



## PLANNING COMMISSION City of Cortland

### MINUTES

**March 22, 2010**

A regular meeting of the City of Cortland Planning Commission was held on Monday, March 22, 2010 at 5:15 PM in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 25 Court Street, Cortland, New York.

PRESENT: Chair VanEtten, Comm. Hansen, Ryan, Smith and Spitzer

Staff Present: Zoning Officer Bruce Weber, Ken Teter, Consulting City Engineer, Captain Knickerbocker and Cheryl Massmann, Deputy City Clerk

#### Item No. 1 – Site Plan Review – 39 N. Main St. – (VanGorder)(GB) – Rebuild Concrete Porch and Add a Wheelchair Lift

Darrell VanGorder from Cortland Granite Works was present. He stated that the building was built in 1845 and that the building's concrete front porch has been deteriorating for years. He has had it patched many times and it just can't be done any more. He would like to take the concrete porch out and put back a new concrete structure and also put on a wheel chair lift on the right side near the driveway. He won't be extending past the building's current footprint. He showed a drawing of his proposal and noted that the new porch and lift will enhance the building. There was no further discussion.

A SEQR review was done.

On the motion by Comm. Hansen, seconded by Comm. Smith, voted and approved to issue a negative declaration.

On a motion by Comm. Hansen, seconded by Comm. Spitzer, voted and approved the project as presented.

Due to the size of the project listed as Item No. 2, Chair Van Etten asked if the agenda could be modified to accommodate the following smaller project and allow sufficient time for Item No. 2. Everyone agreed.

#### Item No. 3 – Site Plan Review – 180 Main St. – (Spadolini)(GB) – Reconfigure Deck, Handicapped Ramp and Repave Parking Lot

Chris Spadolini was present. He stated that his contractor noted that the original approved plan's old ramp would be too long. It had been decided to replace the three (3) steps off of the deck with a ramp. This ramp will meet both City Code and ADA requirements. It also will allow him to pave. There was no further discussion.

A SEQR review was done.

On the motion by Comm. Spitzer, seconded by Comm. Ryan, voted and approved to issue a negative declaration.

On a motion by Comm. Smith, seconded by Comm. Spitzer, voted and approved the project as presented.

Item No. 2 – Site Plan Review – 151-157 Main St. – (TC3)(GB) – New Construction and Parking Lot

Bob Ross was present for the TC3 Foundation along with David Harding and Matthew Klucznik of QPK Designs of Syracuse. Mr. Ross explained that TC3 had been here for twenty-five (25) years, with fifteen (15) of those years on West Court Street, here in Cortland. He noted that they have outgrown the West Court Street facility and needed more classrooms and computer labs.

Mr. Ross explained that the new facility on Main Street will have four (4) classrooms for twenty (20) to twenty-four (24) students each and two (2) computer labs with twenty-four (24) stations. He noted that there will also be a large meeting room that will hold about sixty-five people, a board room and some open computers are planned in the atrium area and there will be some administrative offices, as well. The facility will be a little over ten thousand square feet (10,000 sq. ft.) on five (5) parcels of land. The land is currently owned by the County who will clear the land. They have completed demolition of the two (2) major buildings, the Moose Lodge and Robbins Vending. There is a two (2) story garage yet to be removed and a yellow metal building will remain. The County will be leasing that building back from the Foundation. The TC3 Foundation will be the owner of the property and they will be leasing the facility to the college. This is the same type of arrangement that they had on Court Street.

Comm. Spitzer asked what would become of the TC3 building on West Court Street. Mr. Ross stated that ownership of that building will revert to the County. Mr. Ross stated that the board room will seat about fifteen (15) and the large meeting room will hold about sixty-five (65). Comm. Smith asked about the daytime attendance. Chair Van Etten noted that daytime classes are limited and that most classes take place at night. Mr. Ross agreed and noted that worked well with the parking lot and the adjacent businesses. Mr. Ross noted that the yellow metal building will now belong to the Foundation and the County will lease it to use as a storage facility.

Matt Klucznik walked through the building plans. He noted that the planned building will be about ten thousand square feet (10,000 sq. ft.) and will be single story. He stated that the main entrance will be is to the north and visible from Main Street. He noted that the building will be a steel frame building clad with aluminum metal panels and brick masonry. He noted that there would be a light monitor on top that's over a large central core of the building that will allow natural light to get in and to make it dynamic. He noted that facing Main Street, a taller area will be illuminated at night. He also noted that the location of the building along the street matches the street line of the adjacent buildings so that it will fit in.

