

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COHOES PLANNING BOARD HELD AT 97 MOHAWK STREET  
COMMON COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
FEBURARY 13, 2023 at 6:30PM**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**        **Mr. John Carroll, Vice Chair**  
                                       **Mr. Joe Nadeau**  
                                       **Ms. Stephanie Couture**  
                                       **Ms. Kizzy Williams**  
                                       **Mr. Joe Moloughney**

**ABSENT:**                        **Mr. Robert Bucher**

**ALSO PRESENT:**            **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 was absent.

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES FROM THE NOVEMBER 14, 2022 MEETING**

Vice Chair Carroll; first on the agenda is the meeting minutes from the November 14<sup>th</sup> meeting, are there any questions or concerns, being none he asked for a motion to accept the minutes as printed  
 Motion to accept the minutes was made by Member Nadeau 2<sup>nd</sup> by Member Williams

|                   | YES     | NO |
|-------------------|---------|----|
| Robert Bucher     | ABSENT  |    |
| John Carroll      | X       |    |
| Joe Nadeau        | X       |    |
| Stephanie Couture | X       |    |
| Kizzy Williams    | X       |    |
| Joe Moloughney    | ABSTAIN |    |

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 9, 2023 MEETING**

Vice Chair Carroll; next on the agenda is the meeting minutes from the January 9, 2023 meeting. Are there any questions, being none he asked for a motion to accept the meeting minutes.  
 Motion to accept was made by Member Moloughney 2<sup>nd</sup> by Member Nadeau

|                   | YES     | NO |
|-------------------|---------|----|
| Robert Bucher     | ABSENT  |    |
| John Carroll      | X       |    |
| Joe Nadeau        | X       |    |
| Stephanie Couture | ABSTAIN |    |
| Kizzy Williams    | ABSTAIN |    |
| Joe Moloughney    | X       |    |

**CONSIDERATION OF A SITE PLAN APPROVAL FOR SIGNS AT 378 SARATOGA STREET**

Vice Chair Carroll 378 Saratoga Street who do we have here?

Mr. Ron Levesque with Sign Studio representing Hoffman Car Wash approached the board; the last meeting we were here with a proposal of installing 10 signs. We took the site plan to the zoning board and presented it exactly the way we presented it to this board the first time I was here, they approved all of the signs without alterations, they approved it as proposed. So I'm coming back here and asking this board to accept it as proposed.

Vice Chair Carroll; ok does anyone have any concerns, considerations, questions? We did go over this before, the zoning board approved it.

Tess; did confirm that they went to the zoning board and the board did inquire about the illumination of the signs, questioning the number of candelas, I'm not sure if you have a number for that.

Mr. Levesque stated that he gave it to Joe, that he did ask for it and he sent it to him. I don't have it off hand but what's the number you have?

Tess; 50 candelas per square foot

Mr. Levesque both the signs are what they call a day night. So when it's on at night it will turn white and during the day it is black. The light forces its way out but it doesn't get very bright. The electronic message board is controllable so anytime it is overpowering it can be adjusted. Other than that the directional signs are very small, very close to the ground and those are about 29-30 candelas.

Vice Chair Carroll asked the applicant what the candelas are on the lights in the room

Mr. Levesque stated they are about 25.

Vice Chair Carroll ok, so they are capable of being very bright.

Mr. Levesque replied yes they are capable of being bright but it depends on the square footage you have to take into consideration as well. Small signs close to the ground they are only going to reflect out so far. Considering where the building is and the distance if you are familiar with the street signs going north on 787 we won't be as bright as those ours will be half the brightness of those. Ours won't be as bright considering Mohawk Paper who leaves their lights on all the time, so you have a lot of secondary lighting that is going to diffuse the lights coming off the signs.

Vice Chair Carroll I'm running through my head the area there and there is only one house that would be affected by this, it's the green one.

Mr. Levesque and it's going to be perpendicular to that house, it is parallel to that house so it won't be right at the house it will be an angled light which will have a very limited affect.

Vice Chair Carroll asked if letters went out on this.

Sharon responded that letters went out for zoning and there were no concerns.

Member Couture asked about the hours of operation.

Mr. Levesque deferred the question to Hoffmans.

Mr. Kevin Zalaznik approached and stated the hours operation are mostly during the winter until 7PM Sundays until 6PM and during the summer will be until 8PM, but the vacuums are available 24/7

Member Couture asked about the lights that we are looking to approve or deny tonight are they on 24/7 or only during hours of operation?

Mr. Zalaznik they would be on 24 hours.

