

**CITY OF GLOVERSVILLE PLANNING BOARD
NOVEMBER 3, 2015
7:00 P.M.
CITY HALL**

MEETING NOTES

PRESENT:

**JAMES ANDERSON, CHAIRMAN
GEOFFREY PECK, VICE CHAIRMAN
MATTHEW DONDE
BRENDA LEITT
JONATHAN KLUSKA
PETER SEMIONE, ALTERNATE**

**CINDY OSTRANDER, SECRETARY
TOM GROFF, FIRE CHIEF
SEAN GERAGHTY, SENIOR PLANNER**

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. APPROVE MINUTES OF LAST REGULAR MEETING:

MOTION : To approve the minutes to the October 6, 2015 meeting.
MADE BY : Geoffrey Peck
SECONDED : Brenda Leitt
VOTE : 5 in favor, 0 opposed

III. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

A. Purpose:

The City of Gloversville Planning Board offers a public comment period at the beginning of each of its meetings in an effort to allow the community an opportunity to comment or provide insight on a particular land use planning and/or zoning issue in the City. This comment period is not a public hearing and the Planning Board asks that you save comments regarding a particular project that is before the Board until the actual public hearing on the specific application itself. The Planning Board also asks that you not use the public comment period as a question and answer session since Board members will not enter into a dialogue regarding any particular issue.

There was no one to speak during the public comment period.

IV. SW SKIN CARE AND COSMETICS – PUBLIC HEARING ON SITE PLAN FOR DAY SPA:

A. Background:

SW Skin Care and Cosmetics would like to open up a day spa at 23 Fremont Street in the City of Gloversville. The building being renovated is the former St. Mary's Rectory (Tax Map Parcel No. 149.6-8-17). The project will involve significant interior renovations to the 2,800 sq. ft. structure that will eventually involve the creation of six (6) to seven (7) treatment rooms, locker rooms, a tranquility room, a small retail area and space for two (2) hair stations, two (2) manicure and two (2) pedicure stations.

B. October 6, 2015 Meeting:

During its October 6, 2015 meeting, the Planning Board began reviewing SW Skin Care's Site Plan application for a day spa at 23 Fremont Street. At that time, the Planning Board asked that the following information be provided on a final Site Plan drawing prior to the public hearing:

1. The map reference and notation indicating that additional property will be added to the parcel at 23 Fremont Street through a Quit Claim Deed should be removed.

STATUS: Removed.

2. A notation should be made on the Site Plan drawing identifying the maximum number of individuals who will be working in the spa at any given time.

STATUS: A notation on the drawing indicates that a maximum of seven (7) workers will work at the facility.

3. The hours of operation for the proposed business should be noted on the Site Plan drawings.

STATUS: Provided.

4. The specific location and dimensions of all off-street parking spaces should be identified.

STATUS: Seven (7) unstriped spaces are shown on the revised drawing.

A letter was sent to City Public Works' Director Kevin Jones regarding off-street parking for the applicant's proposed project. In accordance with Section 300-31(c) of the City of Gloversville Zoning Ordinance, the

Planning Board requested that Mr. Jones offer a recommendation regarding the availability of sufficient off-street parking.

STATUS: (See attached letter.)

DISCUSSION: There was a general consensus among Planning Board members that the off-street parking provided by the applicant would be sufficient for the business.

5. The location and any necessary screening for an outdoor storage area on the property must be shown.

STATUS: Provided (with explanations).

DISCUSSION: The Planning Board was comfortable with the location of the outdoor storage area and the screening that already exists on the property.

6. The location and design of any new outdoor lighting on the property should be identified.

STATUS: Downward angled LED wall packs are shown on the revised drawing.

7. A planting schedule for all of the new landscaping to take place on the property should be included on the Site Plan drawings.

STATUS: Provided.

DISCUSSION: The Planning Board was comfortable with the planting schedule for the landscaping plan.

8. The design of any new signs on the property should be identified.

STATUS: Provided.

DISCUSSION: The Planning Board had no comments regarding the design of the new signs. Mr. Wiszchowski explained that the colors on the sign may eventually change.

Mr. Geraghty pointed out that the City's Historic District Review Board will also have to consider the design and colors for the sign.

9. A notation should be made on the Site Plan identifying the amount of building area to be used for retail sales.

STATUS: A notation on the drawing indicates that approximately 250+/- sq. ft. will be used for retail space.

