



CITY OF SALEM PLANNING BOARD

City of Salem Planning Board Meeting Minutes, March 4, 2021

Chair Bill Grisct calls the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

A public hearing of the Salem Planning Board was held on Thursday, February 18, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.via Remote Access. Public participation was possible via zoom video and conference call.

I. ROLL CALL

Those present were: Chair Bill Grisct, Vice Chair Kirt Rieder, Carole Hamilton, Helen Sides, Tom Furey, Noah Koretz, Todd Waller, DJ Napolitano, Sarah Tarbet (9)

Absent:

Also in attendance: Mason Wells, Staff Planner, Tom Devine, Senior Staff Planner

Recorder: Stacy Kilb

Sarah Tarbet, the newest Board member, introduces herself. She is an architect that focuses on accessibility design.

II. REGULAR AGENDA

A. Location: 4 Franklin Street (Map 26-0407)

Applicant: CAS Salem LLC

Description: A public hearing for all persons interested in the application of CAS SALEM LLC for the property located at 4 Franklin Street (Map 26-0407) for a Site Plan Review, Flood Hazard Overlay District Special Permit, and Special Permits associated with the North River Canal Corridor Neighborhood Mixed Use District in accordance with the following sections of the Salem Zoning Ordinance: Section 9.5 Site Plan Review; Section 8.1 Flood Hazard Overlay District; Section 8.4 North River Canal Corridor Neighborhood Mixed Use District. Portions of the site are also in the Entrance Corridor Overlay District. Specifically, the applicant proposes the construction of a business office and ambulance facility with associated employee parking area, utilities, landscaping, and harbor walk path along the North River. The business office and ambulance facility are the first phase of site redevelopment and occurs on the Franklin Street side of the site. The second phase, the plan for which has not been developed, will occur on the North River side of the site.

Project Team:

Attorney Joseph Correnti, 63 Federal St.

Shaun Kelly, Associate, Traffic Engineering and Transportation Planning, Vanasse & Associates

Dennis Cataldo, President, CAS LLC

Bob Griffin, Civil Engineer, Project Engineer, Griffin Engineering

Susan St. Pierre, MEPA and Chapter 91 Coordinator

Dave Stockless, Architectural Engineer, Icon Architecture

Attorney Joseph Correnti represents the project. He provides a brief summary of the proceedings of the previous meeting.

Issues/questions brought up at the last meeting:

- Site entry, City land, right of way, North Street extension (all refer to the same area):
 - Some members of the public were surprised that this was public property.
 - The area in question is shown on an older Plan.
 - In 1964 the two lots were requested to be divided in an ANR. Frontage of Lot B is the 1964 frontage of the City street. Lot A gets its frontage off that area plus Franklin St.
 - Subsequently, for zoning purposes, lots A and B were merged but this does not impact the street.
 - This area must continue to be used for pedestrian access.
 - Kirt Rieder commends Attorney Correnti for providing justification along with a graphic substantiating the assertion.
- Phasing of the project
 - Phase I and II site layout is shown.
 - Applicant needs and desires to participate in Salem Harbor planning process.
 - Many setback requirements constrain Phase II (Chapter 91, NRCC uses, water dependent uses, etc.).
 - Potential Building Layout for Phase II is shown; it is more costly for the landowner to do this in phases. However, they need to move their office now, and cannot wait 2+ years for completion of the Harbor Plan.
 - This will allow for the City and Applicant to agree upon layouts for Phase II that include all requirements of a Chapter 91 waterfront parcel, and it will be a much more appealing layout and use of land than if Applicant built everything at once.
 - Proposed building for Phase 2 is shown. The building envelope they would be allowed to do now with no City input is awkward.
 - Chair Griset appreciates Mr. Correnti's explanation.

Shaun Kelly, Vanasse & Associates, presents Transportation Impact Assessment.