Vice Chair Carroll asked if any members had any other concerns or questions.

Mr. Mark DeFruscio stated that the house his mother owns is the house just across the tracks, and I would be concerned on how the lighting would impact her and the other thing I'm interested in is are any of these signs going to face towards the highway that could cause people to have vision problems on the highway.

Mr. Levesque responded that they looked at what was already there and they did not ask for any more, they didn't exceed that. We didn't ask to go outside the rules and ask for something more than what is there. It's the same as what you see at the bank. He then showed Mr. DeFruscio on the screen where the signs would be. He did state that the open sign will be turned off.

Tess then stated that we did receive one public comment from Paul Johnston Traffic Commissioner stating his only concern is that the signs on each side of the driveway do not block the site distance to vehicles on Saratoga Street.

Mr. Levesque I can address that. The only thing that is going to be on Saratoga Street is the 2 entrance signs and they aren't going to be any higher than 5 feet high. What we did is place them outside the viewing triangle, which is you take the intersection on 2 sides which would be the north side and the south side. So people coming north are going to be coming in and people coming south are going to be coming in, so take that corridor at the curb line, you are Albany

County and their regulations are you go 20 feet back, so you go 20 feet up the road and you draw a line in between them and that is your triangle, we can't go inside that triangle, that's your viewing triangle. Coming up to that intersection you will be able to see within that viewing triangle any on coming traffic so these signs here are outside that viewing triangle. Vice Chair Carroll I was down there the other day and where the lights are going to be and Mark's mother's house, in the summer time she won't see it, during the winter she will. Are there any other questions from anyone else? Being none do we have a motion to accept the site plan.

Motion to accept the site plan as presented made by Member Williams 2<sup>nd</sup> by Member Couture Motion carried unanimously.

|                   | YES    | NO |
|-------------------|--------|----|
| Bob Bucher        | ABSENT |    |
| John Carroll      | X      |    |
| Joe Nadeau        | X      |    |
| Stephanie Couture | X      |    |
| Kizzy Williams    | X      |    |
| Joe Moloughney    | X      |    |

Vice Chair Carroll; I'd like to thank Mark DeFruscio for his service to this committee officially, put it on the minutes.

**CONSIDERATION OF A SITE PLAN APPROVAL FOR 69 & 73 VLIET STREET**

Vice Chair Carroll; Viet Street who do we have?

Mr. Carl Godfrey owner of Remodel Now approached the board. I noticed that this lot has been vacant since I was a little boy so I decided to buy it and build a brand new 4-unit, upstairs downstairs, 2 bedrooms bath and a half.

Member Moloughney; according to the plans that I have here considering that it is of some historical context, the plans....

Mr. Godfrey; we are working with the historical board as well, we had a meeting already, we already sat down with them. Right there at that intersection, those houses they start changing to siding, some are clap boards some are vinyl the rest of the area are all brick. It wasn't all efficient for us to do all brick build units like that especially because I'm doing the build by myself. So we are proposing to do an 8" lath, that has a wood grain in it, it's going to be a cement board and the historical board is going to help us pick out the appropriate colors.

Vice Chair Carroll; members any questions? Tess are there any concerns?

Tess; he received all of his variances through zoning and has met with the historic board. He will go in front of the historic board again regarding the colors for the building.

Vice Chair Carroll ok.

Member Moloughney asked the applicant to clarify for him the retaining wall.

Mr. Godfrey explained the retaining wall, stating that it will be cobble stone look, he didn't want to do traditional patio block.

Member Nadeau asked if the applicant owned the property behind there.

Mr. Godfrey stated that he did not.

Member Nadeau then asked how high the retaining wall would be.

Mr. Godfrey stated it wouldn't be more than 5 feet high at the highest point and they are doing drainage behind the wall and in front of the wall and on the site plan if you look at that the storm water, we are doing catch basins to the north and south of it.

Member Nadeau then asked the applicant what the wall would look like at the back side of that wall as far as infill?

Mr. Godfrey as in what materials?

Member Nadeau material on the other property

Mr. Godfrey we are only going to do 1 foot which is on our property, there will be 1 foot of drainage behind the wall, fill it with top soil and put the grass right up to grade. That wall is shot pretty much level all the way across

Member Nadeau so there will be an elevation difference on the other property?

Mr. Godfrey yes at one point we're right on the hill there. If you are familiar with the project down the street, it's going to be similar to that and we're going to put a fence on top of the retaining wall.

Member Nadeau that was going to be my next question

Mr. Godfrey yes we are doing that obviously for insurance purposes, but that way nobody can fall off the wall.