10. Any exterior renovations beyond the construction of a handicapped ramp and the replacement of a door should be noted on the Site Plan drawing.

STATUS: All exterior renovations have been noted on the revised Site Plan drawings.

11. A note should be added to the drawings indicating that a Knox Box will be provided for the building.

STATUS: Provided.

C. State Environmental Quality Review:

During its October 6, 2015 meeting, the City of Groversville Planning Board authorized the filing of a negative declaration under for this proposed action. Consequently, unless new additional information has been provided, no further SEQR action is necessary.

D. Public Hearing:

1. The public hearing was opened at 7:05 P.M.

2. Speakers:

There was no one to speak regarding SW Skin Care and Cosmetic's Site Plan application for a day spa at 23 Fremont Street.

3. The public hearing was closed at 7:06 P.M.

E. Planning Board Action:

In accordance with Section 300-80 of the City of Groversville Zoning Ordinance, the Planning Board, within forty-five (45) days after the public hearing, shall approve, approve with modifications or disapprove the application for Site Plan approval. Consequently, does the Planning Board wish to issue its final decision on SW Skin Care's Site Plan for a day spa at 23 Fremont Street?

MOTION: To approve SW Skin Care and Cosmetics' Site Plan for a day spa at 23 Fremont Street.

MADE BY: Geoffrey Peck

SECONDED: Matthew Donde

VOTE: 5 in favor, 0 opposed

V. SUSAN CASEY – CONCEPT PLAN FOR LAUNDROMAT:

Planning Board Chairman James Anderson indicated that he would abstain from any discussion on this application because he has worked for the applicant in the past. He asked Planning Board Alternate Peter Semione to take his place for the review of this application.

A. Background:

Susan Casey would like to convert the first floor of a building at 52 South Main Street into a Laundromat (Tax Map Parcel No. 149.6-12-20.5). The property is approximately .47 acres in size. The applicant is proposing to renovate approximately 5,000 sq. ft. of first floor area in the building for a Laundromat.

DISCUSSION: Susan Casey explained to Board members that she would like to take the old Beacon Wholesale building at 52 South Main Street and convert the first floor into a Laundromat. She indicated that she would be closing down her Laundromat on the opposite side of the street in order to develop a larger Laundromat in the former Beacon Wholesale building. She talked about how good the building's physical structure is. She indicated that there was a leak that needed to be taken care of and she received permission from the Historic District Review Board to do some work in the building.

Ms. Casey explained that with Robinson and Smith's pending move from its location on North Main Street, coupled with the fact that her existing Laundromat is overused, she decided to move the business across the street into larger quarters. She indicated that she has negotiated a deal with a dry cleaning business that will use the Laundromat as a pickup spot. She indicated that the new facility will have an attendant. She talked about the availability of parking behind the building and pointed out that she may use the back entrance as the main entrance to the Laundromat. She indicated that she would pave the entire back parking lot as part of the project.

Planning Board Member Geoff Peck asked if there was a curb cut between her building and the Palace Diner?

Ms. Casey indicated that there is.

Mr. Peck asked if residents living in the downtown area frequently utilize her existing Laundromat?

Ms. Casey indicated that she actually has customers from all over the community that utilize her current facility and felt that she needed to enlarge the business and provide a full-time attendant for customers.

Mr. Peck asked if the façade of the building would be painted?

Mrs. Casey indicated that she would leave the masonry façade alone. She pointed out that she would like to keep the original integrity of the building intact.

Planning Board Member Jon Kluska asked about the notation on the Site Plan application regarding the vent dryers?

Mrs. Casey indicated that the notation is simply a note to herself and will be removed on the revised submittal.

Mr. Geraghty suggested that the Planning Board talk about the preparation of revised drawings that will need to be filed as part of this Site Plan application.

B. Planning Department Review:

The Fulton County Planning Department has reviewed the application in accordance with the City's Site Plan Regulations and would like to offer the following comments:

1. The correct Tax Map Parcel Number should be identified on the Site Plan application.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Geraghty pointed out that the Site Plan application itself has an old tax map parcel number identified. He indicated that the applicant has combined several parcels and a new Tax Map Parcel Number has been designated by the County's Real Property Tax Services Office.

