



## CITY OF WATERTOWN, NEW YORK

CITY PLANNING BOARD  
ROOM 302, WATERTOWN CITY HALL  
245 WASHINGTON STREET  
WATERTOWN, NEW YORK 13601-3380  
(315) 785-7730

MEETING: November 4, 2014

PRESENT:

Sara Freda, Chair  
Michele Capone  
Larry Coburn  
William Davis  
Neil Katzman

ALSO:

Kenneth A. Mix, Planning and Community  
Development Coordinator  
Michael Lumbis, Planner  
Andrew Nichols, Planner  
Justin Wood, City Engineer  
Brian Drake, Civil Engineer II

ABSENT:

Lin Fields

The November 4, 2014 Planning Board Meeting was called to order at 3:01 PM by Planning Board Chair Sara Freda. Mrs. Freda then called for a reading of the Minutes from the October 16, 2014 Planning Board Meeting. Mr. Katzman made a motion to waive the reading of the Minutes and accept them as written. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Capone, and all voted in favor.

### **SITE PLAN – TIM HORTONS/GAS STATION 1622 WASHINGTON ST – PARCEL 14-26-102.100**

The Planning Board then considered a request submitted by Tom Ross of GYMO, P.C. on behalf of Edward Valentine for construction of an approximately 5,800 square foot convenience store and gas station at 1622 Washington Street, parcel 14-26-102.100.

Tom Ross and Jim Hagan, the project architect, were in attendance to present the project to the board.

Mr. Hagan began by explaining that his clients were not available to attend this meeting due to a prior commitment.

Mr. Katzman stated for the record that he has some ongoing business relationships with the applicants, which are minor in scope, and thus he would not be recusing himself.

Mr. Hagan outlined the proposed construction and summarized the site's issues. He noted that the site is bisected by the City line, and some site features would be located in the Town of Watertown. He would be attending a Town Planning Board meeting later tonight, but the Town is not expected to require a site plan approval so the City would remain the lead agency. The building and most of the essential site features would be located in the City. He also pointed out the utility easements running across the north side of the site.

This store would replace an existing location a few hundred yard to the south. Mrs. Capone asked if the existing location is the former Hess station. Mr. Hagan said that it was. The site is too small to expand on or improve, so it would be closed and sold.

Mr. Davis joined the meeting at 3:10 pm.

Mr. Hagan described the site circulation. 35 parking spaces would be provided, exceeding the minimum. Drive-through traffic would circulate counter-clockwise. Two driveways would be provided, one on Washington St. and one on Hudson Lane. The paved areas around the pump canopy and the rear of the building have been expanded to provide room for oversized vehicles like busses and trucks.

He noted that a sidewalk would be extended along Washington Street, and the multi-use trail along Hudson would remain. The area where the trail crosses the driveway would be detailed as required by the City, including striping or tactile warning strips if needed. A sidewalk from the Hudson Lane trail to the store would also be provided for pedestrians.

Mr. Katzman asked if the trail was asphalt, and how much use it currently sees.

Mr. Mix explained that it is indeed asphalt. It sees relatively low use currently, as it is an isolated segment. The City has trail easements on nearby land extending both east and west, so as the trail system develops the segment may see more use.

Mr. Hagan described the off-site drainage outfall on the site. Three 36" pipes run underneath Washington Street and daylight on the applicant's property. These pipes collect runoff from the hills to the east. After daylighting, the water runs across the property in an open swale, crosses Howell Drive with similar triple 36" pipes, and then flows westward into the swampy area near Holcomb Street.

The applicant wishes to hard pipe the open swale underneath the parking area by simply extending the 36" pipes. However, the staff report indicates that the City does not want to maintain these pipes, and requests a physical separation between the existing pipes and whatever proposed system carries the water across the site.

Mr. Drake explained that DPW was concerned with the risks of attempting to perform work on private property, so close to gasoline underground storage tanks and pumping equipment. It would be preferable to keep the maintenance responsibility with the property owner.

Mrs. Capone noted that the drainage system would be more aesthetically pleasing if it could be constructed completely underground, given that the site needs to be filled to grade anyway.

Mr. Hagan noted that the sewer connection would require a force main up to Washington Street. He then presented drawings showing turn movements for delivery trucks, and said that a traffic study was underway as indicated by the staff report.

Mr. Davis asked if any of the mechanical equipment could be moved indoors instead of being located on the roof behind the parapet.

Mr. Hagan said that the condenser and HVAC air handler needed to be outdoors, but the interior roof drains would handle precipitation, and the parapet would shield them from

public view. He summarized that there was still work to do with the site design, and that they would come back next month.

Mrs. Freda asked about the traffic report requirement.

Mr. Drake explained that there are so many small unresolved issues regarding traffic flow that their sum necessitates a formal Traffic Impact Analysis, which would take into account traffic volumes, turn movements and signaling, stacking, and sight line distances. He also noted that NYSDOT is currently reviewing a proposed driveway just south of the project site, likely to be limited to right-in/right-out. The final configuration of this driveway could impact the Nice and Easy site design.

Mr. Katzman asked if that driveway could be shared, or if the applicant's driveway could be moved further south.

Mr. Hagan said that the proposed driveway is already located at the southernmost point on the site. The applicant's frontage does not extend out into the Town.

Mr. Davis asked about the applicant's source for traffic data.

Mr. Ross replied that information was adapted from a traffic study completed for a similar site in the Town of LeRay. Physical counts were also conducted at the existing outer Coffeen Street location. The peak hour for that location was 133 incoming vehicles, all entrances combined.

Mr. Davis said that it sounds like the traffic levels would warrant some mitigation measures.

Mr. Ross said that this location is expected to have sales about 35% lower than Coffeen Street, based on the owner's business projections.

Mr. Katzman said that the impact here would be small, if any, compared to the problems that occur down the street near the high school.

Mr. Hagan noted that the proposed development would not be a destination use, but would be more likely to capture traffic that is already passing by.

Mrs. Capone said that she would like to have the applicant continue working with staff to reduce the list of summary items and conditions considerably prior to the next meeting. She also asked that the landscaping plan be addressed.

Mr. Hagan said that the utility easements limit landscaping options, but additional plantings can be added in a few locations.

Mr. Davis observed that traffic in this area has increased due to development of nearby medical offices and other uses.

Mrs. Capone said that the development of this area, particularly the housing, was driven by the availability of infrastructure.

Mr. Coburn suggested looking at the existing nearby store to gauge the potential traffic impact.

Mr. Drake said the comparison can be useful but reiterated that the Traffic Impact Analysis would examine the contributing effect of many small issues.

Mrs. Capone asked if the TIA would make a recommendation for mitigation of traffic issues. Mr. Drake said that it should.

Mrs. Freda asked if an entrance could be added from Howell Drive.

Mr. Hagan said that it was considered, but left out because of the impact on the drive-through traffic flow.

Mrs. Freda asked who would pay for upgrades to the traffic light if the TIA required modifications.

Mr. Drake said that it would need to be negotiated between the City and the developer.

Mr. Katzman moved to table the application pending the production of a Traffic Impact Analysis, and further information regarding the summary items in the staff report.

Mr. Davis seconded, all voted in favor.

Mr. Coburn moved to adjourn. Mrs. Capone seconded, all voted in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 3:53 pm.