

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COHOES PLANNING BOARD HELD AT 97 MOHAWK STREET
COMMON COUNCIL CHAMBERS
JANUARY 9, 2023 at 6:30PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: **Mr. John Carroll, Vice Chair**
 Mr. Joe Nadeau
 Mr. Joe Moloughney

ABSENT: **Mr. Robert Bucher**
 Ms. Stephanie Couture
 Ms. Kizzy Williams

ALSO PRESENT: **Joseph Seman-Graves, City Planner**
 Sharon Butler, Administrative Assistant
 Tess Drauschak, Assistant Planner

Vice Chair Carroll called the January Planning Board meeting to order at 6:30 pm and asked for roll call. Roll Call; Member Bucher, Member Couture and Member Williams were absent.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES FROM THE NOVEMBER 14, 2022 MEETING

Vice Chair Carroll; first on the agenda is the meeting minutes from the November 14th meeting, as we do not have enough members present to vote, the minutes will be tabled until next month.

Motion to table the minutes was made by Member Nadeau 2nd by Vice Chair Carroll

	YES	NO
Robert Bucher		
Joseph Nadeau		
Mark DeFruscio		
John Carroll		
Stephanie Couture		
Kizzy Williams		

CONSIDERATION OF A CHANGE OF USE FOR 20 WHITE STREET

Vice Chair Carroll next on the agenda is the expansion of operation of 20 White Street is the applicant or anyone here to speak on this? No one was present so this item was moved to item #2 on the agenda.

CONSIDERATION OF A SITE PLAN FOR SIGNS AT 378 SARATOGA STREET

Vice Chair Carroll we will move to 378 Saratoga Street Hoffman Carwash. Who is here to speak on this project? Mr. Ron Levesque with Sign Studio representing Hoffman Car Wash approached the board; we are here just for site plan branding for signs. There are some signs here that were presented to the Planning Board during the development of the site itself as far as the building, the layout of the building and I believe those signs were here—he pointed them out on the screen. I think in the original plan they may have presented to you a free standing sign that was located at the entrance of the building on Saratoga – pointed it out on the screen. What we’re proposing is moving that sign to this location—shown on screen, the reason we want to do that is it is the best visibility, we are 13 feet setback in the front but if you look to the 787 side and to the Saratoga side at Dyke Ave it is 13 feet back from the property. The reason why we did that is because it is supposed to be 15 feet and it helped balance it out between the driveway and the property line and that is where the

fence is but there is also State owned or City owned land in the front there, which pushes that property line back even further. So even though its 13 feet back from the property line it is still a considerable amount back from the driveways. There won't be any issues with visibility with vehicles from either direction there. What we also have which wasn't on the original plan is a neon open sign. Typically businesses put an open sign on their business, they won't submit a plan they won't get a sign permit they will just go ahead and install the sign on the building. But Hoffman Car Wash is planning on having a certain type of neon sign, it's kind of retro, it looks nice and it is built custom just for them. So we like to put it on the site plan and like to go ahead and permit it so when we put it on the building all the signs we have will be properly permitted.

Vice Chair Carroll; you will see it coming north on 787?

Mr. Levesque; yes, it will be on the south side but you will be able to see it from the north and the south. And now we move on to the built signs. All the Hoffman locations have the logo either on the driveway, on the exit lane or both. Depending on how the building is located on the property, this building is perpendicular to the road so we would put it towards the road that it is perpendicular to. This has 3 roads and the entrance and the exit are both visible, we would put the logo above at the entrance and the exit on both sides of that building.

Vice Chair Carroll; but you will put the open sign only on one side right?

Mr. Levesque yes it would be on the side with the most traffic, without putting the open sign on all sides of the building trying to be conservative and just put it on the traffic side. And then the other thing we have is way finding signs. The way we based the way finding signs for Hoffman Car Wash is the way the traffic flows through the car wash and the automatic system that we have that pushes the vehicles through, it kind of determined that the ideal height and size are more in tune with the NYS DOT, with how they direct traffic on main roadways that when cars exit that tunnel they can immediately see where to go next and it doesn't hold up traffic and we have to stop the people from coming in through the exit lanes. All the signs here are a little bit higher and a little bit bigger so that traffic continues to flow. So all these signs here adhere more towards NYS traffic flow devices as opposed to any other things that we could come up with. And we have done these on all other locations and it has worked very well.

Vice Chair Carroll; these are C2 and C3 correct?