2. A full-size set of drawings needs to be submitted as part of the Site Plan application.
3. The boundaries of the property should be shown on the Site Plan drawing.
4. The location of off-street parking areas for the business should be identified.

DISCUSSION: Mrs. Casey indicated that she would have a full set of Site Plan drawings prepared with the property boundaries and all of the off-street parking spaces shown.

5. The location of an outdoor storage area for the business should be identified.

DISCUSSION: Mrs. Casey indicated that she did not need an outdoor storage area for the new business. She indicated that the business itself does not generate a significant amount of garbage.

Mr. Peck pointed out that if the facility is attended, then any garbage could be maintained inside.

Mr. Peck then questioned if any additional onsite drainage would be needed once the parking lot area is paved?

Mrs. Casey explained that there is an existing catchbasin in the parking lot area.

Mr. Peck asked that the location of that catchbasin be identified on the revised Site Plan submittal.

6. The location, size and design of any new signage advertising the business should be identified.

DISCUSSION: Mrs. Casey indicated that the only signage will be decals placed in the front windows to the building.

Mr. Geraghty reminded her that she would need to get approval from the Historic District Review Board for any signage in the windows.

7. Any outdoor lighting that will be added to the site should be shown.

DISCUSSION: Mrs. Casey indicated that an additional wall pack may be needed on the building to illuminate an area that is not already illuminated by adjacent street lights.

8. Building elevation drawings that give a clear representation of what the building will look like should be provided. This would include showing the design of the new awning that is proposed on the front of the building.

DISCUSSION: After a brief discussion, the Planning Board felt that, given the limited changes to take place on the façade of the building, elevation drawings will not need to be provided. Once again, Mr. Geraghty reminded Mrs. Casey that any changes to the front façade will require a Historic District Review Board approval.

9. Any additional exterior renovations to be made to the building beyond the window and door replacements should be noted.

DISCUSSION: Mrs. Casey indicated that no other exterior renovations would take place on the building.

10. An estimated project construction schedule should be included with the Site Plan submittal.

DISCUSSION: Mrs. Casey indicated that she would like to start work on the project as soon as possible but did not have a definite timetable.

C. State Environmental Quality Review:

The reuse of an existing building for a similar type of use is considered a Type II Action under the State Environmental Quality Review Act and is not subject to any further review.

D. Planning Board Action:

In accordance with Section 300-79 of the City of Gloversville Zoning Ordinance, the Planning Board must fix a time within forty-five (45) days from the day the Planning Board determines an application for Site Plan review to be complete for a public hearing on the application for Site Plan approval. Consequently, does the Planning Board feel that a public hearing should be scheduled on Susan Casey's Site Plan application for a Laundromat at 52 South Main Street at this time?

DISCUSSION: After a brief discussion, the Planning Board felt that a public hearing on the Site Plan review should be held.

MOTION: To schedule a public hearing on Susan Casey's Site Plan application for a Laundromat at 52 South Main Street for 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, December 1, 2015.

MADE BY: Brenda Leitt

SECONDED: Jonathan Kluska

VOTE: 5 in favor, 0 opposed

VI. SOLAR FARM ZONING DISCUSSION:

A. Background:

During the October 6, 2015 meeting, the Planning Board listened to a brief presentation by Monolith Solar about a concept plan to develop a "Solar Garden Project" along the north side of West Eleventh Avenue in the City of Gloversville (Tax Map Parcel No. 134.10-4-27.1). At that time, City Building Inspector Brandon Myers and County Senior Planner Sean Geraghty explained that the placement or development of solar-generation facilities is not addressed in the City's Zoning Regulations and, therefore, this type of use is currently not allowed in the community. The Planning Board went on to explain to Monolith Solar representatives that the City of Gloversville Common Council is currently under contract with Greenman Pedersen Associates to have the City's current Zoning Regulations completely rewritten. The Planning Board suggested that Monolith Solar approach the Common Council and ask that the concept of allowing solar-generation projects in the City of Gloversville be address by Greenman Pedersen.

B. October 13, 2015 City of Gloversville Common Council Meeting:

During its meeting on October 13, 2015, the City of Gloversville Common Council discuss Monolith Solar's proposal for the property on West Eleventh Avenue and decided to refer the issue back to the Planning Board for a discussion regarding the concept of allowing these types of uses in the community. The Council is asking that the Planning Board consider whether or not "Solar Generation" Projects should be allowed in the community and, if so, what Zoning Districts they should be allowed in.

