MEETING MINUTES
ST. ALBANS CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
6:00 PM MONDAY MAY 20, 2019
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NO. MAIN STREET

Approved June 17, 2019

Board Members Present: David Barber, Chair; Luke Richter, Vice-Chair; Michael Gawne; Stan Bradeen; Amy Paradis

Board Members Absent: None.

Staff Members Present: Chip Sawyer, Director of Planning Development, also taking minutes

Public Present: See attached sign-in sheet

1. **Open Meeting: Chair D.Barber opened the meeting at 6:06 PM.**
   a. Discuss additions or deletions to agenda

      There was none.

2. Approval of Minutes

   Motion by S.Bradeen to approve the minutes of April 15, 2019, as presented. Second by L.Richter and approved with all in favor, except for A.Paradis abstaining.

3. Consider request for a district boundary change on Spruce Street.

   D.Barber asked why the description of this agenda item was not more specific to a particular address. C.Sawyer answered that he was aware someone may make a request for a particular lot, but that request would not limit any potential amendments that the Planning Commission may want to direct staff to prepare. Warnings and agendas would be more specific if any amendments were actually proposed for official hearings.

   Ross Arsenault introduced himself and distributed some pictures of properties that the Beverage Mart has purchased over the years. He summarized the redevelopment of 5 Spruce St. He has recently purchased 7 Spruce St., which squares off the Bev. Mart property. He opined that 7 Spruces was a blighted property. He is asking the Planning Commission to draft an amendment to change 7 Spruce to the B1 Central Business Subdistrict (it is currently Low Density Residential). Would like to be able to have the entire property in a commercial district and eventually sell as commercial someday in the future.

M.Gawne asked R.Arsenault if 7 Spruce would be integrated into the entire Beverage Mart complex. The answer given was yes.

S.Bradeen asked what R.Arsenault would like to do at 7 Spruce. The answer given was no idea at this time, except for possible snow storage.

M.Gawne mentioned that the Planning Commission could look further than just 7 Spruce for an amendment.

D.Barber mentioned that the neighborhood could be looking at the demolition of 3 properties, including 5 Spruce in 2013.

R.Arsenault stated that those properties are not saleable in their current condition.

D.Barber stated his concern that business uses could creep into the Spruce St. neighborhood.

C.Sawyer offered some process clarification in that the Planning Commission could not put conditions on a specific project as part of a regulatory amendment. Considerations needed to be limited to potential uses, densities, and other standards.

S.Bradeen stated that the question is whether or not a new commercial district would diminish the neighborhood and what uses are appropriate.

L.Richter asked R.Arsenault about future plans for 7 Spruce. The answer given was probably a house on top of a garage someday. The garage could be used for equipment storage.

L.Richter asked then why R.Arsenault wanted the change. The answer given was that the storage would complement the Beverage Mart business.

M.Gawne state that he is more likely to want to look at the bigger picture.

Deb Lawrence stated that she has concerns. Fears that Beverage Mart will expand beyond 7 Spruce. Feels that there is too much traffic on the street. There are issues with wrong-way traffic and litter. She does not support more B1 district properties in the neighborhood. Favors only a residential use for 7 Spruce.

Lisa Jett complained about light pollution, litter and traffic, including customer traffic through her yard at 11 Spruce St.

Karen Sullivan complained about a lot of congestion at the corner.

There was discussion about whether Spruce St. was one-way along its entire length.

Theodore Sprunger stated his worries about more people and traffic.

R.Arsenault stated that he will not expand his business to 7 Spruce St. He also stated that, if he purchased 9 Spruce, he would not seek to add it to a commercial district. When asked, he stated that he needed 7 Spruce to be in a commercial district for the marketability of the lot.

R.Arsenault then stated that he would not build an apartment on 7 Spruce St.

S.Bradeen stated that a future owner of 7 Spruce could make it a business use if it were to be re-zoned now. He stated that he was curious about looking at the surrounding area.

L.Richter asked if the condition of 7 Spruce was currently a public health issue. The general answer from the audience was "not really."

