



## CITY OF WATERTOWN, NEW YORK

CITY PLANNING BOARD  
ROOM 304, WATERTOWN CITY HALL  
245 WASHINGTON STREET  
WATERTOWN, NEW YORK 13601-3380  
(315) 785-7740

MEETING: April 5, 2016

PRESENT:

Larry Coburn, Chairperson  
Linda Fields  
Neil Katzman  
Anthony Neddo  
Steve Rowell  
Michelle Capone

ALSO:

Michael A. Lumbis, Planning & Community  
Development Director  
Jeffrey Polkowski, Planner  
Geoffrey Urda, Planner  
Justin Wood, City Engineer  
Brian Drake, Civil Engineer II

ABSENT:

None

The April 5, 2016 Planning Board Meeting was called to order at 3:00 PM by Planning Board Chair Larry Coburn. Mr. Coburn called for a reading of the Minutes from the March 1, 2016 Planning Board Meeting. Mr. Neddo made a motion to accept the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Katzman and all voted in favor.

### **SITE PLAN APPROVAL**

**217 HIGH STREET – PARCEL NUMBERS 6-03-101.000, 6-03-102.000, 6-03-201.000,  
6-03-217.000 AND 6-03-218.000**

The Planning Board then considered a request submitted by Matthew R. Morgia of Aubertine and Currier, PLLC on behalf of Mike Belcher of Watertown Doors and Windows for the construction of a 6,000 square-foot storage building located at 217 High Street, Parcel Numbers 6-03-101.000, 6-03-102.000, 6-03-201.000, 6-03-217.000 and 6-03-218.000.

Mr. Morgia and Mr. Belcher were in attendance to represent the request. Mr. Morgia began by saying that the proposal consisted of a 6,000 square-foot self-storage facility. He then drew the Planning Board's attention to an enlarged version of the site plan and gave an overview of the site, identifying all the existing buildings on the property, many of which he said were open-sided storage sheds.

Mr. Morgia then identified one particular group of open-sided storage sheds at the north end of the site that he said was proposed for demolition to make room for the proposed self-storage units. He added that the site was mostly crushed stone and that the grey path on the site plan depicted a vehicular access lane.

Mr. Morgia then said that the Zoning Ordinance required some landscape buffering on the site due to the presence of a residential district across Olive Street to the north.

He identified a proposed row of shrubs shown on the site plan at the northern edge of the property along Olive Street that would satisfy the landscaping requirement. He then added that some grading would need to take place on the site to accommodate floor slabs and drainage.

Mr. Morgia then discussed the possible need to reroute a sewer line. He said that an existing storm sewer runs across the property and connects to the Olive Street storm sewer line, but that as of the time of this meeting, his team was unsure of the exact location of the line that runs across the property. He said that until construction begins and his team sees exactly where the existing sewer line is, they were unsure if and how it would need to be rerouted.

Mr. Morgia then asked if the Planning Board would like to go through the summary items on Staff's memorandum one by one. All the members of the Planning Board agreed and Mr. Morgia said that he had prepared written responses to each summary item. He then distributed printed copies of his responses to all the Planning Board members as well as Staff members that were present.

Mr. Morgia began by addressing the first summary item, which asked for proposed hours of operation. He said that all of the proposed self-storage units would be available for their clients to access 24 hours a day, seven days a week. He added that the units themselves would not contain interior lighting, so it was likely that the majority of clients would access their storage units during daylight hours.

Mr. Morgia then addressed the second summary item, which asked for anticipated traffic volume. He said that his team's traffic calculations projected one trip per hour entering and one trip per hour exiting the proposed facility.

Mr. Morgia then addressed the third summary item, which asked for a clarification of the applicant's parking calculations. He said that the calculations were based on the aggregate floor area of the existing buildings on all five parcels plus the proposed building. He said that the available square footage of parking area on the site yielded 210 spaces, and that the required number was 21 spaces, so there was more than enough parking. He added that due to the nature of self-storage units, that no one would be using the site for long-term parking anyway.

Mr. Morgia then addressed the fourth summary item, which required the applicant to assemble all five parcels as a condition of site plan approval. He said his team was fully aware that all five parcels would need to be assembled and that the owner planned to do so.

Mr. Morgia then addressed the fifth summary item, which asked for a revised lighting schedule so that no light levels above 0.5 footcandles extended across any property line. He said that although the large plan that he had with him did not show lighting, the submitted site plan did.