- Why the study is done: evaluate existing characteristics, ID future demands, determine impacts of Project, make recommendations to ensure safe and efficient access while minimizing impacts to Neighborhood.
- Site Location Map/Study Area Intersections.
- Existing Condition Summary.
 - Counts conducted prior to impacts of COVID 19; State discourages counts under current conditions.
 - Franklin St.: 3,550 on a typical weekday; 188 vehicles during morning peak hour, 285 during evening peak hour
 - Motor Vehicle Crash Data: All locations below state average, mostly property damage only
 - Franklin St. Vehicle Speeds: Avg. 25 mph
 - Ped/bicycle accommodations: Sidewalk and bicycle lanes or "sharrows" provided on North St.
 - City is designing improvements on North St. including parking revisions, pedestrian crossings and bicycle accommodations.
 - Public Transit: Study area served by MBTA local bus and commuter rail.
 - Growth in traffic, including upcoming developments, is accounted for.
 - How estimates are done is described. There is no ITE (Institute of Traffic Engineers) rate for an ambulance service, so a technician was sent to another Cataldo site (296 Canal St.) to

measure staff trips and ambulance trips. Few are emergency trips; many are scheduled. During such trips, ambulances may be out for the day and don't return to the facility.

- Graph of Trip Generation Observations is shown: total is 5 trips per hour maximum. There aren't many uses that will generate this few trips.
 - ITE data for this project vs. HMA: HMA saw 60 trips per peak hour AM and 95 trips per peak hour PM.
- Conclusions and Recommendations
 - Summary: 3-5 vehicle trips during peak hours.
 - Minimal increases in delays, minimal impact on pedestrians, cyclists, commuters.
 - No safety deficiencies.
 - Recommendations: Improve existing site access.
 - Maintain "No Left Turn" restriction from Franklin St. onto North (except in emergencies, will use lights for that).
 - Direct all non-emergency ambulance activity to use Mason St. to access points south of project.

Attorney Correnti asks Mr. Cataldo to describe how the facility will operate.

Mr. Cataldo

- Operates more like Police Dept. rather than Fire Dept.
- Ambulances do not usually come back to point of origin regularly, so do not have sirens/lights.
- Normally return during periods of less traffic; typically they do not need to use sirens/lights for access or egress.
- Minimal traffic impact to surroundings.
- 2013 Salem Police Department responded to 40,000 calls from Franklin St. This number is dramatically higher than the number Cataldo does. 4/8 or 5,000 PD calls go to Fire Dept.; the majority of those are medical related.
- 2-3 emergency ambulances will be operated per day; the Police Dept. uses far more but they do not cause a lot of traffic.

Kirt Rieder

- Clarifies that Mr. Kelly is sub-consultant to Cataldo.
- Asks about left turn only: recommended that driveway have left turn arrow only, but no graphic was provided. Would be facing outbound from downtown, left turn only toward gas station. I.e., they will NOT encourage right hand turns onto Franklin St. toward the neighborhood.
- Future meeting, Board may ask for peer review on topic of ingress and egress, curb cuts.

Tom Furey

- Impact of drivers' habits; drivers are unsafe, especially those coming from Commercial St. and gas stations. Numbers do not show the whole picture.
- Consider traffic signal, perhaps blinking one or safety light?
- Mr. Kelly notes that a traffic signal (green/red/yellow) is not warranted here, as volume does not meet requirements for one. Yellow/red beacon could be considered.
- Kirt Rieder clarifies that a light dedicated for emergency vehicles may be what Mr. Furey refers to.

Helen Sides

- Not concerned with volume.
- Is concerned with access to the site and that access to the second phase will be predetermined by this location. Encourages access to be from the back of the site. 1964 Plan showed easement at the

back of the lot from property line to dredging company - can this be maintained as access to the second parcel?

- Moving building to front to access from back will improve conditions at intersection.

Sarah Tarbet

- No safety deficiencies identified in the study area, but there are some concerns with pedestrian safety.
- Mr. Kelly: Consultants collect crash data from past several years and assess numbers and severity. Based on volume in intersections, DOT has number of crashes expected. Actual crash rate is compared to state average; this intersection is well below.
- Severity of crashes is also assessed. 21 of 28 were fender benders.

Kirt Rieder

- Asks about pedestrian safety, especially with cars turning.
- Mr. Kelly: Did not see collisions with pedestrians at that location.
- Additional signage indicating pedestrian crossings could be explored.
- Chair Griset asks Mr. Kelly to confirm no pedestrian issues at next meeting.

Noah Koretz

- Improvements to North St. were considered; major theme of work has been making North St. less of a speedway and more friendly for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Backward-looking data is fine, but going forward many in neighborhood are hoping for more pedestrian and bicycle activity.
- Would like to see forward-looking analysis that will consider such future activity.

Chair Griset opens to public comment.

An email was received; if not in the shared folder yet, it will be placed there after the meeting.

Stephen Kapantais, 23 Wisteria St.

