

**CITY OF GLOVERSVILLE PLANNING BOARD
DECEMBER 1, 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 November 3, 2015 meeting.
MADE BY : Geoffrey Peck
SECONDED : Jonathan Klusa
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. SUSAN CASEY – PUBLIC HEARING ON A SITE PLAN FOR A LAUNDROMAT:

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 6,048 sq. ft. of first floor area in the building for a Laundromat.

(NOTE: Planning Board Chairman Jim Anderson indicated that he would abstain from any discussion on this application because he has worked for the applicant in the past. Planning Board Alternate Peter Semione took Mr. Anderson's place for the review of this application.)

B. November 3, 2015 Meeting:

During its November 3, 2015 meeting, the City of Gloversville Planning Board began its review of Susan Casey's Site Plan for a Laundromat at 52 South Main Street. At that time, the Planning Board asked that the following information be provided on a revised Site Plan application prior to the public hearing.

1. The correct tax map parcel number should be identified on the Site Plan application.

STATUS: Provided.

2. A full-size set of drawings for the project needs to be submitted to the Planning Board showing the property boundary and the location of the building on the parcel.

STATUS: Provided.

DISCUSSION: The Planning Board felt that the revised set of drawings were acceptable.

3. The location of access driveways to the property, as well as all parking areas for the business, should be identified.

STATUS: Provided.

DISCUSSION: County Senior Planner Sean Geraghty questioned whether or not the only access to the property would be off of Arlington Avenue? He noted that there is a driveway cut along South Main Street, but it

appears that a fence and gate will obstruct any access to the property from South Main Street.

Chad Taback, representing Susan Casey, indicated that he believed the gate would be left open so that the property could be accessed from both South Arlington Avenue and South Main Street.

The Planning Board had no further questions regarding this issue.

4. The location of the existing catch basin that will handle stormwater runoff for the parking lot should be identified.

STATUS: Provided.

5. A notation should be made on the drawing indicating that the only signage on the property will consist of decals placed in the windows of the building.

STATUS: A notation has been added to the drawings indicating that decal signs will be placed inside the glass on several windows.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Geraghty indicated that the City Historic District Review Board may have to approve the decals for the windows. He indicated that he believed the Historic District Review Board has authority over all types of signage that is located within 3' of storefront windows.

Planning Board Member Brenda Leitt, who is also a member of the City's Historic District Review Board, indicated that she believed that was the case.

6. The location and design of any additional lighting to be installed on the property should be identified.

STATUS: A notation has been made on the drawing indicating that new security lights will be placed around the perimeter of the building. The type of lighting to be used has not been identified.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Taback indicated that he believed wall packs would be placed around the exterior doors.

The Planning Board did not have any other questions regarding this issue.

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

STATUS: ?

DISCUSSION: Mr. Taback indicated that he believed the applicant would like to start construction immediately and work through the winter.

The Planning Board did not ask for any additional information regarding the project construction schedule.

C. Public Hearing:

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

2. Speakers:

Planning Board Alternate Peter Semione asked how Mrs. Casey intended to use the current Laundromat space in the building across the street from her project?

Mr. Geraghty indicated that he believed Mrs. Casey mentioned to the Board that the current Laundromat location will be closed and used for retail space, offices or additional storage for her business.

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

D. Planning Board Action:

In accordance with Section 300-80 of the City of Gloversville 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 Susan Casey's Site Plan for a Laundromat at 52 South Main Street?

MOTION: To approve Susan Casey's Site Plan application for a Laundromat at 52 South Main Street.

MADE BY: Geoffrey Peck

SECONDED: Matthew Donde

VOTE: 5 in favor, 0 opposed

V. **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.

D. November 3, 2015 Meeting:

During its November 3, 2015 meeting, the Planning Board began discussing the issue of whether or not to permit the development of solar-generation type facilities within the City limits. At that time, the Planning Board asked the County Planning Department to put together a map showing the locations of Brownfield/vacant industrial sites within the City's borders and to quantify how much property could conceivably be made available on these sites for the development of solar-generation type facilities. The Planning Board felt that, given the City's current Zoning Regulations, there is no specific District that could be identified as the classification where solar-generation facilities should be allowed. Instead, the Planning Board discussed the concept of creating a new Zoning District that would allow solar-generation type facilities and to classify former Brownfield/vacant industrial sites under that designation. The Planning Board felt that given the history of many of these properties, the removal of vacant industrial buildings or the cleanup of vacant industrial sites and the subsequent development of solar-generation type facilities would represent an improvement in many neighborhoods throughout the community.

