showed that there would be minimal change. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked has there been any consideration on how to alleviate the flow. Mr. Saladino stated that the grade does not warrant a change. Mr. Saladino reviewed the parking. He stated that the parking demanded 81 on site and 11 adjacent. They then looked at individual uses NWMMC, CCV, etc. The level was projected over the level of the day with peak parking demand and then spread out. There would be 30 spaces. CCV peaks at 10 or 11 am and then again at 4 or 5 pm. Students would all be directed to park in the parking garage. He stated that there was a sufficient buffer built in so that demand does not overwhelm the capacity. In terms of off-site parking, they estimated that the retail parking peaking around 10 and CCV would peak at 27. All total 36 would be the peak on off site. They compared with the parking garage uses downtown and there would be ample parking in the downtown garage. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked if there would be a gate for entrance. Member Manahan asked what would be required to access the parking. Mr. White stated that they haven't finalized what method would be used. They want to make it easy and convenient. Member Manahan asked if there would be any way to discourage students from parking at Ace Hardware or on Main Street. Mr. Cloud stated that they are offering the police department's services. Member LaPointe stated that it is hard to see when exiting at Congress and what would be done to help. Mr. Saladino stated that there has been no crash data in the last five years that has indicated that too much of a problem. Member Manahan asked that when they reline of Congress Street, how many spaces would be eliminated. Mr. Cross stated that one would be eliminated. Vice Chair Pfeiffer asked that looking at the change in the parking structure on Congress, would they lose the space next to Ace Hardware. Mr. White stated yes but one would be added in front of twelve congress and four next to Maiden. Member Manahan asked if there was room for traffic and parking. Mr. Cross stated that they plan on removing 2 feet of the green belt to accommodate. Mr. White reviewed the application for Conditional Use. He stated that Conditional Use has five standards that need to be met to be considered

Conditional Use. The significant thing is the importance of the mixed use concept. One is the density of use – a residential use of downtown adds vibrancy. The municipal plan of St. Albans talks about it multiple times. In appropriate locations, commercial is on the first floor. Maiden Lane is not a good space for commercial use due to it being away from the Main commercial center of the city. Residential use is the best option. He reviewed the five conditions that had to be met.

1. Detrimental impact - None.
2. Character of area affected – The City has encouraged infill, density and residential use Downtown.
3. Traffic – This would have a negligible effect.
4. Bylaws in effect – They have not found any bylaw that this would effect.
5. Renewable energy impact – None.

Member Manahan asked what the current occupancy use of Maiden Lane was. Mr. Cloud stated that there were twenty-three units and three are currently vacant. Member Leonard asked about the current tenants? CHT would temporarily relocate them. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked if the intent was that residents would come back once project is completed. Mr. Cloud stated that the intent was to have them come back. Member LaPointe asked if the tenants had been warned. Mr. Marty Manahan with the City of St. Albans stated that he has spoken to the current residents of Maiden Lane many times. Vice-Chair Pfeiffer asked if the current residents would have any type priority over other tenants. Mr. Bill Niquette stated that the current residents would have preferred access. Member Manahan asked what the proposed ownership structure of market rate would be after construction. Mr. Cloud stated that the building would be owned by an LLC. Mr. Grant Butterfield stated that the apartments would not be sold individually or converted to affordable housing. Member Manahan asked if there would be certain parking spaces designated for each unit. Mr. White stated that each building has a certain number parking spaces for each building. There would be thirty spaces for the market rate housing – one per unit and fifteen for subsidized housing.

**Michael Conner** – 30 Congress Street – He stated that he believes that this project is sorely needed and would eliminate an eye sore that is sitting across from their buildings. As a neighbor, he had a few concerns. He asked how tall would the housing be. Mr. White responded that it would be within the 60 feet allowed for zoning. Mr. Connor asked about the roof design? Mr. White stated that they anticipate a flat roof. Mr. Connor stated that the gate for parking would limit to the residential use and would create issues. He is also concerned with vision around entrances of streets.

**Lily Gamache** – She stated that the parking would be a problem without a doubt.

**Gordon Winters** – He owns Ace Hardware building next door. He stated that he has had several questions and received a lot of cooperation from the City in answering them. He stated that they need to look at storm water coming down Congress and make sure it worked. He was concerned that the truck unloading would it block his driveway. They have trucks coming in daily. Mr. Cross stated that they would run a program called Allturn which predicts the turning radii. Member Manahan asked how far up Congress are they proposing on striping. Mr. Cross stated that they would stripe up to Ace

Hardware driveway. Mr. Cloud stated that the main parking message that the City has is that, if there are problems, let the City know what the experience is so they can make adjustments such as adding an additional enforcement officer or adjusting hours of enforcement officers.

- e. **Case 2018-019 / 85 No. Main Street / Parcel # 14063085; 89 No. Main Street / 14063089; 99 No. Main Street / 11063099; 8 Congress Street / 11022008; and 8-10-12-14 Maiden Lane – Requests a Major Site Plan approval.** No Board member has any conflict with this case. Mr. Southwick reviewed the case including the staff comments and relevant previous Zoning Actions. The case has been publically warded with certified letters to the abutters. **HEARING COMBINED WITH CASE 2018-018**

**3. Other Business –**

- a. **Planning and Development Updates** – Mr. Southwick stated that they should be moving forward on zoning software this fiscal year
- b. **Enforcement Updates** – Mr. Southwick stated that notification went out to George Wood tire. He has talked to Peter Decker. He got the card back that they have received their notices.
- c. **Approval of May 7, 2018 Meeting Minutes** – Member Manahan made a motion to approve. Member Leonard seconded it. It passed unanimously.
- d. **Approval of June 2, 2018 Meeting Minutes** – Member LaPointe made a motion to approve. Member Thayer seconded it. It passed with two abstentions - Members Manahan and Leonard
- e. Confirm next meeting date: **Monday August 6, 2018 6:30 p.m.**
- f. **Other**

**4. Public Comment – None**

- 5. Enter Deliberative Session** – Member Manahan made a motion to enter deliberative session. Member Thayer seconded the motion. It passed unanimously at 9:15.

St Albans Development Review Board - Regular Meeting  
2-Jul-18

Thank you for attending. Please sign in

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Michelle Monroe	St. Albans Messenger		

