

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

Village of Ballston Spa

Held on May 13, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 by Chairman Rory O'Connor.

Chairman present: Rory O'Connor

Members present: Mike McNamara, Scott Burlingame, Pete Martin

Members absent: Mike Barabasz

Pledge of allegiance.

The board reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting. Motion made by Member McNamara to approve the previous minutes, seconded by Member Martin. All ayes.

Chairman O'Connor began the meeting by going over the AutoZone proposal and explaining the purpose of this meeting. The Planning Board has been chosen to be the lead agent. The board is to review the proposal and variance requests from AutoZone, then make recommendations to the ZBA regarding their thoughts and comments.

The two variance requests that have been proposed are for parking and egress. According to the zoning code, the size of the building requires 40 parking spaces, but the proposal shows only 30 spaces. In addition, the plan only has one access and the zoning code requires two. The applicant's representative has chosen not to be present during this meeting but will be present for the upcoming ZBA meeting.

The board has all had time to review the environmental packet. One question that Chairman O'Connor has is whether or not the land is in a flood plain. He believes it is, wants to do a little more research regarding that.

The board members agree that two main issues with this proposed project is stormwater drainage and traffic. The board members have walked the property and believe stormwater is a big issue. AutoZone has stated in the past that they don't believe it will be such a big problem for them.

Member McNamara believes while stormwater drainage is a problem, it can be taken care of and won't keep the project from proceeding. Chazen Engineering has submitted a letter stating their concerns. One of those concerns is the soils being interrupted so close to the Ricketts property, can cause contamination. In regards to the letter from Chazen, we should hear from Chazen once all the concerns have been addressed and corrected.

Member McNamara has an idea, where the applicant can mirror the project to help with some of the concerns. This would mean they would move the building closer to Route 50, and place the parking lot closer to the Bogda residence. This would make it easier for them to get the two access points for egress, give them better visibility from the road, and the neighbors would have a parking lot closer to them rather than a large commercial building.

Chairman O'Connor likes that idea and thinks it should be mentioned to the ZBA.

Chairman O'Connor brings up the traffic again, believes it could potentially be a big issue, especially for that location in the village. He's also concerned with the drainage repair recommendations, that it may not be enough. Member Burlingame points out that it is not the responsibility of the applicant to repair the village's drainage issues, only to not create more issues because of their project. Everyone agrees.

The board members briefly talk about the parking variance request, referring to appendix C of the zoning code. They wonder if the building needs to be referred to as 6000 square feet of retail space, considering part of it is storage. Chairman O'Connor states he has brought this up multiple times to the applicant and they insist it is to be referred to as all retail. Attorney Fauci states that you can't separate a building for zoning purposes, so it should all be considered retail.

The board then talk about the egress variance request. Chairman O'Connor asks if it's practical to expect two entrances? Their proposal shows only one point of egress at Union St. He is very concerned with the traffic flow there. Members McNamara and Burlingame don't believe traffic will be much of an issue with only one entrance. In fact, they wonder if adding another entrance would complicate things further. Member Martin agrees as well. Member Burlingame also points out there is a lot of foot traffic near that location, as there is a bus stop nearby.

The letter from Chazen had recommended the applicant move the entrance so that it lines up with the Aldi entrance.

Chairman O'Connor opens the floor to the public at 7:38.

Resident Elizabeth Kormos of 89 Hyde Blvd has a few points to bring up. As far as egress goes, she said the reason for more than one entrance may be due to emergency reasons. If one entrance is blocked for some reason, there needs to be another point of entry. She states this has come up before, in regards to emergency vehicles/fire trucks. Also, she likes Member McNamara's idea to mirror the site, but wonders if the applicant doesn't want to do that due to the possibility of contamination from disturbing the soils in that area. And she requests that the EAF and other pertinent paperwork be placed on the website for the public to be able to view.

Chairman O'Connor closes the floor to the public at 7:41.

Chairman O'Connor explains to the board that he will be typing up a letter that includes all their comments and suggestions to give to the ZBA. He hopes to have a draft of the letter ready for them to review by the end of the week.

Meeting adjourned at 7:43.

Respectfully submitted,

Shari Kanarek
Secretary