He also noted that the scale of the building is similar to that of the adjacent streetscape. He noted that the top of the building is at approximately twenty-three (23) feet and the adjacent building is about thirty (30) feet high in the front. He noted that the planned building is keeping in scale with the neighborhood. He stated that the main access to the site is off of South Main Street and that the parking would be in the back. He noted that there were forty-nine (49) parking spaces and there would be handicapped access toward the front adjacent to the main entrance to the building. He explained that there would be bicycle storage at the main entrance and seating areas with benches with some transparent trees; Eastern Red Buds. He noted that those trees would allow visibility, but would add some color in the springtime and that they were of a smaller scale. He noted that the building is accented with landscaping all around the complete perimeter. He stated that pedestrian access was via a concrete paved pathway that leads to the back area. He noted that there is an existing alleyway, but there would be no vehicular traffic going through the alleyway. There is an existing alleyway going through the site and they plan to limit access by installing gates to allow pedestrian traffic. They will allow emergency access to police and fire. The perimeter of the site to the east is residential and that will have a buffer barrier of ten (10) foot plantings. There will also be a chain link fence installed there to provide further separation and security. They do not plan to change the rear of the existing building. There will be plenty of lighting and landscaping. He also noted that there would be a small emergency exit off of the back of the area for police and fire as well as an emergency exit door to the rear of the building for fire egress. He noted that there were larger plantings toward the back were coniferous trees and smaller trees would be deciduous with natural grasses would flank along the adjacent Cortland Re-entry Building. The plan is to re-top the existing paving as much as possible to save dollars and paving will also be extended to the east. He noted that some areas will be re-paved and others will need a sub-base and then paving. Mr. Harding noted that there will be a fourteen (14) foot six (6) inch wide buffer area on the east property line and they would be maintaining the ten (10) foot wide buffer on the south edge.

Comm. Smith asked what would happen to the existing trees. Mr. Harding noted that as many of the existing trees could be saved would be and those will be enhanced with further plantings. Mr. Klucznik noted that they will be planting seven to eight (7 to 8) foot arborvitaes with a mature growing height of twenty-five (25) feet. Zoning Officer Bruce Weber asked the architects to bring in more specific site plan document including the planting density. Mr. Klucznik noted that the plantings will be more intense than the original plans with about two (2) plants per every ten (10) feet. He noted that the trash enclosure has now been shifted so it is a bit more to the south and they have a full ten (10) feet between it and the property line. He also noted that the lighting plan had been modified and that the lights are now on twelve (12) foot high poles to eliminate light spillage into the adjoining property. It's now equivalent to .03 foot candles. They also have added two (2) extra light poles in the center isle areas in order to maintain the coverage they were looking for. It was also noted that the fixtures were also dark sky compliant so that there isn't light emitted into the community and the light is all focused on the site. The light fixtures also will only have one hundred (100) watt bulbs. Comm. Smith asked for an explanation of the fencing. It was explained that the fencing would go across the alleyway from the NAPA building to the TC3 building along the south boundary and then would turn and go along the east boundary and turn again and go along the metal storage building. There would be access gates in the fencing. He noted that there would

be no fencing along the north boundary other than that for the trash enclosure. The plans call for stamped colored concrete entryways to match the streetscape.

Comm. Hansen asked them to explain what was planned for snow storage. Mr. Harding noted that they planned to use the east edge grassy area of the parking area as well as the small strip that separates the alley way from the parking area as well as the grass area to the north. Mr. Klucznik stated that in severe snow events, the snow would have to be trucked off site and TC3 was aware of that. Comm. Spitzer asked for clarification regarding the drywell. Mr. Harding noted that it was existing and located in the parking lot. The plan was to clean it out and make it operational and to reconfigure the storm system so the water goes through it with a catch basin which would have a sump and a hood with an outlet pipe which would keep floating debris and oils from passing into the drywell. He noted that these were the new EPA standards for dry or injection wells. This would correct a bad situation by routing it through the catch basin. He also noted that they were changing the impervious cover on the site from seventy-five (75) percent to sixty-seven (67) percent by removal of the existing pavements and roofs. They also were increasing the green space in the front of the property, but did note that they were expanding the impervious surface in the back of the property. He noted that the watersheds off of the building would go to the street system. He also noted that they would be putting in a catch basin in front of the storage building to catch water that is currently draining off of that building reducing the water shed that is currently heading to the adjoining neighbor's yards.

Chair Van Etten asked Consulting Engineer Teter to speak regarding some of his written comments on the plans. He spoke regarding the parking spaces noting that there were only forty-eight (48) that he saw and only two (2) handicapped parking spaces. He also expressed concerns regarding the adequacy of the storm water system in terms of the system in the street and asked that confirmation of that be obtained from Chris Bistocchi of the DPW. Mr. Harding noted that Mr. Bistocchi had no concerns regarding the storm water from the site being drained to the street system. He noted that Mr. Bistocchi suggested that they tie the dry well into the street, but unfortunately the invert of the dry well is below the invert of the street system and this was an overall reduction of flow offsite to the street. He noted there were forty-nine (49) parking spots with one (1) being by the trash enclosure, but agreed that there were only two (2) handicapped spaces. TC3 had decided that since Code only mandated two (2) spaces, they would go with that.

