



PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
Regular Meeting of March 24, 2014

A regular meeting of the City of Cortland Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, March 24, 2014, at 5:00 PM in the Mayor’s Conference Room at City Hall, 25 Court Street, Cortland, NY.

Present: Rafael Felix, Denise Bushnell, Joseph McMahon, Troy Beckwith, Jim Reeners, Chris Ryan

Absent: Commissioners Jeff Gebhardt

Staff Present: Deputy Fire Chief William Knickerbocker, Zoning Officer Bruce Weber, Secretary to the Mayor Shellie Blaisdell

**Item # – 1 – 1 South Ave – (Bennedy) – (R2) – Site Plan Review – Property renovation of lower floor of the 3200 square foot former train station into a rooming house and apartments**

Timothy Buhl (Engineer) was present to answer questions from the board. He brought the most recent copies of the plans defining parking spaces, green areas, calculations, setbacks and yard dimensions count on the parking, re-stoned, the interior layout of the building with the actual number of rooms, building elevations, designating which are new and old windows and doors and addressing the concerns of the Planning Board. He explained the drawing descriptions ie; “Typical” and continuity between old and new windows and doors (Showing old vs. new to line up with the new floor plan). Mr. Buhl has pointed out all of the concerns on the drawings meet the questions the board had for Mr. Bennedy.

Board has a concern about the elevations – are not exactly what they should be, windows are not exactly where they should be.

Mr. Buhl indicated he has brought comprehensive plans to the meeting which answers the questions of the board and is willing to answer any other questions the board has.

This doesn’t fit into the plan in the neighborhood with the housing master plan. Housing promotes for all income levels. RT – Housing legislatures. This type of housing is necessary.

1. A tenant discounted rent for being supervisor on premises. Feedback from neighborhood. Concerned – business owners, discuss previously in neighborhood, social questions – what control come to meeting with everything. What guarantee – what will end up being there? End result is not he same. Will it have an effect on the neighborhood?

Comm. Reeners asked the question, once a plan is approved, how is it guaranteed it is completed to the approved specifications? Code would be in on a regular basis doing an inspection.

A motion was made by Comm. Beckwith to table the application until Corporation Counsel can be provided all information and direct the board on what the boundaries are considering the concerns brought to the attention from the community.

Motion by: Comm. Beckwith

Seconded by: Comm. Bushnell

Ayes – 4

Nays – 0

Abstain – 1 (Comm. Reeners)

**Item # – 2 – 91, 93-95 Lincoln Ave – (Reeners) – (R2) – Site Plan Review – Two family dwelling**

(Item #2 was heard as the last item at this meeting due to the applicant being a board member. Mr. Jim Reeners also recused himself from voting on this application.

Jim Reeners was present to answer questions from the board. The application is for a Site Plan Review. The ZBA has denied the Use Variance application of the maintenance garage and also denied the crossover driveway with the one-way exit which would reduce traffic flow. The driveway will now be two-way – there is no overnight parking in the floodway. ZBA recommended increasing the depth of parking spaces to 19 ft and degree-angles of spot. 60° angles in spot. Housing is sitting just over the line –removing the existing curb cut. The ZBA did grant the front yard of the 2ft stoop.

A motion was made by Comm. McMahon regarding property 91 Lincoln Ave. to approve the application as presented with the contingency of green space percentage does not exceed 60% and was seconded by Comm. Ryan.

Motion by:                   Comm. McMahon  
Seconded by:               Comm. Ryan

Ayes – 4  
Nays – 0  
Abstain – 1 (Comm. Reeners)

A motion was made by Comm. McMahon regarding property 93-95 Lincoln Ave to approve the application as presented and seconded by Comm. Ryan.

Motion by:                   Comm. McMahon  
Seconded by:               Comm. Ryan

Ayes – 4  
Nays – 1 (Comm. Reeners)

**Item # – 3 – 5-7 Wheeler Ave – (Cute) – (R1) – Site Plan Review – Running a shelter and sanctuary for stray cats**

Attorney Sharon Sulimowicz was present to answer questions from the board. Has indicated it is a 2 family dwelling with a building in the back which was formerly a vet office (not currently being used). The owner (Cute and Purr-Fect World) would like to help the city to some degree and the SPCA and care for stray cats that the SPCA cannot do. There were previously violations and a history- harboring separate action and should not be considered.

~~What is presented is having an established basic business on a private property. It requires a SPR and a Use Variance. Planning needs to review and make a decision on the site plan and make a recommendation to the ZBA.~~

~~The code allows for someone to make an action – whether to grant the variance~~

Addition of four (4) parking spaces.

How much traffic-do not anticipate much traffic. There is a limit to how many cats, (50 and is probably how many she has now)-they are kept in rooms, all cats have been checked by vet, have been spayed and neutered. This is to help and assist where there is a need. There is currently a boarding agreement- and is a non profit business-meets parking requirements.

