

**City of Schenectady  
Planning Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
*April 17, 2019***

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Commissioner Wallinger called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

**II. ATTENDANCE**

**PRESENT:** Mary Moore Wallinger, Chair; Bradley Lewis, Vice Chair; Ryan Bailey; Randall Beach; Kimberly Case; Richard Ferro; Andrew Healey; Jason Bogdanowicz-Wilson; Christine Primiano, Principal Planner; Andrew Koldin, Assistant Corporation Counsel

**ABSENT:** Evan Euripidou

**III. CONFLICT OF INTEREST CHECK**

None.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

Motion by Commissioner Ferro, seconded by Commissioner Beach, to accept the Minutes of the March 20, 2019 meeting as submitted.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

**V. NEW BUSINESS - AWAITING SHPO REVIEW AND COMMENT**

**A. VALE CEMETERY ASSOCIATION requests site plan approval pursuant to Section 264-90 I of a proposal to construct a 961 sq. ft. garage at the existing crematory building at 909 State Street, tax parcel # 49.34-1-24.1, located in an "OS" Open Space District.**

Luigi Palleschi of ABD Engineers and Surveyors and Mike Roth of SRG Architects presented the proposal.

Prior to the beginning of the presentation Commissioner Wallinger noted that the Commission would be unable to act on the proposal at the meeting except to declare themselves lead agency for SEQR. She explained that once lead agency is declared a mandatory 30-day period begins, in which interested parties can offer their comments regarding SEQR and the project.

Mr. Palleschi explained that the addition will allow hearses to drive into a fully enclosed area to unload; currently the hearses back in to the garage and are unable to close the door. He stated that some additional grading to the site will be needed and new catch basins will be added. He noted

that they are working with the City Engineer to work out an agreement to allow a portion of the building to be on City park land.

Mr. Roth reviewed the elevation drawings, pointing out that they have added a high row of windows to the structure to allow natural light into the space while not allowing anyone to see in. He noted that the State Division of Cemeteries has made it mandatory that vehicles be in a completely enclosed space when unloading, thus this addition is necessary to meet those requirements. Commissioner Wallinger asked if they had decided on a color scheme for the exterior of the building. Mr. Roth stated that they have not decided yet, but they plan to repaint the entire building in colors that will blend with the environment, as opposed to the current bright green and yellow.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

### **MOTION TO DECLARE LEAD AGENCY**

Motion by Commissioner Lewis, seconded by Commissioner Healey, to declare the Schenectady City Planning Commission as Lead Agency for SEQR review.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

**B. NAVIN PATEL requests site plan approval pursuant to Section 264-90 I of a proposal to renovate the existing building and construct two additions to the Days Inn Hotel at 157 Nott Terrace, tax parcel # 39.81-2-7, located in a “C-4” Downtown Commercial District.**

Navin Patel and Luigi Palleschi of ABD Engineers and Surveyors presented the proposal. Mr. Palleschi noted that due to a death in the family Dave Nardozzi, architect for the project, was unable to attend the meeting.

Commissioner Wallinger explained that because the awaited State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) comments had been received the day of the meeting the Commission would be able to act on the proposal if they were prepared to do so.

Mr. Palleschi reviewed the recommended changes that had been discussed at the last meeting, pointing out the added landscaping, the door on the Nott Terrace side of the building, the revised color scheme, and the lighting fixtures. Commissioner Wallinger noted that the lights added to the plan do not meet the City design guidelines. She pointed out that the decorative light fixtures used at the nearby Doubletree Hotel are

an example of what is required. Mr. Patel indicated that he has no objection to using the decorative light fixtures.

Commissioner Ferro asked City Planner Primiano if the revised building façade on State Street meets the requirement for 60% glass. Ms. Primiano stated that with the added door it comes very close. The Commissioners discussed adding a canopy over the door on the Nott Terrace side, to add some shelter from the weather and to make the door look more inviting. Mr. Patel indicated that he would be willing to add the canopy. Mr. Palleschi stated that it would be added to the final revised plans to be submitted to City Planner Primiano.

Seeing no further comments from the Commissioners Commissioner Wallinger asked if they would have any objection to voting on the proposal at the meeting. The Commissioners indicated that they did not. Commissioner Wallinger thanked the applicants for working with the Commission and incorporating the recommended changes on the site.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

#### **SEQR RESOLUTION**

Motion by Commissioner Lewis, seconded by Commissioner Healey, to accept the Negative Declaration.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

#### **SITE PLAN APPROVAL**

Motion by Commissioner Lewis, seconded by Commissioner Bailey, to accept the proposal with the following conditions:

1. The address will be prominently displayed so that it is easily visible from Nott Terrace.
2. Metal roll gates and iron bars cannot be installed on any doors or windows at any time in the future.
3. The canopy over the Nott Terrace side door will be submitted to City staff for final approval.
4. The final revised site plan and elevation drawings will be submitted to the City Planner for final review and approval.
5. If during construction any changes become necessary the applicants must return to the City Planner for review and approval of the proposed changes or appear before the Planning Commission if staff deems it necessary.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS – CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. OTHA M. POWELL requests site plan approval pursuant to Section 264-90 M of a proposal to operate a smoothie and fresh juice bar at 96 Jay Street, tax parcel # 39.72-2-8 respectively, located in a “C-4” Downtown Commercial District.**

Otha M. Powell appeared before the Commission.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**SITE PLAN APPROVAL**

Motion by Commissioner Wilson, seconded by Commissioner Lewis, to accept the proposal with the following conditions:

1. The address will be prominently displayed so that it is easily visible from Jay Street.
2. Metal roll gates and iron bars cannot be installed on any doors or windows at any time in the future.
3. Pursuant to Section 264-49 G, all refuse must be stored in a closed and locked container and screened from the public view. The garbage from the residential and the commercial tenants must be consolidated and stored together. The applicant will submit a final garbage storage plan to the City Planner for review and approval prior to the opening of the business.
4. The applicant must obtain a revocable permit for the proposed sign prior to the issuance of the Certificate of Use license.
5. The applicant will obtain a Certificate of Use license and a Public Assembly License prior to opening the business.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

**VII. NEW BUSINESS - CONTINUED**

- A. KRISTINE MOORE requests site plan approval pursuant to Section 264-90 M of a proposal to operate a secondhand retail store at 2153 Van Vranken Avenue, tax parcel # 39.28-1-1.1, located in a “C-2” Mixed Use Commercial District.**

Kristine Moore presented the proposal.

Ms. Moore explained that she plans to open a secondhand store at the site. She stated that she is currently renting the space but is in negotiations to buy the building. She noted that she is a long-time resident of the neighborhood and believes that there is a need for this type of store in the community.

The applicant and Commissioners discussed the sidewalk in front of the store and Ms. Moore stated that she had begun the process of applying for a neighborhood sidewalk grant. It was decided that she would return to the May 2019 meeting with final plans and a timeline for the sidewalk repair and landscaping installation, but the Commission could grant conditional site plan approval to allow her to move toward opening the business.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

### **SITE PLAN APPROVAL**

Motion by Commissioner Beach, seconded by Commissioner Lewis, to accept the proposal with the following conditions:

1. The address will be prominently displayed so that it is easily visible from Van Vranken Avenue.
2. Metal roll gates and iron bars cannot be installed on any doors or windows at any time in the future.
3. The applicant will return to the Commission at the May 15, 2019 meeting with a detailed sidewalk and landscaping plan. The plan will include types and location of landscaping (minimum of one tree to be planted) and a timeline for completion.
4. The wood trim on the garage will be painted by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019.
5. A Secondhand Dealer's License and a Certificate of Use license are required prior to operating the business.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

### **B. WALGREENS requests site plan approval pursuant to Section 264-90 M of a proposal to operate a retail pharmacy store at 1203 Eastern Avenue, tax parcel # 50.21-3-30.1, located in a "C-2" Mixed Use Commercial District.**

Erin MacFarlane, manager of this Walgreens location, presented the proposal.

Ms. MacFarlane explained that Walgreens purchased this former Rite Aid in 2018, but just last month finished the rebranding of the store to Walgreens. City Planner Primiano noted that there has been a problem with temporary storage containers being stored on the site. Ms. MacFarlane stated that they have all been removed. Ms. Primiano stated that the window surface may only be covered a maximum of 20% with signs. Ms. MacFarlane replied that the vinyl cover panels have been removed from the windows.

Commissioner Wallinger explained that she and Ms. Primiano had been discussing the exterior colors and felt that the design would look more harmonious if the inset areas which are currently painted white were painted the same gray as the canopy and roof trim. She noted that it would also look less dirty than the bright white, which tends to appear dingy after a short time. Ms. MacFarlane stated that she was sure there would be no objection to the painting. The Commissioners and the applicant also discussed issues with the sidewalk and the need for a handicap ramp at the corner. Ms. Primiano suggested she contact the Engineering Department for the exact specifications of what is necessary.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

### **SITE PLAN APPROVAL**

Motion by Commissioner Wilson, seconded by Commissioner Ferro, to accept the proposal with the following conditions:

1. The address will be prominently displayed so that it is easily visible from Eastern Avenue.
2. Metal roll gates and iron bars cannot be installed on any doors or windows at any time in the future.
3. All temporary storage containers will be removed prior to the issuance of the Public Assembly License.
4. The dumpsters will be consolidated within one dumpster enclosure and screened from public view. The enclosure will be kept closed and locked at all times.
5. Two attached building signs are permitted. The third sign is not permitted. The applicant will determine placement of the two permitted signs prior to applying for a building permit.
6. Pursuant to Section 264-43 N. All window signs affixed to the inside of the window or posted inside the building are permitted, provided they do not cover more than 20% of the glass area of the pane to which the sign is affixed.
7. All landscaping must be maintained to the existing level. If removal of any of the landscaping is needed, approval by City Planning staff and replacement in kind is required.
8. The exterior façade insets which are currently painted white will be painted gray to match the canopy and the roof trim.
9. The sidewalk at the corner of Eastern Avenue and McClellan Street is not ADA compliant and is in poor repair in some sections. The applicant will consult with the Engineering Department regarding installing the proper corner section and repairing the sidewalk to City standards. The sidewalk will be repaired by July 31, 2019.