Mr. Levesque; yes C1 is the sign at the main entrance and then we have C2 –applicant went to the screen and pointed out the signs and where they are located (C1, C2, and C3) he stated that it would direct people which way to go into the car wash, then to the vacuum area.

Vice Chair Carroll asked if any members had any concerns with the open sign, the size or location of it?

Member Nadeau; stated that he is wondering if the open sign is necessary, it just seems like a lot of lighting on that site.

Mr. Levesque explained that they did go up and down the corridor and we wanted to make sure we are not asking for anything more than what other sites have on that corridor.

Vice Chair Carroll are we talking Saratoga?

Mr. Levesque Saratoga and 787

Vice Chair Carroll 787 doesn't have much on it.

Mr. Levesque we looked at both sides of 787 and Saratoga and we noticed that there are freestanding signs close to the road on 787, some will have 3 signs on one side of their building. We are looking for 3 sides --one sign per side of the building, so basically we're looking for 3 sides with one sign per side. And that is the extent of the building signs.

Vice Chair Carroll; Joe do you have anything?

Member Moloughney; it's clear what the intent is.

Mr. Levesque; if it's the building signs, the lettering is black so when you see that during the day it's black during the day, at night it lights up, it has a diffuser in it so that it will light up white at night but it won't be a bright light.

Vice Chair Carroll; and they're all within the size that is allowed, is it something that zoning would have to look at?

Joe Seman-Graves; it has to go to zoning, several of the signs are oversized. So it will go to zoning at the end of the month so this meeting would be no action but recommendations for the zoning board.

Member Nadeau; the lighting at the entrance itself, on Saratoga is that necessary?

Mr. Levesque; the entrance signs?

Member Nadeau; yes. The 2x4, I know you talked about visibility.

Mr. Levesque; yeah, those signs are 2'x4' signs and they are 5 feet high so they aren't very high, they do have illumination so it cuts down on the lighting with them being so close to the ground and in that area it doesn't need to be extremely bright.

Member Nadeau; and they are considerably back from the sidewalk.

Mr. Levesque; yes they are outside the 25' viewing angle to make sure that traffic flowing in and out isn't blocked by the signage.

Vice Chair Carroll; gentlemen any concerns or questions?

Member Moloughney; I'm trying to reconcile the code the way it is written for any ambiguity. Free standing signs, it reads in the code shall not be more than 20 feet, my interpretation of the code is it would be the 1 primary large free-standing sign. All the little ones around the site are technically free-standing, according to the code are they all aggregately all free-standing?

Mr. Levesque; they are all separate parts of the code, you can have a free-standing directional sign.....

Joe Seman-Graves explained the code as it is now, it doesn't give an interpretation of free-standing directional signs compared to free-standing signs. I'm inclined to leave that to zoning just to be cautious about it, I can see where you are coming from and I don't disagree.

Mr. Levesque; I think the difference is the free-standing sign is the Hoffman Car Wash brand and all the other signs are directional, they give directions on where to go next.

Vice Chair Carroll; do we have a recommendation to move it to zoning?

Member Moloughney; yes, my only question is on the site plan given for consideration for signs C1 and C2 they both seem redundant, could you get by with one instead of 2?

Mr. Levesque; we would like to present it as is to zoning if we could and if zoning came back and said that, we do notice that approaching traffic if we had a road sign one from the north and one approaching from the south it would make it easier if we had two.

Vice Chair Carroll; do we want to make a recommendation to move it to zoning?

Joe Seman-Graves; it will have to come back to this board assuming that zoning makes an approval or they ask for any changes.

Vice Chair Carroll; is it more appropriate to table this until we find out what zoning wants to do with the signs?

Joe Seman-Graves; you can table it; I can just pass along the minutes so they have them when they have the discussion.

Vice Chair Carroll; we need a motion to table this application

Motion made by Member Moloughney 2nd by Member Nadeau motion passed unanimously to TABLE the application.

	YES	NO
Bob Bucher	ABSENT	
Joseph Nadeau	X	
Joe Moloughney	X	
Jack Carroll	X	
Stephanie Couture	ABSENT	
Kizzy Williams	ABSENT	

CONSIDERATION OF A CHANGE OF USE/NEW TENANT APPLICATION FOR 20 WHITE STREET

Vice Chair Carroll; next we have 20 White Street; he invited the applicant to approach and give the board an overview of their project.

Ms. Shoniqua Parker approached the board.

Vice Chair Carroll; you want to expand your business model?

Ms. Parker; yes

Vice Chair Carroll; ok tell us what you want to do.

