

**VILLAGE OF ESSEX JUNCTION
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
October 6, 2011**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Liza Kilcoyne (Chairwoman); Diane Clemens, Nick Meyer, John Alden., Aaron Martin, Andrew Boutin, David Nistico.

ADMINISTRATION: Robin Pierce, Development Director.

OTHERS PRESENT: John Stawinski, Paul O’Leary.

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order
2. Audience for Visitors
3. Additions/Amendments to the Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes
5. Public Meeting
 - Continued Site Plan, Change of Use from a church to Personal Service Establishment and Professional Offices, 56 Main Street, John Stawinski for Unity Church
6. Other Planning Commission Items
7. Adjournment

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Liza Kilcoyne called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

2. AUDIENCE FOR VISITORS

There were no comments from the public at this time.

3. ADDITIONS/AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Add under “Other Planning Commission Items:

- Color choices for building on Railroad Ave.
- New ordinance – abandoned buildings and noxious weeds/litter
- New meeting time (6 PM)

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

May 19, 2011

MOTION by Diane Clemens, **SECOND** by Nick Meyer, to approve the minutes of 5/19/11 as written. **VOTING:** all ayes except two abstentions (Martin, Nistico); **motion carried.**

September 15, 2011

MOTION by Nick Meyer, **SECOND** by Andrew Boutin, to approve the 9/15/11 minutes with the following correction(s)/clarification(s):

Globally correct the name spelling of Doug Goulette;

Page 4, **MOTION**, Condition #4 – delete “or brick like”.

VOTING: unanimous (7-0); **motion carried.**

5. PUBLIC MEETING

Continued Site Plan for a change of use from a church to personal service establishment and professional offices with on-site parking at 56 Main Street in the R-O District by John Stawinski, agent for Unity Church, owner

John Stawinski and Paul O'Leary appeared on behalf of the application.

STAFF REPORT

Robin Pierce reported the revised plan does not propose parking in the right-of-way or on the side of Grove Street where parking is prohibited. Traffic circulation is one-way from the driveway easement (entrance) to Grove Street (exit). There is a hedge proposed along Main Street to screen the parking and there should be a maximum height required.

APPLICANT COMMENT

Paul O'Leary reviewed the parking layout using the driveway easement as entry into the 10 space parking area and exiting onto Grove Street (one way traffic pattern). Mr. O'Leary noted the following:

- Two small offices and a physical therapy fitness center are proposed in the building.
- The regulations require 12 parking spaces. The plan shows 10 spaces including one accessible space. There are two parking spaces shown on the west side of the building by the driveway easement to mainly be used by the owner. The Village Engineer had concern about the parking spaces and the narrow driveway/easement width. If the two spaces are eliminated, a waiver for parking will be needed.
- A handicap ramp to the existing entrance will be built. Boards covering windows on the building will be removed. A hedge will be planted to screen the parking from Main Street (suggested maximum height of four feet to maintain sight distance). The existing mature maple tree by Main Street will remain.
- The driveway aisle width is 20'. The regulations require 24' width, but with one-way circulation a 20' wide aisle is permitted.
- There is a streetlight on the corner and a light on the building. Lights are not proposed in the parking lot as required by the regulations so a waiver for lighting is needed.
- The change in use is a conditional use that requires approval by the zoning board. Additionally, a variance will be needed to park in the front and side yard setbacks.
- Lot coverage with the proposed parking lot is 59.7%. The maximum allowed is 40% so a variance is needed.

There was discussion of the two parking spaces on the west side of the building and the suggestion to locate the spaces behind the building if possible (would require approval of a new curb cut). Snow sliding off the slate roof of the building and onto cars parked in the spaces is a concern as is impact on residents of the adjacent apartment building who use the driveway. There is public parking available within a reasonable distance of the site (i.e. municipal parking lot by the railroad tracks and parking on the north side of Grove Street).

There was discussion of parking facing Main Street. It was noted the church across the street from the site has parking in the front yard. The parking lot proposed by the applicant will be gravel with precast curb markers to identify the edge of the spaces and prevent cars from parking on the lawn.

There was discussion of landscaping. John Alden noted the street rhythm and character is maintained by retaining the maple tree which is in line with other trees along the street. David Nistico mentioned landscaping on Grove Street to screen the parking lot from residents. Paul O'Leary stated street trees can be planted on the boundary line. Diane Clemens cautioned against too much foliage hiding the building and the distinctive windows.

There was discussion of lighting. Liza Kilcoyne suggested adding a light by the entry to the parking lot. The accessible parking space and ramp will also need lighting. Lighting standards in the Land Development Code must be met. Paul O'Leary suggested installing building mounted down shielded lights. The lighting plan will be submitted for approval by staff.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from the public on the application.

DELIBERATION/DECISION

Site Plan, Change of Use, 56 Main Street, Stawinski for Unity Church

MOTION by Diane Clemens, SECOND by David Nistico, to approve the site plan for a change of use from a church to personal service establishment and professional office space with on-site parking at 56 Main Street in the R-O District by John Stawinski, agent for Unity Church, with the following conditions:

- 1. The site plan is approved as drawn with 12 parking spaces with the provision the two parking spaces on the west side of the building in the easement are not constructed until the need for the spaces is demonstrated.**
- 2. Material for the parking lot shall be gravel with a paved apron at the entry and exit per the Land Development Code.**
- 3. Precast wheel stops at each parking space in the parking lot shall be installed to prevent parking on the grass.**
- 4. There shall be one-way circulation through the parking lot, west to east, with the entry from Main Street and the exit onto Grove Street.**
- 5. The applicant shall review lighting levels to meet the Land Development Code and additional lighting shall be reviewed and approved by staff.**
- 6. The landscape plan shall be reviewed and approved by staff and shall include a hedge that will be maintained at four (4') in height along Main Street plus two street trees on Grove Street of at least two inch caliper (species to be chosen from the approve list in the Land Development Code).**
- 7. A variance shall be requested and approved by the Zoning Board of Adjustment for the 59.7% lot coverage.**

8. Parking lot run off shall be contained on the site to the maximum possible.

9. Comments from the Village Engineer shall be addressed.

VOTING: unanimous (7-0); motion carried.

6. OTHER PLANNING COMMISSION ITEMS

Color Choices for Building on Railroad Ave.

Staff suggested white, green, and tan shades to go with the brick on buildings in the historic Brownell Block area.

Ordinances

Staff reported the process for adoption of ordinances to deal with abandoned buildings and noxious weeds/litter control is underway. Nick Meyer will circulate a copy of the building ordinance adopted by the City of Burlington.

Meeting Time

The Planning Commission agreed to change the meeting start time to 6 PM.

Next Meeting(s)

Work session on ordinance(s) is October 20, 2011.

7. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Aaron Martin, SECOND by Diane Clemens, to adjourn the meeting.

VOTING: unanimous (7-0); motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.

RScty: M.E.Riordan