- 1964 Subdivision: was Burger Chef back then. Hearings before PB on subdivision of lot in 1974 and 1995. Planning Board should search its records for this Property re merging/subdivision of two lots.

Stacia Kraft, 140 Federal St.

- Agrees w/Noah Koretz; no one walks across bridge b/c it is unpleasant, but Salem wants to change that.
- Not sure ambulance service here supports that.
- Concerned about inundation as this is planned on a flood plain. New maps were received, some communities using these to relocate emergency services out of a floodplain, this Plan puts it into one.
- Stormwater collection proposed but development = loss of floodplain.
- Floodplain should be allowed to function naturally.
- Discussed revising floodplain Ordinance but 4 new floodplain development proposals have been seen while discussing.

Andrew Fett, 0 Felt St. Way

- Franklin St. is a greater safety deficiency than North St.; concerned about adequacy of sidewalk on Franklin. People park there now, this must be prevented.
- Raised issue w/Tom Daniel previously, but was lack of priority.

Anne Sterling, 29 Orchard St.

- Encouraging new businesses on North St. City wants people walking and biking more.
- Sidewalk for access to Phases I and II is across from Northfields.
- Concerned about safety of pedestrians.
- This is not an office space but an ambulance facility; 6% of building space is office, 75% ambulance storage. Is within NRCC standards but one of these is to increase walkability.

Elizabeth Brott, 22 Larchmont Rd.

- Concerned about ambulance left hand turns out of Franklin St. [onto North St.] It is reiterated that ambulances will be allowed to make a left hand turn only in an emergency; cars will be prohibited from doing so.
- She would like a light or to be allowed to make a left hand turn out of the neighborhood.
- Ambulances will not be able to exit during rush hours.
- Dangerous for cyclists.
- Chair Griset clarifies that the review of pedestrian accidents should also include cyclist accidents.

Noah Koretz

- Previously asked about heavy trucks currently parked on site; Applicant has not moved them. Incongruous to move forward with procedures under Zoning ordinance we are required to do when Applicant has been, for a year or more, violating Ordinance w/current use of site.
- Vehicle storage or excess capacity for car dealer is not compliant w/NRCC usage.
- Board must address current zoning violation prior to moving forward.
- Bill Griset clarifies that no one has been cited for zoning violation, but the Applicant should respond.
- Mr. Cataldo replies: Salem Brake & Clutch has high volume of vehicles that belong to residents/businesses for plowing/sanding and is using the site as short-term parking for vehicles being converted to this use. They are removed in the spring. CAS has not been notified of any violation/need to move; there is no ill intent to continue this in the future or be in violation. Trying to help another business.
- They will be moved if he needs to move them.
- Bill Griset asks Mason Wells to follow up with Mr. Cataldo re zoning enforcement.

DJ Napolitano

- This is not meant to be punitive; what is the allowable use for that parcel? Concerned that Mr. Cataldo is taking it that way. Meant to enforce the NRCC rules on the books. Not helpful for anyone to say, "if the city allows/disallows this." "If it is not the desire of the community for those vehicles to be there, they will be removed. I don't need the city to tell me by the letter of the law they should not be there."
- Attorney Correnti assures the Board that the issue will be addressed.
- Noah Koretz notes it is not a "gotcha," but it has been bugging him and several neighbors are focused on trying to make North St. more livable and neighborhood focused, and while it is great to do a favor for a fellow business owner, it is not a good use, and it has been going on for a while. Visually not the direction we're trying to take the neighborhood.

- Chair Griset: allow Mr. Correnti and Applicant the opportunity to address the trucks.

Kirt Rieder

- Trucks were there in Nov. 2019, so it has been happening a long time.
- In future presentations, Mr. Griffin, please discuss vertical granite curb resetting/improvement along Franklin St. frontage.
- Think about a raised crosswalk or other improvements to City right of way to increase pedestrian safety.
- Second meeting with public comment regarding coastal storm surge, floodplain impacts, please take a proactive approach to define things/allay these fears.
- Previously indicated questions about street tree species, met with Tree Warden, encourages relaying to Landscape Architect to consider Tupelo and Swamp White Oak instead of Red Maple and Zalcova.

Mr. Correnti wonders if the Board will make a recommendation to send the Plans to the Design Review Board (DRB). Kirt Rieder notes it is important to know what changes may be made to the Site Plan before referring to the DRB. Timing of this is discussed; there will be no major architectural material changes. Building orientation and siting on the lot are being discussed, as are drive aisles, access and egress, but the DRB only meets once per month. They will come back to the April 1st Planning Board meeting to allow time for the substantive changes described. Helen Sides comments that waiting to go to the DRB is better (she is on both Boards). It is not just about the materiality of the building; a lot can change along with location. The design of the building is not significant until Site Plan Review is complete.