Planning approve parking spaces – 2 for residence/4 additional spots R1-2 family. Single family dwelling, single family and business use. At present time is a single family dwelling. Although it is an R1-the property use to be commercial and there is commercial businesses surrounding property.

A motion was made by Comm. McMahon to deny the application as presented based on the recommendation by the County Planning and because it is not an accepted use in a residential area, and to recommend to the ZBA to not approve the Use Variance, this was seconded by Comm. Bushnell.  
Table the site plan review until next month.

Motion by: Comm. McMahon  
Seconded by: Comm. Bushnell

Ayes – 4  
Nays – 0  
Abstain – 1 (Comm. Reeners)

**Item # – 4 – Cortland Rural Cemetery – (Hoeschele) – Site Plan Review – Conversion of a single family dwelling to office/gallery use.**

John Hoeschele was present to answer questions from the board. The application is to convert the Superintendent’s House, which has been vacant for a period of time, into a commercial rental property/gallery. It is still maintained at an expense by the board and a public trust. Not for profit company. It will be used as a part-time office as a cultural resource.

A motion was made by Comm. Reeners to approve the application as presented and seconded by Comm. Ryan with the Historic Boards stipulation to limit the landscape to the first 100 feet of property to be applicable to board approval and to provide a recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals to approve the Use Variance Application.

Motion by: Comm. Reeners  
Seconded by: Comm. Ryan

Ayes – 5  
Nays – 0

**Item # – 5 – 39-47 East Court Street & 60 Pendleton Street – (Natrium) – (GB) – Site Plan Review – Natrium warehouse request for change of zone**

Tim Anderson (Engineer with G&S) was present to answer questions from the board. This application is a Site Plan Review Request of 11,000 square feet cold storage building and vacant lot (formerly Agway).

Question to an increase in jobs? The future plans for the plant but for right now it will only be a storage building. Question to the traffic? Fork trucks and the same amount of truck traffic as present-there will be no increase in truck traffic with this request. There is a current practice of parking across the street, this will eliminate that. It is industrial in a residential neighborhood. With the zone change there could be potential for future production on the property.

Planning Board would encourage business in this community – may grow to create more jobs in the future and owner does have plans to expand.

A motion was made by Comm. Bushnell to recommend the zone change to Common Council and was seconded by Comm. Ryan.

Motion by: Comm. Bushnell  
Seconded by: Comm. Ryan

Ayes – 5  
Nays – 0

A motion was made by Comm. McMahon to table the Site Plan Review until Common Council makes the determination of the zone change and is seconded by Comm. Beckwith.

Motion by: Comm. McMahon  
Seconded by: Comm. Beckwith

Ayes – 5  
Nays – 0

**Item # – 6 – 43 & 45 Charles Street – (NYSEG) – (R4) – Site Plan Review – Build Regulator Station**

Bart Besley (Engineering Supervisor for NYSEG) Was present to answer questions from the board. This application supports a regulatory building station which is currently on Grant/Main Street (underground) to be moved to Charles Street. The current building is in need of repair. The new building will be above ground, there are no potential hazards, no exposure to natural gas. The will provide shrubbery, a 50 ft. warning sound/safety device – prevent pressure, it is checked regularly.

A motion was made by Comm. Reeners to approve the application as presented and seconded by Comm. McMahon.

Motion by: Comm. Reeners  
Seconded by: Comm. McMahon

Ayes – 5  
Nays – 0

**Item # – 7 – 16 Court Street – (Cortland Beer Co) – (CB) – Site Plan Review – Cortland Beer Co. Sidewalk Café Table and Chair**

Dan Cleary was present to answer questions from the board. Application is to provide outside seating in front of the brewery with 13 tables – 3 in front. Will be roping the area off. They will do everything they can to ensure people to not walk off the property with alcohol. They will also have signage “alcohol cannot leave the premises and will have cameras on the property. No current plans for lighting as there is adequate street lighting. Only serving beer at this time.

A motion was made by Comm. McMahon to approve the application as presented and seconded by Comm. Beckwith.

Motion by: Comm. McMahon  
Seconded by: Comm. Beckwith

Ayes – 5  
Nays – 0

**Minutes: Minutes from February 24, 2014**

**A motion by Comm. Bushnell was made to accept the minutes of February 24, 2014 and seconded by Comm. Beckwith.**

Motion by: Comm. Bushnell  
Seconded by: Comm. Beckwith

Ayes – 5  
Nays – 0

**Adjournment: (6:20 pm)**

Motion by: Comm. McMahon  
Seconded by: Comm. Beckwith

Ayes – 5  
Nays – 0

**I, JEFF GEBHARDT, CHAIRPERSON OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CORTLAND, NY, DO HEREBY CERTIFY THAT SAID RESOLUTION(S) WERE ADOPTED AT A MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CORTLAND, NY, HELD ON MARCH 24, 2014.**

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**JEFF GEBHARDT, CHAIRPERSON**