Ms. Parker; so first I would like to extend the hours of the operation from 9am to 7pm to 9am to 10pm. On certain days I will have my grandson so I will only be available certain times. I have been asked if I could do small gatherings or do little parties like Valentine's Day get together. I would like to be able to provide services like that.

Vice Chair Carroll; from what it says here it says ages from 1 to 12, you don't expect to have parties for anything else. Just kiddie parties, birthdays.

Ms. Parker; yes

Member Nadeau asked if there would be any preparation of food on the premises?

Ms. Parker responded no that if people wanted food she would order pizza.

Vice Chair Carroll stated there will be no alcohol or cooking on the premises? Everything is going to be ordered or brought in?

Ms. Parker; yes brought in, she also stated that she would have warmers for food if necessary but no cooking and no alcohol.

Vice Chair Carroll; so basically you are just renting out the space for a party?

Ms. Parker; yes, sometimes I like to do kids' stuff or book to do kids' stuff, like Valentines, Halloween, little get togethers with cupcakes, I have a projector screen so I'd like to do something once a month, I have a popcorn maker, I plan on doing a spa day do little kids nails and pedicures.

Vice Chair Carroll; how many people do you expect at these gatherings?

Ms. Parker; up to 12 kids and the parents and if the parents want to stay with them, but I prefer if they leave them and they come back to get them. I have the rectangular tables for the kids with chairs.

Vice Chair Carroll; so now you are going to have up to 12 kids, with parents you could potentially have 12 cars that need parking. That's tight parking where are you going to direct them to park?

Ms. Parker; on the street, side street

Vice Chair Carroll; there's a municipal lot just a little way up the street that they can use. Did you have any concerns about the parking Joe? (Member Nadeau)

Member Nadeau; I do. You are changing your business model so now you have required parking.

Ms. Parker; I'm not changing it completely, it is still going to be what I do, these events will be maybe on the weekend or every other weekend. It's not going to be an everyday event.

Member Nadeau; it still changes your business, your required parking and I'm not sure that is our jurisdiction to make that call. Is that a zoning issue?

Joe Seman-Graves; planning can waive the parking requirements because there is a municipal lot. The things that should be identified is what the business is, and if you're comfortable with what it is you can waive the parking requirements

Member Nadeau; to the applicant – you understand what that is, you would have to keep it to parties for children with the hopes that parents will be dropping them off but if that changes, then that becomes a whole different venue, then it becomes a parking issue and you would have to come back to here and zoning.

Ms. Parker acknowledged what Member Nadeau was saying to her.

Vice Chair Carroll; is that parking lot right next to Soup in a Bowl is that open for public or is that private?

Joe Seman-Graves; technically that is private it's going to be developed. There is a public lot within 200 feet.

Member Nadeau; obviously you will have to direct your clientele to the public parking.

Member Moloughney; I'm new to the board, your on the ground level of commercial retail space and your current business is from what I understand more of a party planning, your clients come in and talk to you,

Ms. Parker; yes, I have chairs and stuff I rent out, I have a balloon arch things like that

Member Moloughney; ok, and in terms of hosting children's parties, I understand the parking considerations that we have, I mean day time parking, the children's parties are going to be planned right, they aren't going to be Saturday night or when there is a Music Hall event, it's more likely to be in the afternoon or morning, so I don't think it will be creating a huge parking issue.

Vice Chair Carroll; gentlemen anything else?

Member Moloughney; so what are we approving?

Vice Chair Carroll; we are approving the expansion of the operating hours.

Joe Seman-Graves explained to the board about the Change of Use/New Tenant application, with the applicant coming to the board it helps one with the identification of businesses coming in and two it how large to judge what the parking requirements are. He stated that Ms. Parker followed the proper procedures in order to receive her approvals.

Vice Chair Carroll; do we have a motion to accept the application? He opened it up to public comments, being none closed public comments and proceeded with the motion to accept the application.

Motion to approved was made by Member Moloughney 2nd by Member Nadeau motion carried unanimously.

	YES	NO
Robert Bucher	ABSENT	
Joseph Nadeau	X	
Mark DeFruscio	ABSENT	
John Carroll	X	
Stephanie Couture	ABSENT	
Kizzy Williams	ABSENT	

Discussion Items;

It was discussed that at the next meeting the board would vote on a Chair and Vice Chair for the board. It was also discussed to have the voting once a year so other members who may be interested in Chair or Vice Chair would have the opportunity for the roles.

Member Nadeau made a motion to adjourn at 6:56 PM 2nd by Member Moloughney; All in favor, meeting adjourned at 6:56PM

Submitted by:

Sharon Butler

Secretary