***Motion carried unanimously.***

- C. JOHN DE AUGUSTINE requests site plan approval pursuant to Section 264-90 M of a proposal to rent 40,000 sq. ft. of existing warehouse space at 2345 Maxon Road Extension, tax parcel # 30.83-1-2.111, located in an “M-1” Light Manufacturing and Warehousing District.**

Because the applicant was not present at the beginning of the meeting, Commissioner Wallinger removed this item from the Consent Agenda. Later, because Mr. De Augustine failed to appear, the Commissioners decided to table the application.

**MOTION TO TABLE**

Motion by Commissioner Lewis, seconded by Commissioner Beach, to table the application.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

**VIII. OLD BUSINESS**

- A. DAVID BROWN requests site plan approval pursuant to Section 264-90 M of a proposal to create an additional commercial space in the existing building at 1730 State Street, tax parcel # 60.30-3-63, located in a “C-5” Business District.**

David Brown appeared before the Commission.

Mr. Brown stated that since the last meeting he had moved the cars as requested, created a dumpster enclosure, and added the parking barrier. He noted that at the suggestion of the Commissioners he had also changed the design of the proposed sign and had submitted it to City Planner Primiano. Ms. Primiano asked Mr. Brown if the sidewalk has been repaired. Mr. Brown stated that he had begun the repairs, but they are not finished.

Ms. Primiano stated that the Commissioners could consider granting conditional site plan approval contingent on City staff visiting the site and confirming that the violations have been addressed. The Commissioners agreed that this would be the best way to proceed.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**SITE PLAN APPROVAL**

Motion by Commissioner Ferro, seconded by Commissioner Healey, to accept the proposal with the following conditions:

1. The address will remain prominently displayed so that it is easily visible from State Street.
2. Metal roll gates and iron bars cannot be installed on any doors or windows at any time in the future.
3. The site will be inspected by City staff to ensure that all reported corrections have been satisfactorily completed. Final site plan approval will not be issued until it is determined that the site is no longer in violation of the conditional site plan review issued in May 2016.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

**B. MICHAEL MCPARTLON requests site plan approval pursuant to Section 264-90 I of a proposal to construct a 2,200 sq. ft. addition to the existing building at 793 State Street and 2 Mynderse Street, tax parcel #'s 49.25-3-16 & 17 respectfully, located in a "C-2" Mixed Use Commercial District.**

Luigi Palleschi of ABD Engineers and Surveyors and Michael McPartlon presented the proposal.

Mr. Palleschi reviewed the changes that had been made to the site plan since the March 2019 meeting, including working with the City Engineer to reduce the curb cut on State Street. He noted that the existing planter boxes would be added to and the lot consolidation had been completed.

The parking at the State Street side of the building was discussed, and it was determined that landscaping should be installed between the parking area and the back of the sidewalk. Commissioner Wallinger suggested ornamental grasses and daylilies, or some similar plantings that would offer screening but would also be hardy and require minimal maintenance.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**SEQR RESOLUTION**

Motion by Commissioner Lewis, seconded by Commissioner Healey, to accept the Negative Declaration.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

**SITE PLAN APPROVAL**

Motion by Commissioner Beach, seconded by Commissioner Ferro, to accept the proposal with the following conditions:

1. The address will remain prominently displayed so that it is easily visible from State Street.
2. Metal roll gates and iron bars cannot be installed on any doors or windows at any time in the future.
3. As discussed at the meeting, additional landscaping will be added, including a planting bed from the back of the sidewalk to the edge of the parking area. The final landscaping plan will be submitted to the City Planner for approval prior to the installation of the landscaping. The landscaping will be installed prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Completion.
4. Confirmation from the County of the lot consolidation must be submitted with the building permit application or a building permit will not be issued.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

**IX. MISCELLANEOUS**

Commissioner Wallinger noted that the proposed changes to the downtown parking requirements are scheduled to be considered by the City Council at their May 6, 2019 meeting. She asked the Commissioners to attend the meeting and show their support for the changes if possible.

**X. MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Motion by Commissioner Beach, seconded by Commissioner Wilson, to adjourn the meeting.

*Motion carried unanimously.*

Meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.