



City of Lowell - Planning Board

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 1, 2021 6:30 p.m.

Conducted via Zoom

Note: These minutes are not completed verbatim. For a recording of the meeting, visit www.ltc.org

Members Present

Thomas Linnehan, Chairman
Gerard Frechette, Vice Chairman
Richard Lockhart, Member
Robert Malavich, Member
Caleb Cheng, Member
Sinead Gallivan, Associate Member

Members Absent

Russell Pandres, Associate Member

Others Present

Fran Cigliano, Senior Planner
Jess Wilson, Associate Planner
Dylan Ricker, Assistant Planner

A quorum of the Board was present. Chairman Linnehan called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

I. Minutes for Approval

January 21, 2021

R. Lockhart motioned and R. Malavich seconded the motion to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously, (5-0).

II. Continued Business

Site Plan Review and Special Permit: 610 Gorham Street 01852

Nelson Group has applied to the Planning Board for Site Plan Review and Special Permit approval to redevelop the existing building at 610 Gorham Street into a four-unit residential structure. The building currently has three residential units and one vacant commercial unit. The subject property is located in the Urban Neighborhood Mixed Use (UMU) zoning district and requires Site Plan Review approval per Section 11.4 to expand a residential structure with more than three dwelling units, Special Permit approval per Section 12.1(d) for the use, and a Variance per Section 6.1 for relief from the off-street parking requirement.

On Behalf:

John Bavuso, Applicant

J. Bavuso said that he believes an additional unit makes the best use of the space since there is a housing shortage in Massachusetts. The ZBA approved the application with conditions at last Monday's ZBA meeting.

Speaking in Favor:

None

Speaking in Opposition:

None

Discussion:

T. Linnehan said that the last time they met, C. Cheng asked whether the four off-street parking spaces would be assigned. J. Bavuso said they typically do assign parking spaces, one per unit. T. Linnehan asked whether some of the spots would be more preferable than others. J. Bavuso said he does not think so, but they are limited on space. T. Linnehan confirmed no guest parking would be allowed. J. Bavuso said they would erect a no parking, tow zone sign to prevent unauthorized vehicles from parking there.

R. Lockhart said that the proposed trash/snow storage area does not look large enough for adequate snow storage. He asked whether they would have a problem being required to haul snow away. J. Bavuso said they would not; the Nelson Group routinely removes snow from their properties.

R. Lockhart asked whether they got a count of on-street parking spaces. J. Bavuso said there would be three parking spaces on Gorham Street and two on Central Street.

C. Cheng said that the ZBA required fencing around the barrel area. C. Cheng said that the fencing would make it difficult to store snow there. He asked what kind of fencing would be used to screen the trash area. J. Bavuso said it was not discussed yet, but that a see-through fence would be preferable. C. Cheng asked whether the chain link fence would be replaced. J. Bavuso said they do not own the fence and that they need to talk to the neighbors.

S. Gallivan said that she looked at the updated renderings. On the renderings, they show updated lighting on the sidewalk and striping at the pedestrian signals. She asked if those improvements were part of the proposal. J. Bavuso said that those are existing. He said they would typically not add lights on the sidewalk, since that's city property. S. Gallivan said that adding lighting and striping would be an improvement. J. Bavuso said that he would reach out to DPW to discuss restriping the sidewalk.

G. Frechette said it is a tight site but obviously, it will be an improvement to the building. He said making a successful retail space would be difficult; making this building fully residential is most economically viable.

J. Bavuso asked if they could work with traffic commission to add a white "x" in front of the entrance to the site to prevent cars from blocking it. The Planning Board members said that would be agreeable and an improvement.

Motion:

G. Frechette motioned and R. Malavich seconded the motion to approve the Site Plan Review with the following conditions:

1. DPD shall review and sign off on the final fencing to be installed around the trash receptacles;
2. The applicant shall work with DPD to restripe the crosswalk in front of the subject property;
3. The applicant is required to remove any snow that would result in a loss of any parking on-site; and
4. The applicant is subject to final approval by the City's stormwater team.

The motion passed unanimously, (5-0).

R. Lockhart motioned and R. Malavich seconded the motion to approve the Special Permit with the same conditions as the ZBA approval. The motion passed unanimously, (5-0).

III. New Business

IV. Other Business

Historic Board Nomination

T. Linnehan motioned and R. Malavich seconded the motion to appoint R. Lockhart to the Historic Board. The motion passed unanimously, (5-0).

V. Notices

VI. Further Comments from Planning Board Members

R. Lockhart said the Historic Board activity level has been quiet. There has been no new activity other than mural regulations in development.

T. Linnehan congratulated R. Malavich for being re-appointed to the Planning Board and welcomed new Assistant Planner Dylan Ricker.

VII. Adjournment

R. Malavich motioned and R. Lockhart seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously, (5-0). The time was 7:1