Mr. Morgia said that the proposed lights were pretty small and that you couldn't go much smaller and maintain continuous lighting around the building. He said although some light levels above 0.5 footcandles did extend into the Olive Street right-of-way, that they did not even extend as far as the street curb, and that his team felt that this should not be a major item of

concern. Mr. Katzman then asked if the proposed lights would be dark sky compliant. Mr. Morgia answered in the affirmative.

Mr. Morgia then addressed the sixth summary item, which asked for a letter from the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) that determines whether or not the proposed project has the potential to impact any archeological resources. He said that his team had sent pictures of the existing structures to SHPO, but had not received anything in reply yet. He added that his team did not note anything on the site as historic.

Mr. Morgia then addressed the seventh summary item, which noted that the applicant had left Question 13b on the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) Short Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) blank, and asked the applicant to provide an answer. He said that Question 13b asks if the proposed project will physically alter, or encroach onto, any existing wetland or water body. He then answered that the proposed project did not do either of these things, and that the Short EAF had been revised to provide the “No” answer for Question 13b.

Mr. Morgia then addressed the eighth summary item, which required the applicant to depict the existing 10-foot sewer easement along the northern property line on the site plan. He said that the site plan would be revised to depict the easement.

Mr. Morgia then addressed the ninth summary item, which required the applicant to add a note to the site plan regarding the storm line to be removed. Mr. Morgia said that depending on where the line is found, it will either be cut and capped appropriately or left where it is. He said that the owner’s preference was to leave it alone if possible.

Mr. Morgia then addressed the tenth summary item, which asked the applicant to clarify ownership of the properties which comprise the site. Mr. Morgia said that the legal name of the property owner is Watertown Doors and Windows Inc. DBA Watertown Builders Supply. He added that the company name changed a few years ago from Watertown Builders Supply Inc., and that many of the deeds and databases that the City refers to for property information may predate the company’s name change. He reiterated that the applicant and the company identified on the deed are in fact the same entity.

Mr. Morgia then addressed the eleventh summary item, which identified the permits that the applicant must obtain prior to demolition and construction. Mr. Morgia acknowledged that all the listed permits are necessary and will be obtained.

Mr. Morgia then addressed an email from Staff that was sent the day before the Planning Board meeting regarding fire truck access around the building. Mr. Morgia said that as he understood it, a fire truck needed 20 feet of width to maneuver around the proposed building to fight a fire, and that because of where an existing building stood, that width became narrower than acceptable at the southwest corner of the proposed building. He said that the owner was willing to remove the westernmost 35 feet from the existing building, which would provide the 20-foot width needed for a fire truck.

Mr. Morgia then said that he was finished with his overview and asked the Planning Board if they had any questions. Some members of the Planning Board noted that the fire truck access requirement was not identified on the memorandum.

Mr. Drake then said that Staff had reached out to Codes to see if there were any anticipated issues that would arise when the applicant sought a Building Permit. Mr. Drake said that their concern was the need for a fire truck to have 20 feet of access all the way around the building. He noted that on the north side, where only 15 feet of vehicular access was proposed, that a fire truck could still fight a fire from Olive Street, but that on the south side, there was no alternative, and the applicant would need to create the necessary space as Mr. Morgia had said.

Mr. Katzman then indicated that he was ready to make a motion to approve the request. Mr. Lumbis then said that the Planning Board could remove a number of conditions prior to making a motion. He said that the applicant had satisfied Summary Items 1, 2, 3, 7, 8 and 10 and that Summary Item 5 could be eliminated. He added that the Planning Board would need to insert a condition for the 20 feet of fire truck access.

Mr. Katzman then moved to approve the request submitted by Matthew R. Morgia of Aubertine and Currier, PLLC on behalf of Mike Belcher of Watertown Doors and Windows for the construction of a 6,000 square-foot storage building located at 217 High Street, Parcel Numbers 6-03-101.000, 6-03-102.000, 6-03-201.000, 6-03-217.000 and 6-03-218.000 contingent upon the following:

1. The applicant shall assemble all five parcels as proposed to create a lot that conforms to the Zoning Ordinance.
2. The applicant shall provide a letter from SHPO that determines whether or not the proposed project has the potential to impact any archeological resources.
3. The applicant shall add a note to the Site Plan for the storm line to be removed that reads, "Storm line to be cut, capped and pipe to be removed."
4. The applicant must obtain the following permits, minimally, prior to demolition and construction: Demolition Permit, Building Permit, Storm Permit and Fence Permit.
5. The applicant shall provide a minimum of 20 feet in width to the south of the proposed building to allow a City fire truck room to maneuver and fight a fire.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Fields and all voted in favor.