Member Moloughney just so I know, it's not facing Vliet Street. I was thinking the streetscape on Vliet Street you're looking at the side of the building as opposed to .....

Mr. Godfrey you're looking at the side, it has a Hamilton address all four doors are on Hamilton.

Member Moloughney in my mind, I don't know that it matters, whether just the stark side of the building is . well it's better than a vacant lot.

Mr. Godfrey yes and all those houses down on Hamilton .....(inaudible)

Member Moloughney parking, I don't see parking in the plans.

Mr. Godfrey responded that parking is going to be on Hamilton there are 4 spots and we proposed a bike rack as well that we are going to put on the property. I've gone there 3 times a week since we bought the property and nobody parks there except the guy that lives next door and I went over and introduced myself and told him he would have to park on the other side which he agreed to do.

Vice Chair Carroll ok, do we have any other questions? Is it possible, the first house going up Hamilton, could you put the entrance on Vliet and would the design change be at all possible

Mr. Godfrey explained to the board why this wouldn't work with where the doors are. He also stated that they were looking at putting a sign on the building that said Vliet Street on the side of the building then have signs above the doors indicating what units they are.

Vice Chair Carroll asked about landscaping.

Mr. Godfrey responded that there would be landscaping which is in the site drawings.

Member Couture asked if there was proposed lighting outside the units.

Mr. Godfrey if there is it is only going to be a light above the doors.

Member Williams asked if there is going to be any trees.

Mr. Godfrey replied that there are going to be trees and they will also help with stormwater drainage, he pointed out the trees on the screen.

Member Moloughney then asked if engineer Garry and code are ok with this, would it come with building permit review.

Sharon responded that yes Garry would look at stormwater on submitted plans and code will do their review for compliance.

Vice Chair Carroll ok do I hear a motion? Public comment, does anyone in the public have any comments? Mr. DeFruscio?

Mr. DeFruscio asked if there was something the planning board needs to do something because there is no off street parking available? I think the Code calls for 4 spaces of off-street parking.

Mr. Godfrey replied that they do have 4 spaces on the street.

Mr. DeFruscio stated that is has to be 4 off street parking spaces, if not the board has to approve that.

Mr. Godfrey ok I understand.

Member Williams asked what the rent would be for the units.

Mr. Godfrey stated it would be between \$1,400 and \$1,600 a month.

Mr. DeFruscio a concern I have about the drainage, you're not going to impact your neighbors below you by what you are doing by building this house. In other words you're going to build drainage so that water goes in the direction it is going now and the drainage is going to go around your neighbors and not into your neighbor's yard.

Mr. Godfrey stated that on the site plan it shows on the north and south where they have catch basins and the water is going to run exactly as it is now.

Member Moloughney stated the stormwater is in the packet and the drywells are designed to be able to handle 10-year storm events etc.

Vice Chair Carroll any other public comments? Being none he asked for a motion. Do we have to do the waiver on the parking?

Member Moloughney stated it would be part of the resolution.

Vice Chair Carroll asked for a motion to accept with the waiver for the parking.

Member Moloughney made a motion to accept the site plan including the parking waiver. Member Nadeau 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

|                   | YES    | NO |
|-------------------|--------|----|
| Robert Bucher     | ABSENT |    |
| Joseph Nadeau     | X      |    |
| John Carroll      | X      |    |
| Stephanie Couture | X      |    |
| Kizzy Williams    | X      |    |
| Joe Moloughney    | X      |    |

**CONSIDERATION OF A SITE PLAN APPROVAL FOR 100 WATERS VIEW CIRCLE**

Vice Chair Carroll next Waterview Circle

Ms. Allison Yovine from Saratoga Associates here on behalf of the Aker Companies approached the board. Aker Companies is the owner of Water Views Circle. They are requesting to construct lower patio with a fire pit, a dog park enclosure and a walkway to the dog park and part of the second phase is a kayak launch. We still have to get the appropriate approvals from DEC, etc. This is a pretty straightforward project, so the patio will be a little bit lower, there will be fence around the storm water retention. She showed on the screen where the area is for the dog park, stating that the rock would stay there and they would put in more chain link fence, the area would be carded so the residents would be able to get in the dog park from the water side and the Delaware Ave. side. The owners are looking to put in more amenities to make the property more marketable.

Vice Chair Carroll asked how much of the property would be paved or cobbled.

Ms. Yovine stated she didn't have the exact number but the entire project is only .3 acres.

Vice Chair Carroll so a lot of crushed stone dust.

Ms. Yovine yes a lot of stone dust.