C. Local Solar Farm Regulations:

The Town of Johnstown recently put together regulations dealing with the development of Solar Farms in that community. There are two (2) components in the Town's regulations that are worth mentioning. First, the Town of Johnstown has added the following definitions to its Zoning Regulations:

Solar Collector: A device, structure, panel or part of a device or structure for which the primary purpose is to transform solar radiant energy into thermal mechanical chemical or electrical energy.

Solar Farm: The use of land where a series of one (1) or more solar collectors are placed in an area on a parcel of land for the purpose of generating photovoltaic power and said series of one (1) or more solar collectors placed in an area on a parcel of land collectively has a nameplate generation capacity of at least 15 kilowatts (kw) direct current (dc) or more when operating at maximum efficiency.

The second component in the Town's regulations that is worth mentioning deals with the applicability of those regulations. The Town's Solar Farm Regulations specifically state that:

"The term Solar Farm shall not be construed to include, so as to prohibit, or have the effect of prohibiting, the installation of a solar collector that gathers solar radiation as a substitute for traditional energy for water heating, active space heating and cooling, passive heating or generating electricity for a residential property. The term Solar Farm shall also not be construed in such a way as to prohibit the installation or mounting of a series of one (1) or more solar collectors upon the roofs of residential and/or commercial structures regardless of whether said series of one (1) or more solar collectors collectively has a total nameplate generation of at least 15 kilowatts (kw) direct current (dc) or more when operating at maximum efficiency.

The City of Gloversville is obviously a much more densely-development community than the Town of Johnstown and the issues that were considered in that community will be different from the ones within the City of Gloversville.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Geraghty explained the sequence of events that took place since the Monolith Solar representatives talked about their concept plans at the Planning Board's October 6, 2015 meeting. He indicated that he had discussions earlier in the day with City Attorney Anthony Casale and City Public Works Director Kevin Jones concerning what the Council wanted the Planning Board to consider. He explained that it is his understanding that the City Council is asking the Planning Board to consider whether or not solar-generation type facilities should be allowed within the City's borders and, if so, where those facilities should be located.

Mr. Geraghty then talked about the Town of Johnstown's recently-adopted regulations dealing with Solar Farms. He stressed that the Town did not want to regulate the installation of solar panels on residential homes or on commercial businesses but focused its efforts on establishing parameters and regulations for large-scale solar installations where energy is being sold back to the grid. He indicated that he believed the City of Gloversville Common Council wished to do the same thing and have the Planning Board focus on the installation of large-scale solar-generation facilities.

There was then a discussion regarding the status of Greenman Pedersen's efforts to draft new Zoning Regulations for the City of Gloversville.

City Fire Chief Tom Groff indicated that he was a member of the committee working with Greenman Pedersen and explained that the group has only made limited progress on the new regulations.

Planning Board members expressed some concern with identifying a specific Zoning District where solar-generation type facilities could be developed throughout the community.

Planning Board Member Geoff Peck suggested that the City look at its Brownfield sites and other vacant industrial properties and attempt to quantify how much solar development could take place on those properties.

Mr. Geraghty pointed out that, as part of its effort to update the City's Zoning Regulations, the Committee working with Greenman Pedersen Associates could identify a new zoning classification for the Brownfield/industrial properties and allow solar-generation type facilities in that zone. He indicated that this would resolve the concern over allowing solar-generation facilities in a particular Zoning District throughout the entire community which may cause significant land use conflicts with adjacent residential uses.

After briefly discussing the matter, Planning Board members seemed to feel that additional research should be conducted by the County Planning Department on the number of Brownfield and vacant industrial properties that exist in the community. Mr. Geraghty indicated that he would speak with County GIS Administrator Scott Henze to see if he could map those properties throughout the community and provide a quantification of the amount of acreage that could conceivably be available for development of solar-generation facilities. Mr. Geraghty indicated that he would send a follow-up letter to City Attorney Anthony Casale regarding the Planning Board's discussion this evening.

VII. CLOSE OF THE MEETING;

MOTION: To close the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

MADE BY: Geoffrey Peck

SECONDED: Jonathan Kluska

VOTE: 5 in favor, 0 opposed