L.Richter asked if the Midas property was a nuisance to the area. L.Jett answered that it was in terms of lighting and tire piles. She also said that the food smells from Hoss's Dog House could be a nuisance sometimes.

S.Bradeen stated that the Planning Commission shouldn't take too long on this issue and that some issues in the neighborhood cannot be controlled by zoning.

M.Gawne stated that the Planning Commission can come up with setback rules, etc. to help deal with quality of life issues.

D.Barber stated the Planning Commission's decision needs to be based on what makes sense for the neighborhood.

M.Gawne asked if the June meeting could be a walk around the Spruce St. area.

D.Barber and S.Bradeen had a discussion about looking at multiple similar properties in the area and not just basing these matters on property owner requests.

D.Lawrence submitted a list of signatures (attached) from residents of the Spruce St. neighborhood.

M.Gawne and Marie Bessette had a discussion about possibility dead-ending a portion of Spruce St. one day and separating the neighborhood from the Beverage Mart section.

C.Sawyer requested further direction from the Planning Commission and opined that the solution should be something other than the B1 District. He stated that any changes should be transitionary in nature between the B1 and low density districts.

D.Barber stated that he does not want to lose any more green lawns in the area.

D.Lawrence worried about snow dumping on 7 Spruce and what it would do to drainage to neighbors. T.Sprunger was worried about litter in the snow.

The Planning Commission decided by consensus to do a walk of the area at 5:30 PM for their meeting in June.

There was a discussion about the Handy Lake Street lot and how districts could be redrawn to be more transitionary.

a. Consider preparation of an amendment and hearing.

   There was no motion or action.

b. Consider waiver of re-zoning fee.

   There was no motion or action

4. Discuss proposals and ideas for Land Development Regulations

   No discussion in addition to above.

5. Other Business.
   a. Update on Certified Local Government status

      C.Sawyer gave an update on the idea of pursuing Certified Local Government status with the VT Division of Historic Preservation and the National Park Service. S.Bradeen asked about the typical scope of historic survey updates. He also mentioned doing a historic property walk at some point.

   b. Planning & Development update.

      S.Bradeen said he had some questions that he would send to C.Sawyer.

   c. Other. – None.

6. Public Comment.

   None.

Motion by M.Gawne to adjourn. Second by S.Bradeen and approved at 8:00 PM with all in favor.

PC 5/20/19

THANK YOU FOR COMING. PLEASE SIGN IN.

NAME	EMAIL	PHONE
Ross ARSENAULT	ROSSARSENaulT@yahoo	527-7437
Shelley Arsenault	bensonelliot15@gmail.com	527-7437
Lesa D. Jett	Ldjett2018@Gmail.com	524-6865
Dir Lawrence	57dylawrence@gmail.com	524-1191
Marie Bessette	mbessetiii25@usn.com	524-5209
Karen Sullivan		524-2074
Theodor Sprunger	SPrunger62@gmail.com	802-598-7336

OCT. 1994 CORNER OF SPRUCE & LAKE ST.

Beverage Mart
DISCOUNT BEVERAGE
& LIQUOR OUTLET
ICE

Future Site

of The Beverage Mart's

New Bottle Redemption Center

BEVERAGE MART
DRIVE-UP BOTTLE REDEMPTION
OPEN 6 AM TO 9 PM
7/9/2002

DANGER
FALLING
ICE & SNOW
PEPSI

195 LAKE ST.

195 LAKE ST. HOSS'S DOGG HOUSE

We the residence on Spruce Street are opposed to residential changes and the expansion of the Beverage Mart

1.	Debrah J Laurence	10 Spruce
2	Lesa D. Getti	11 Spruce
3	Donna Freeman	
4 ~~3~~	Arthur Gorz	14 Spruce
5 ~~4~~	James Cross	14 Spruce
6 ~~5~~	Suzanne Roberge	9 No. Elm St.
7 ~~6~~	Emelia M Scott	15 Spruce
8 ~~7~~	David Scott	15 Spruce St.
9 ~~8~~	Karen Sullivan	22 Spruce St.
10 ~~9~~	Lorraine Sullivan	31 Lasalle St.
11 ~~10~~	Theodor Stringer	12 SPRUCE ST