Vice Chair Carroll but no paving?

Ms. Yovine stated that the patio would be paved about 700 square feet.

Vice Chair Carroll stated he was wondering about the run off because they are right on the river there.

Ms. Yovine replied that it is pavers with permeable joints.

Vice Chair Carroll ok so it's pavers?

Member Moloughney it's pavers not stamped concrete?

Ms. Yovine right.

Vice Chair Carroll asked the board if they had any questions or comments.

Ms. Yovine stated that Albany County Planning Board looked at it and since then they received the letter from SHPO.

Vice Chair Carroll yes I noticed that, if they don't have a problem with it then I'm good with it.

Member Moloughney asked Tess; we don't have any outstanding issues as a City with the property or complaints or any other issues going on that would complicate this.

Tess not that I'm aware of, she did ask if neighbors were sent letters.

Sharon no letters went out.

Vice Chair Carroll; all the neighbors live there.

Tess; yes the Town of Waterford was the closest entity.

Member Couture; in the packet that we have shows a proposed bridge that will be over some rip rap, is that for people going to the dog park, or is it part of the walkway?

Ms. Yovine stated that it is part of the walkway, the purpose of that is to give a walkway and will still allow the water to run over that rip rap so drainage won't be affected.

Vice Chair Carroll ok are there any other concerns?

Member Couture asked if they would have any discussion on the kayak launch now or are we only dealing with the approvals for the dog park and the patio.

Tess my understanding is that the kayak is phase II

Vice Chair Carroll so we are not addressing Phase II tonight.

Ms. Yovine stated that she understood that, she talked to Joe about it and the approval would include the kayak launch, we will be constructing it once we get the permits, so you can make that a conditional approval based on us getting the required permits from the Town Board, the Army Corp. and DEC.

Vice Chair Carroll sounds like you've done this before.

Member Moloughney only to clarify for the minutes, I am an employee of the Canal Corporation, I have an ethical conflict that I can not participate in anything that requires Canal Corporation approval, but I can also empathically state you do not need a Canal Corp permit because that part of the Mohawk River does not need Canal Corp decision. You will need the environmental permits and DEC.

Ms. Yovine thank you, that's great.

Mr. DeFruscio asked if this was sent to the County yet

Tess stated yes it had Albany County Planning Board review and their only recommendation was to have Saratoga County Review and SHPO review. We sent it to the Town of Waterford and they had no objection.

Vice Chair Carroll ok do we have a motion?

Member Couture I have a question, does the City have the opportunity to utilize this as a public kayak launch?

Vice Chair Carroll as it is proposed my understanding is it is private to the residents.

Ms. Yovine I believe so, the intention is that it is private for the residents but there isn't going to be a way to guard it.

Mr. DeFruscio stated that all the other buildings on the other side of the street were required to build access to the river, a walkway along the river that had public access, that was open to the public.

Vice Chair Carroll the ones we did yes, but Riverview.....

Member Moloughney just for clarification, that's waterfront mixed-use zoning, this was planned development.

Vice Chair Carroll anything else? Do we have a motion?

Member Nadeau made a motion to approve the Site Plan 2<sup>nd</sup> by Member Williams motion carried unanimously.

|                   | YES    | NO |
|-------------------|--------|----|
| Robert Bucher     | ABSENT |    |
| Joseph Nadeau     | X      |    |
| John Carroll      | X      |    |
| Stephanie Couture | X      |    |
| Kizzy Williams    | X      |    |
| Joe Moloughney    | X      |    |

### **Discussion Items; 9 Laura Drive-renovation to the school building**

9 Laura Drive discussion of converting the old school into apartments. Presenter Fred Sharifipour approached the board and gave an overview of what he is looking to do with the building. Mr. Sharifipour said the Church reached out to his attorney and he was asked to take a look at it, which he did and stated that the structure was in great shape. Mr. Sharifipour said he had an engineer look at it and it is 2 separate parcels He stated to the board that he is currently under contract to purchase the building and is on a time constraint for approvals and that is why he is coming to the board for preliminary review. He is proposing to do 9 units in the bigger building and 3 units in the smaller building, which was an addition, he will keep the building the same inside as it is set up to convert to apartments. He will do landscaping and some modifications on the outside of the building to make it look more residential and soften the look. They have 36 parking spots which they are looking to make a little less and they will do picnic tables, built in grills, bike racks, playground etc. They are not looking for any credits or IDA pilots, but will be doing the everything themselves. He stated that they will be utilizing the classrooms that are in there now and do 9 units, and the other building they are proposing to do 3 units with 3 bedrooms. It is zoned correctly for him to do the apartments, per the engineer. They will submit a more formal plan to the board.

