



Marybeth Pettit, AICP
Planning Director

CITY OF RENSSELAER
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
BUILDING & ZONING
CITY HALL, 62 WASHINGTON STREET
RENSSELAER, NEW YORK 12144-2696
Planning (518) 465-1693 Building (518) 462-5489 Fax (518) 465-2031

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the City of Rensselaer Planning Commission
First Floor Conference Room, Rensselaer Community Center, 62 Washington Street
April 12, 2010

Members Present:

Charles Moore – Vice-Chair (acting Chair), Frank Adams, James Ahlemeyer, Tom Cardamone, Bob Campano, George Farrell, Christine Van Vorst

Members Not Present:

NONE.

Staff Present:

Marybeth Pettit – Director of Planning, Kevin McLoughlin – Assistant Director, John Spath – Deputy Corporation Counsel

Others Present

Harry Adalian – Common Council President, Dominick Tagliento – Alderman, Marian Webber – Alderman, Jim VanVorst – Alderman, Charles Shank, Matthew Griesemer, Steve LeFevre, Richard Wood Jr., David Gardner, Steve Boisvert, Lou Lourinia, John Montagne, Bill Lithgow.

Call to Order:

Acting chair Moore called the regular meeting of the City of Rensselaer Planning Commission to order at 6:31 PM. Roll call was taken, and it was determined there was a quorum.

Adoption of Past Meeting Minutes

The regular meeting minutes of March 8, 2010 were approved as submitted and without amendment.

Communications

Mr. McLoughlin related that the County Planning Bureau had deferred to local considerations for the 78 Broadway application and shared a fax, received that day from Carlos Lima, requesting a postponement of his application until the next month's meeting.

Public Hearing

- 1. Partion Street, Harrison, Street, Wilson Street** – discuss proposed grant application for public facilities funding.

Ms. Pettit described the purpose of the hearing as allowing public input prior to the city pursuing grants through the Governor’s Office of Small Cities to separate water and sewer lines on Broadway. This work would help alleviate problems at the Partition Street CSO, which is most prone to overflows.

Dave Gardner, of Sixth Street, warned that as a resident of the Hollow there was so much groundwater that any work on Harrison could lead to soil and slope collapse. Ms. Pettit clarified that the proposed work was slated for lower Harrison between Third and Broadway and not in the Hollow

The next public hearing on the matter was announced for 4/19/10 at 5:00 PM.

Old Business

- 1. Carlos Lima, 8 2nd Avenue** – request for consideration under SEQRA and Site Plan and Special User Permit approval to operate an automobile detailing shop and auto dealership in a local business (LB) zoning district.
 - a) SEQRA review & Public Hearing**

Postponed to the next regular meeting at request of the applicant.

- 2. Cottage Hill Landings, 96 Partion Street** – submission of revised SEQRA materials for completeness review and initiation of public review process.

Mr. Moore noted that the matter before the board was only review of whether the submitted Supplemental EIS was complete and ready for public review through acceptance of the document as complete. Steve Levevre of Barton & Loguidice stated that his firm’s review concluded that the SEIS contained all the elements that were found to be absent when the project was revised in the fall. Steve Lefevre suggested that the board discuss the comment period and a date for a public hearing.

The board expressed a preference for a 60-day review period. Ms. Pettit suggested scheduling the public hearing date for the same day as the regular zoning board meeting of 5/24/10. The comment period would run from 4/21/10 to 6/21/10. It was also indicated that the board wished to have neighbors within 500 feet of the project lot directly noticed for the public hearing.

Mr. Farrell moved to accept the SEIS as complete and establish a public comment period with hearing per the stipulations listed above and Frank Adams seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

3. DeLaet's Landing / Marx Properties Redevelopment, 555-575 Broadway

a) Review / approve invoice #2.002-9 (Fraser & Associates)

Mrs. VanVorst asked why it appeared some individuals had submitted more than 24 hours worth of work on a particular date. It was pointed out that the Fraser Bill listed task work tallied per individual per week and the date on the invoice indicated the week ending date.