**WAIVER OF SITE PLAN APPROVAL  
1 THOMPSON PARK – PARCEL # 12-30-101.000**

The Planning Board then considered a tabled request for a Waiver of Site Plan Approval submitted by Edward G. Olley Jr. of GYMO, D.P.C., on behalf of the New York State

Zoo for the construction of a 579 square-foot building addition to the Otter Exhibit at the New York State Zoo, located at 1 Thompson Park, Parcel Number 12-30-101.000.

Mr. Olley was in attendance to represent this project. At this time, Mr. Rowell stated for the record that since he was a member of the Zoo Board, he would abstain from voting on this request.

Mr. Olley began by saying that he had been asked to revisit his application and make some modifications before requesting that it be taken from the table. He said that his team had received several comments from the City Engineering Department and had worked to address them. He then drew the Planning Board's attention to a revised drawing, which he said provided more data about the modifications from the previous iteration of his proposal.

Mr. Coburn then said that there were a series of things on Staff's memorandum and on the resubmitted application that would require some understanding on the Planning Board's part. He said that as he understood it, Staff felt like there was sufficient parking and sufficient landscaping. Mr. Coburn then brought up the issue of drainage and asked Mr. Olley if that's why they were here.

Mr. Olley replied that the goal was for the drains in the otter exhibit go into the septic system. He said that they would collect the rainwater that comes off the otters' grassy area. He added that if the Zoo needed to redirect roof water by means of a gutter system, then they would do that.

Mr. Drake then said that Mr. Olley could argue the foundation drain definition, but that he could not put a foundation drain in the sewer and get a building permit.

Mr. Olley said that he would like to take rainwater off the surface area and direct it into the septic system. Mr. Drake asked Mr. Olley if daylighting was an option. Mr. Olley replied that they could only daylight on one side.

Mr. Drake then told Mr. Olley that he was all right with working the issue out between the two of them, but that it needed to be settled before the issuance of a building permit.

Mr. Coburn then said that, from his chair, what he saw was that Mr. Olley wanted the Planning Board to waive Site Plan Approval, but he still had a lot of work to do. Ms. Capone then asked how Site Plan Approval could be waived when the applicant was saying that he still had changes to make.

Mr. Lumbis then said that by granting the waiver, what the Planning Board was actually waiving was all the requirements of a Site Plan Approval, most prominently that the application would not need to go before City Council, as details could be worked out with Staff.

Ms. Capone then asked for confirmation that Engineering Department approval of further revisions could be enforced as a condition of approval. Mr. Polkowski replied that in order for the applicant to receive a building permit, the Engineering Department must first approve all revisions.

Mr. Katzman then said that that the waiver should be subject to the approval of both Engineering and Codes. Mr. Olley replied that he and his team were poised to do more engineering and design work.

Ms. Capone then asked about the relevance of some of the ancillary discussions that had arisen during previous Planning Board meetings, such as new bathrooms at the site. Mr. Coburn replied that those were not part of this discussion. Ms. Capone then said that she did not want to waive something where things will be added as the project goes forward and things are tweaked after the fact.

Mr. Olley then said that the Zoo had a list of things that it had planned to do in the past, but could not execute, and that sanitary sewer was just one of many. He said that maybe it will be a part of a future project, but it was not part of this one.

Mr. Katzman then moved to approve the request for a Waiver of Site Plan Approval submitted by Edward G. Olley Jr. of GYMO, D.P.C., on behalf of the New York State Zoo for the construction of a 579 square-foot building addition to the Otter Exhibit at the New York State Zoo, located at 1 Thompson Park, Parcel Number 12-30-101.000, contingent upon the following:

1. The applicant shall revise the plans to include a Foundation Drain that is either redirected to an above ground channel or redirected to a drywell.
2. The applicant shall revise the plans to include accurate required absorption bed area.
3. Waiver applies to only the current Otter Exhibit Expansion. Any future connections to the Sanitary System or expansions to the building shall be required to obtain the required regulatory and City permits.
4. PDFs of the entire drawings set shall be forwarded to the Engineering Department anytime revisions are made to the drawings.

Ms. Fields seconded the motion and all voted in favor, except Mr. Rowell, who abstained.

Ms. Fields then moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Neddo and all voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 3:26 PM.