Timing is further discussed.

A motion to continue this matter to April 1, 2021, is made by Carole Hamilton, seconded by DJ Napolitano, and passes 9-0 in a roll call vote.

Carole Hamilton	Yes
DJ Napolitano	Yes
Helen Sides	Yes
Kirt Rieder	Yes
Noah Koretz	Yes
Tom Furey	Yes
Todd Waller	Yes
Sarah Tarbet	Yes
Bill Griset	Yes

B. Location: 203 Canal Street (Map 33, Lot 11)

Applicant: Z & M Realty Trust

Description: *The applicant has requested a continuance to the regularly scheduled meeting on March 18th of the public hearing for all persons interested in the application of Z & M REALTY TRUST for the property located at 203 Canal Street (Map 33, Lot 0011) for a Site Plan Review, Drive-Through Facilities Special Permit, and a Flood Hazard Overlay District Special Permit in accordance with the Salem Zoning Ordinance Section 9.5, Section 8.2, and Section 8.1. Specifically, the applicant proposes removal of the vehicle entrance on Canal Street and creation of one entrance and exit off of Forest Avenue for a new drive through and parking lot layout. The project includes an updated

point of sale and order board windows, increased site landscaping, improved parking layout with increased mobility within the site and an updated ADA accessible entrance.

This item is heard first. Present for the Applicant is John Bobreck of Bobreck Engineering, who requests a continuance to the March 18th meeting.

A motion to continue this matter to March 18, 2021 is made by Kirt Rieder, seconded by Helen Sides, and passes 9-0 in a roll call vote.

Carole Hamilton	Yes
DJ Napolitano	Yes
Helen Sides	Yes
Kirt Rieder	Yes
Noah Koretz	Yes
Tom Furey	Yes
Todd Waller	Yes
Sarah Tarbet	Yes
Bill Griset	Yes

III. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

A. Receive and File: Chapter 91 Notification for 419 Lafayette Street

Written comments can be submitted to Mason Wells; no additional action is needed.

B. *Update on Clark Avenue (Map 6, Lots 7, 8, and 9) – Woodlands Subdivision

Nick Mennino, owner, provides the update.

- 14 houses sold/occupied.
- 8 under construction.
- 1 ready for closing.
- Heavy construction to be finished spring/summer.
- Last 300' of road being constructed, will be ready for pavement when asphalt plants open in April, weather dependent.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Planning Board meeting minutes for December 3, 2020.

A motion to approve the above minutes, with minor corrections is made by Kirt Rieder seconded by Noah Koretz, and passes 7-0 in a roll call vote.

Carole Hamilton	Yes
DJ Napolitano	Yes
Helen Sides	Yes
Kirt Rieder	Yes
Noah Koretz	Yes
Tom Furey	Yes

Todd Waller	Ineligible/Abstain.
Sarah Tarbet	Ineligible/Abstain.
Bill Griset	Yes

B. Regular Planning Board meeting minutes for December 17, 2020.

A motion to approve the above minutes is made by Helen Sides, seconded by Carole Hamilton, and passes 7-0 in a roll call vote.

Carole Hamilton	Yes
DJ Napolitano	Yes
Helen Sides	Yes
Kirt Rieder	Yes
Noah Koretz	Yes
Tom Furey	Yes
Todd Waller	Ineligible/Abstain.
Sarah Tarbet	Ineligible/Abstain.
Bill Griset	Yes

V. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn is made by Kirt Rieder, seconded by DJ Napolitano, and passes 9-0 in a roll call vote.

Carole Hamilton	Yes
DJ Napolitano	Yes
Helen Sides	Yes
Kirt Rieder	Yes
Noah Koretz	Yes
Tom Furey	Yes
Todd Waller	Yes
Sarah Tarbet	Yes
Bill Griset	Yes

The meeting ends at 8:15PM.

For actions where the decisions have not been fully written into these minutes, copies of the decisions have been posted separately by address or project at: <https://www.salem.com/planning-board/webforms/planning-board-2021-decisions>

Respectfully submitted,
Stacy Kilb, Recording Clerk

Approved by the Planning Board on 6/3/2021