Mrs. VanVorst moved to approve the invoice, and Mr. Campano seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

New Business

1. B&D Realty Management, 78 Broadway – request for Site Plan approval and Certificate of Appropriateness to expand an insurance company parking lot, and renovate the building exterior in a historic residential (HR) zoning district zoning district.

Andrew Howard & Charles Shank described proposed work at the premises to renovate the entrance to his business to move the primary entrance location, add a disabled-accessible ramp, remove the existing aluminum siding and replace with cement fiberboard material, and to take ownership of a parcel of land presently leased from NYS DOT for the parking lot. They affirmed that the existing sign would not be enlarged or removed, maintaining its grandfathered status under the Zoning Code.

Ms. Pettit asked if the plan had been revised per her advice to maintain a link for pedestrians to enter the business from Broadway. Mr. Shank confirmed that this amendment would be made to the revised plans submitted that evening to show paved link from the new entrance steps to the sidewalk. Ms. Pettit confirmed that the parking lot was pre-existing and was not proposed for expansion in the submitted plan.

Ms. Pettit asked if lighting of the existing sign had been discussed as goose-neck lamps would be considered acceptable. The applicant expressed interest in installing such lighting, but anticipated need for more than one lamp to effectively illuminate the sign and would work out specific details with Ms. Pettit.

Mr. Moore led the board in a review and completion of a Short EAF. Mr. Moore recused himself from voting on the matter as the application involved a NYS DOT land parcel and he is an employee of that agency. No significant impacts were identified.

Mr. Campano moved to have the Planning Commission Declare as Lead Agency and issue a Negative Declaration of environmental impact based on the completed Short EAF and Mrs. VanVorst seconded. The motion was unanimously approved with Mr. Moore abstaining.

Mr. Campano moved to Grant Site Plan Approval Conditional on the transfer of title of the parcel of land owned by NYS DOT to the applicant and Mrs. VanVorst seconded. The motion was unanimously approved with Mr. Moore abstaining.

Mr. Campano moved to Grant a Certificate of Appropriateness with the stipulations that the applicant (per the submitted application and plans) use hunter green cement fiberboard siding, Pella windows, paint rails / trim / decking / doors white, paint or stain the proposed cedar shakes to match or complement the cement fiberboard siding, use gooseneck lighting to illuminate the existing sign. Mr. Farrell seconded.

The motion was unanimously approved with Mr. Moore abstaining.

- 2. Thomas Frede, 26 Broadway** – request for Certificate of Appropriateness to install a dormer on the façade, replace the front porch and steps, and repaint the exterior clapboard siding. In a historic residential (HR) zoning district.

Thomas Frede described his plan to renovate the row house at 26 Broadway for use as a single-family residence. Part of his proposal includes adding a dormer porch to the 3rd floor frontage, which he noted was a common architectural element on many historic homes in the region.

Mr. Campano asked about the dormer construction and Thomas Frede replied that the dormer would be the same height as the existing roofline and would have the same pitch. Mr. Campano inquired about the plan for reconstructing the front porch and the applicant responded that he hoped to emulate or copy what his neighbor to the north did.

Ms. Pettit asked about the exterior cladding and Thomas Frede stated that he intended to repair the front siding and paint it and to use shiplap wood siding in the rear.

Mrs. Van Vorst moved to Grant the Certificate of Appropriateness per the submitted drawings and application with the following stipulations: primary frontage wood siding will be retained and repaired, use of 6” shiplap wood siding on the rear of the building, exterior painting using burgundy as the primary color with cream trim and accents, use of aluminum clad wood windows, reconstruction of the original porch / entrance structure, use of wood doors for the front side and dormer porch entrances. Mr. Farrell seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Other Business

NONE.

Adjournment:

Hearing no objections, Mr. Moore adjourned the meeting at 7:45 PM.

Next Meeting:

The next regular meeting is scheduled for May 10, 2010 at 6:30 PM.

Record of Decisions:

An official record of decisions noting the details of motions and votes from this meeting along with any conditions & stipulations of approval has been filed with the City Clerk and a copy maintained in Planning Department records.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marybeth Pettit
Secretary