Ken Teter also expressed concern about the twenty (20) foot strip of alleyway and the maintenance, ownership, rights, etc. of that alleyway. He also asked what restrictions would be used to keep kids from using that alleyway. Mr. Ross noted that they would use swinging gates to restrict access across that property. Gate keys will be provided to law enforcement and emergency personnel to have emergency vehicle access, otherwise it will be pedestrian only. They've also spoken with Kellogg Auto and Cortland Re-entry and neither had a problem with this. Mr. Teter again noted that he was unsure of who would maintain the alleyway and who owns it. Mr. Ross noted that it was not noted who had deeded ownership of most of this strip of property, but Corporation Counsel Ron Walsh didn't feel that there would be any problems with this. Mr. Teter asked if they would add more buffer to the west to protect the one (1) residential property there. The architects indicated that they had. Mr. Teter noted that the dead cedars were on the TC3 property

and those should be removed and the area replanted. Mr. Teter noted that there was no indication on the site plan of where the curb cuts would be. Mr. Harding noted that they were shown on the updated plans. Mr. Teter stated that the pavement overlays did not match. Mr. Harding noted that the plans have now been tweaked and they now match.

Comm. Spitzer asked for an explanation of the black vinyl coated chain link fencing. Mr. Harding noted that the fence would be at the rear of the property. Mr. Harding noted that it would be a fence made out of a black plastic coated chain link wire fencing to inhibit rust and it would not be slatted. The only slatted fencing would be at the dumpster enclosure. He also explained that the fencing is for security and that the plantings were for a buffer. It was felt that black would blend and be less intrusive. Chair Van Etten noted that the plan showed a wood fence to the east. Mr. Harding stated that the wood fence was now gone. Comm. Smith asked if there would be blue security lights in the parking lot. Mr. Harding noted that there would not be blue lights, but they would have surveillance cameras instead. It was also noted that they would have a panic button system inside the building that would be connected to the police station. They have one of those installed at the West Court Street building. Mr. Klucznik noted that the entire site will be illuminated better than their West Court Street site. Mr. Ross noted that there would be a small kitchenette in the facility, but no cafeteria program. It was expected that students would utilize local businesses. They also use local businesses to cater special events.

Chair Van Etten asked if a public hearing was needed for this project. Zoning Officer Weber noted that when combining property parcels the Planning Commission would acknowledge the combining of the parcels by deed description, but no public hearing was needed for this.

A SEQR review was done.

On a motion by Comm. Spitzer, seconded by Comm. Hansen, voted and approved to issue a negative declaration.

Dave Aloi, the neighbor to this property was present. Chair Van Etten gave him an opportunity to speak regarding this project. Mr. Aloi stated that he does not agree with the project and he is worried that something is buried there. He has heard rumors. This had once been a car dealership. Mr. Ross assured him that a Phase I had been done. Mr. Aloi expressed concerns regarding snow removal and the fact that the run off would end up on his property. Chair Van Etten stated that it will drain to the center area and some snow would be pushed to the grass strip, but during significant snowfall, it will be trucked off site. It was noted that the plan was to recapture run off on site and that a small berm will divide TC3 from Mr. Aloi's property. Mr. Aloi was also concerned about the security cameras being aimed at his property. He stated his concerns regarding the fact that this project is on the fast track and the public was not adequately involved. A TC3 representative noted that there was more footage between the parking lot and the neighbor than what had been there previously. Chair Van Etten noted that this was a partnership between TC3 and the neighbors in the City. He also asked about signage for this project. Mr. Ross indicated that there would be no free standing signs. There would only be signage on the building consisting of brushed aluminum letters with subtle back lighting. The "T" would be about four (4) feet high and the other letters would be two feet

four inches (2' 4") high and they meet code. Comm. Spitzer asked if they planned further meetings with the neighbors. Mr. Klucznik stated that they had met with the neighbors and had changed their plans to appease the neighbor's concerns. Mr. Teter asked that the title to the strip of property be put as a condition to the approval of this project. Comm. Smith asked if the property had currently changed hands. It was noted that it had not.

On a motion by Comm. Smith, seconded by Comm. Hansen, voted and approved the project as presented with the condition that any issues that arise with the abstract or title report be satisfactorily resolved with regards to the alley way and/or access to it.

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On the motion by Comm. Spitzer, seconded by Comm. Hansen, voted and approved.

#### New Business

Chair Van Etten stated that he had sent a letter to the NYS Department of Transportation regarding the two (2) remaining trees at the Tim Horton's site. The letter stated that the Planning Commission would like the trees evaluated at the end of this year's growing cycle to determine if their root systems had been compromised before the DOT made any decision to remove them.

Chair Van Etten introduced Captain Knickerbocker to the Planning Commission members.

Chair Van Etten also informed the Planning Commission that he would remain on the Commission for one (1) more month. He would inform the Mayor of the fact that he would be moving out of the City after that time and would be ineligible to serve.

#### Adjournment

On the motion by Comm. Hansen, and seconded by Comm. Spitzer, voted and approved.

**I, DOUGLAS VANETTEN, CHAIRPERSON OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CORTLAND, NEW YORK, DO HEREBY CERTIFY THAT SAID RESOLUTION(S) WERE ADOPTED AT A MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CORTLAND, NEW YORK, HELD ON THE 22nd DAY OF MARCH 2010.**

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**DOUGLAS VANETTEN, CHAIRPERSON**