Vice Chair Carroll asked Mr. Sharifipour to repeat how many 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom units he would have.

Mr. Sharifipour replied, it's not set in stone but the smaller building they would only be doing 3 units, there will be a 3 bedroom, a 2 bedroom and a 1 bedroom. On the bigger building there are 7 classrooms that are already there, about 700 to 725 square feet each, we will make those one bedroom, and then there is the gymnasium that has about 24 foot ceilings

about 1,550 square feet, we are only going to do 2 units both 3 bedroom units. Some of the 700 square foot units we may possibly do 2 bedrooms but until the architect gets ahold of the project, we won't know.

Member Couture asked who owns the property right now.

Mr. Sharifipour replied that the Church owns it now

Member Couture asked if the existing parking would be used for snow storage or trash receptacles

Mr. Sharifipour responded that the engineer is working on all of that now and will include everything in the final site plan to be presented. He stated that he met with Joe on Friday and it was suggested that he give the board an overview of what he is looking to do. He stated that the Church has been trying to get it to another nonprofit organization and tried to rent it out also but didn't have any luck.

Tess told the board members that the applicant does not have to go to zoning because this is 2 different parcels with 2 different tax numbers, so the 10-apartment limit does not apply here.

Vice Chair Carroll stated that the board has talked about putting multiple unit apartments on the island in the past and there is a certain amount of resistance and it is a concern that you need to be aware of.

Mr. DeFruscio asked about traffic.

Mr. Sharifipour responded that is something the engineer is working on also.

Vice Chair Carroll stated that traffic is a concern and the number of cars coming and going on the island.

Member Nadeau stated that it would be same thing if somebody bought that for a business.

There was a discussion regarding the traffic, and reusing a vacant building.

Member Williams asked how the company plans on running this, will they use a management company.

Mr. Sharifipour responded that his wife has a company that would be managing the complex which is in Colonie.

He stated that they want it to be really nice as their name is associated with it.

Mr. DeFruscio this street is it behind Scared Heart?

Vice Chair Carroll stated that it is behind Pulaski, the old convent.

Mr. DeFruscio I guess if I was the City I'd be concerned about what parking they're getting rid of because the fire department uses the parking lot

Member Nadeau responded that the City doesn't own it, the Church owns it.

There was then a discussion about the parking and a parking lot that Scared Heart sold off previously and the possibility that the fire department will lose their parking in that lot.

Member Moloughney asked about the code and what is the threshold for when recreational spaces need to be provided for multi-family units?

Tess stated she couldn't answer that.

Member Moloughney it is in the Code, as a technicality, if you're saying it's 9 and 3, and it's not 10 per the code, would each parcel then need to have recreational space?

Tess I'm not sure of the answer to that, but I don't think that less than 10 triggers that but I'm not sure.

Member Moloughney stated that he would be interested to know how the space would be used, how the building will be refreshed, what will all the extra open space look like, how will it be treated. That's all to be presented.

Mr. Sharifipour asked the board what specifically they would want on the site plan review so he can make sure the engineer has it.

Member Couture stated to provide as much as possible, including lighting, landscaping, snow storage, parking, floor plans, etc.

Member Moloughney asked about the parking plan as it is currently laid some of this parking especially on the southerly side, you have lots that are emptying out on to Laura Drive – probably a bigger concern are cars coming out, kids playing that maybe Pulaski may be a little more amendable to the traffic coming and going.

Mr. Sharifipour responded that the problem with that is that there is a huge slope there. He then explained the layout of the property.

Vice Chair Carroll asked when they could expect a formal plan to be submitted.

Mr. Sharifipour responded that he should have everything submitted by the 21<sup>st</sup> to be on the agenda for next month's meeting.

There was no vote on this item.

**Election of Chair and Vice Chair;**

Election of Chair and Vice Chair to the Planning Board; nomination was made by Member Nadeau for Jack Carroll to be Chair of the Board. Nomination for Vice Chair was made by Vice Chair Carroll for Joe Moloughney. No other nominations were made therefore for the 2023-year Jack Carroll is Chair and Joe Moloughney is Vice Chair of the Planning Board.

Nominations of Chair and Vice Chair will take place at the first meeting of the Planning Board each year.

**Adjournment;**

Motion to adjourn by Member Nadeau 2<sup>nd</sup> by Member Couture, meeting adjourned at 7:35PM.

Submitted by:

*Sharon Butler*

Secretary