



# MEMORANDUM

## CITY OF WATERTOWN PLANNING OFFICE

245 WASHINGTON STREET, ROOM 304

WATERTOWN, NEW YORK 13601

PHONE: 315-785-7741 – FAX: 315-782-9014

TO: Planning Board Members  
FROM: Michael A. Lumbis, Planner  
SUBJECT: Waiver of Site Plan Approval – 1 Thompson Park  
DATE: November 25, 2015

**Request:** Waiver of Site Plan Approval for the construction of a 579 square foot building addition to the Otter Exhibit located at 1 Thompson Park, Parcel Number 12-30-101.000.

**Applicant:** Edward G. Olley, Jr. of GYMO, D.P.C., on behalf of the New York State Zoo

**Proposed Use:** Zoological park

**Property Owner:** City of Watertown

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### Submitted:

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Property Survey: No	Preliminary Architectural Drawings: Yes
Site Plan: Yes	Preliminary Site Engineering Plans: Yes
Vehicle and Pedestrian Circulation Plan: No	Construction Time Schedule: No
Landscaping and Grading Plan: No	Description of Uses, Hours & Traffic Volume: No

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SEQRA: Type II Action	County Review Required: No
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### Zoning Information:

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District: Residence A	Maximum Lot Coverage: 30%
Setback Requirements: 20' front, 5' side, 25' rear	Buffer Zone Required: No

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**Project Overview:** The applicant proposes to remove an existing 418 square feet structure and replace it with a 579 square feet structure in the same location, resulting in a net increase in building size of 161 square feet. The structure exists within the Thompson Park Zoo, on land leased by the City of Watertown to the New York State Zoo at Thompson Park.

The Planning Board may waive site plan approval if it determines that this proposal meets the criteria for a waiver listed in Section 310-55 of the Zoning Ordinance:

- 1) Does not involve a change in the boundaries of the property, and
- 2) Does not represent the initial building on the property, and
- 3) Is minor and incidental in size to the existing building pattern, size and coverage on the property, but in no event shall exceed 2,500 square feet, and
- 4) Does not effectively change or impair the overall grading, circulation, drainage, utility services, and appearance and visual effect of the property and is also otherwise consistent with all purposes of this chapter.

While this application has been reviewed as a site plan waiver, Staff feels that there are several site related issues that should be addressed as part of the project as detailed below.

**Parking:** There are no parking regulations for zoos within the City's adopted zoning ordinance. However there are currently 133 parking spaces within the zoo, as well as on street parking. Staff feels that there is already sufficient parking and a 161 square foot net increase to the otter exhibit will not affect parking needs.

**Landscaping:** Although the applicant did not submit a landscaping plan, it is Staff's opinion that there is already sufficient landscaping in the area surrounding the otter exhibit and within the otter exhibit itself.

**Drainage, Grading, and Utilities:** The proposed plan depicts that wastewater will be disposed of through a storm system and onsite drywell. This is unacceptable. An approvable method of sewage disposal must be designed and the details of the sewage disposal system must be submitted to the City Engineering Department prior to the issuance of a building permit for the project. The sewage disposal design must include adequate grading information, both existing and proposed, so that the design can be evaluated.

In the submitted plans, the applicant depicts that a future sanitary pump station is to be installed but does not provide details to indicate the location of a connection to a sanitary sewer disposal system. As such, this future pump station shall be removed from the plans.

The plans also show a future restroom. Any restrooms included in the building shall be designed to meet regulatory requirements.

**Other Comments:** A letter to the City stating that the New York State Zoo has authorized GYMO D.P.C. to apply for a site plan waiver on its behalf has not been submitted. The applicant shall obtain a signed authorization letter from the zoo.

The applicant must acquire the following permits prior to construction: Building Permit, City Septic System Permit, and General City Permit for any work on City property.

**SEQRA:** Since the proposed construction and expansion of the facility involves less than 4,000 square feet of gross floor area and the action does not involve a change in zoning or a use variance and is consistent with local land use controls, the project is considered a Type II Action as defined by SEQR. Type II Actions do not require SEQR review, and the Short Environmental Assessment Form does not need to be completed by the Planning Board for this project.

### **Summary:**

1. The applicant shall revise the plans to include an approvable method of sewage disposal. The design must include adequate grading information, both existing and proposed and details of the sewage disposal system must be submitted to the City Engineering Department prior to the issuance of a building permit.

2. The applicant shall remove the future pump station from the plans.
3. Any restrooms included in the building shall be designed to meet regulatory requirements.
4. The applicant shall obtain a signed authorization letter from the New York State Zoo allowing GYMO, D.P.C., to apply on behalf of the owner.
5. PDFs of the entire drawings set shall be forwarded to the Engineering Department anytime revisions are made to the drawings.

cc: Robert J. Slye, City Attorney  
Brian Drake, Civil Engineer II  
Edward G. Olley, Jr., GYMO, D.P.C.