E. Brownfield/Industrial Site Map:

County GIS Coordinator Scott Henze took information that was supplied by the City of Gloversville Department of Public Works and the assessor's office and attempted to map the Brownfield and industrial sites throughout the City of Gloversville. A total of 39 sites were identified making up approximately 78+/- acres. The parcels were overlaid on a map showing the Zoning Districts throughout the City.

PLANNING BOARD DISCUSSION: Mr. Geraghty explained that the City DPW and Assessor's Office put together the list of Brownfield/industrial sites in the community. He indicated that not all of the industrial sites are vacant and pointed out that there may be other sites that were left off of the list. Mr. Geraghty noted that the map clearly shows that the former industrial properties were located along the spine of the City and are generally located in manufacturing zones.

There was a general consensus among Board members that the mapping provided by GIS Coordinator Scott Henze was very helpful and informative.

Mr. Geraghty noted that the Fulton County Industrial Development Agency (IDA) has also been approached by a solar energy company about property in the Crossroads Business Park that sits on the hill separating the Business Park from the Crossroads Industrial Park. Mr. Geraghty explained that the property is not developable and could be a good location for the installation of solar panels. The Planning Board agreed.

Mr. Semione pointed out that the City of Gloversville Water Board is also looking at property in the Crossroads Business Park for a potential water tower location.

Both Mr. Geraghty and Mr. Peck explained that the water tower will probably not be located on the hillside, but will likely be situated on the highest point on the property, near the end of the cul-de-sac.

Planning Board Member Jon Kluska noted that the complex of properties along Grove Street could be an excellent location for a solar panel installation, given the fact that the previous building foundations are still in place on the property. The Planning Board agreed.

Mr. Geraghty noted that the property is located in a flood zone, so the potential flooding impacts associated with solar panel installations would need to be carefully considered.

Planning Board Chairman Jim Anderson indicated that he felt the parcels shown as 38 and 39 on the map would also be a good site for a solar-generation facility if it wasn't for the fact that the properties are located along the NYS Route 30A Corridor.

Mr. Geraghty pointed out that the installation of a solar panel array on those properties would be much more aesthetically pleasing than the dilapidated structures that currently sit on the property. Planning Board Members agreed with this assessment.

Mr. Peck then indicated that the former Independent Leather site along South Main Street, the Pan American property along West Fulton Street and the Grove Street complex would probably be the best potential sites for a solar panel array. He also talked about the City's property along Eighth Avenue, but noted that the property is still being used by the City.

Mr. Anderson indicated that the property on the north side of Eighth Avenue is very large and only a small portion of the property is being used by the City.

Mr. Peck indicated that he felt the Planning Board should make a recommendation to the Committee working on the City's new Zoning Regulations to create a new zoning classification that would allow solar-generation facilities and to consider reusing Brownfield sites in the community as potentially the best possible locations for solar-power

generation type facilities. Mr. Peck specifically talked about the Risedorph site, the Independent Leather site and the Pan American site as potential locations for the new zoning classification. He also noted that the Grove Street complex of properties may also be a good site.

Mr. Geraghty asked City Fire Chief Tom Groff where the City's Zoning Commission stood with regards to its work on the new Zoning Regulations?

Mr. Groff indicated that very little progress has been made recently, given the fact that several of the Committee members will no longer be working on this effort. He speculated that the group would begin meeting again after the New Year when all of the newly-elected officials are in office.

Mr. Peck stated that he didn't feel the Planning Board should make any recommendation on its own, but should suggest to the Common Council what the Zoning Commission should consider.

MOTION: To recommend that the City of Gloversville Common Council direct the City Zoning Commission to consider the creation of a separate zoning classification that would allow solar-generation type facilities to be located within the City's borders and to suggest that the City's Brownfield sites, such as Pan American Tannery, Independent Leather, Risedorph Tannery, as well as the Grove Street complex of properties and the hillside separating the Crossroads Business Park from the Crossroads Industrial Park be considered as possible locations for this new zoning classification.

MADE BY: Geoffrey Peck
SECONDED: Jonathan Kluska
VOTE: 5 in favor, 0 opposed

VI. OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Training:

Mr. Geraghty indicated that the County Planning Board will, once again, be working with Montgomery County to sponsor a training session at Fulton-Montgomery Community College. He indicated that the 2016 session will be held late in February. Mr. Geraghty explained that one of the topics will be a case law update. He indicated that he's waiting to hear back from Montgomery County on a second topic before he contacts the State Department of Local Government Services to finalize the arrangements.

VII. CLOSE OF THE MEETING;

MOTION: To close the meeting at 7:26 p.m.

MADE BY: Geoffrey Peck

SECONDED: Matthew Donde

VOTE: 5 in favor, 0 opposed