

VILLAGE OF BALDWINSVILLE
PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, January 24, 2012, 7:30 P.M.
Approved 3/27/12

PRESENT: Carl Pelcher, Chairman
Dave Arthur
Terrie King
Jim Schanzenbach
Bob Scherfling
Nicole Schlater

ALSO PRESENT: Dave Jones, Village Attorney
Tim Baker, Village Engineer
Gregg Humphrey, Code Enforcement Officer
Susan LaQuay, Board Secretary

GUESTS: Mr. Michael Chemotti (regarding 16-18 East Genesee Street)
Mr. Marco Marzocchi (regarding 18 East Genesee Street)

Upon motion by D. Arthur and second by J. Schanzenbach, the minutes of the December 27, 2011 Planning Board meeting are approved as submitted. Motion passed.

OTHER BUSINESS

Informal Discussion regarding 18 East Genesee Street (old Eckerd building) – Widewaters Group
Mr. Marco Marzocchi is present to address the Board on behalf of Widewaters Group. Chairman Pelcher reviewed the situation regarding this property. He stated that the building is currently a nonconforming use. However, the nonconforming status is no longer applicable as the building has been vacant for longer than 6 months. The building must now be brought into compliance with Village codes.

T. Baker submitted a memo he prepared in anticipation of this evening's discussion regarding issues he would like the Planning Board to consider when reviewing any plans regarding this property. This memo is dated 1/27/2012 and will be made part of the record regarding this property.

Mr. Marzocchi is the attorney for Widewaters Group. He briefly reviewed the history of the company. They are very experienced in retail development and right now this is what they are concentrating on. He stated he met with Chairman Pelcher and G. Humphrey, as well as Mayor Saraceni, to try to understand how to approach redevelopment of this property and how to restore it to a productive state and remove the eyesore from the area. Mr. Marzocchi stated that Widewaters has not yet marketed the property to prospective tenants as they are not yet sure how or if they can use it. He is hoping to come to a reasonable agreement with the Village. He believes they will likely have to divide the building into 2 or 3 tenants. During this discussion he had with Chairman Pelcher, G. Humphrey, and Mayor Saraceni, Mr. Marzocchi determined there to be some important issues, as follows:

1. The building's façade. He has nothing to show today regarding how they will deal with the building's exterior appearance. He stated he spoke with Toni Kleist and she is preparing

some preliminary drawings. He stated he understands the importance of this and is willing to work on reasonable modifications to the exterior appearance of the building.

2. Sidewalk from East Genesee Street to the building. Mr. Marzocchi stated the plan shows it along the western boundary. However, it was brought to his attention by Mr. Jim Orlando that the Village has plans for the municipal parking area from EDR, which shows a sidewalk between Key Bank and the B'ville Diner along the west of the municipal parking area. He stated he has been in direct communication with the owners of the B'ville Diner and would like to partner with them to make this happen. He stated he feels the EDR location is more appropriate than the location proposed on his property. He would like to modify his plan to remove the sidewalk along his west property area.

T. Baker noted that this sidewalk is not on the current Village plan. J. Schanzenbach stated he agrees that the sidewalk on the west of the 18 East Genesee Street property may not be the best location. It may be better to have it along the side closer to Key Bank.

Mr. Marzocchi stated that economically it is not feasible to demolish the building and they will reuse the existing structure.

Chairman Pelcher provided Mr. Marzocchi with a copy of the overlay district for this area. He stated that the overlay district is the code for this area now. According to the overlay, the site will need a sidewalk from East Genesee Street to the building and a sidewalk fronting East Genesee Street. Mr. Marzocchi stated he understands this.

D. Arthur asked about parking. Mr. Marzocchi stated they do plan to do some additional striping and will be in compliance with regulations regarding handicap accessibility. They have spoken with the owners of the B'ville Diner regarding shared parking and the expense. D. Arthur stated he thinks it should be restriped. He also feels the parking lot could use more lighting. Mr. Marzocchi stated he agrees it could use more lighting, but is not sure how the pole could be retrofitted. They will look to do some additional lighting on the building as well. D. Arthur stated he would like to see that along the west side of the building especially.

D. Arthur asked if they have considered that the building is within an overlay district which now defines it as having two frontages, one on East Genesee Street and one on the Seneca River and the trail. Mr. Marzocchi stated they do not think this is feasible. He feels the trail use is so seasonable that the store frontage will have to be on the front of the building.

Mr. Marzocchi stated they will probably remove the canopy/overhang and extend the windows all the way to the end. The entrance on the front will remain the same. However, they envision the building being subdivided inside into 2 or 3 spaces, which would have other entrances along the frontage. He is not exactly sure where these entrances would be located. T. Baker noted that a change in the exterior entrances will trigger site plan review and asked if they are proposing to submit a new site plan. Mr. Marzocchi stated they do not plan to do this and they do not plan to engineer this site. T. Baker stated the Board has been through this with the current owner when they applied and the trigger which requires site plan approval is that there is a change in the exterior entrances such that it would affect the site plan. What Widewaters is proposing is what the Planning Board has previously rejected. Mr. Marzocchi stated he spoke to Chairman Pelcher and G. Humphrey about this and they are not looking to reengineer the site. T. Baker noted that there is a de facto site plan for this property, which is what exists on the site on the ground. With a de facto site plan in the field and with the changes Widewaters is planning to make, they will need to submit a site plan for review. The change in entrances changes the site plan impact. There will be new pedestrian patterns, new lighting patterns, new parking requirements, etc. This was also explained to the current owner when they came before the Planning Board. Chairman Pelcher noted that

even without the proposed changes, the nonconforming status would still trigger site plan review as the building has been vacant for so long. He stated the Applicant will need to submit a site plan.

Mr. Marzocchi stated his plan will show existing features of the site together with the proposed changes. However, if the Board is suggesting they hire an engineering firm to do grading, drainage, landscaping, lighting plans, etc., then they would not be willing to do that. T. Baker stated they are not asking for all of that and whether they are or are not willing to do that based on cost does not have anything to do with the Village requirement for a site plan. Mr. Marzocchi asked why the materials they have already submitted cannot be considered the site plan. T. Baker stated the plan submitted only represents what is on the ground. The site needs to be brought up to current requirements and standards. Mr. Marzocchi asked what the Board would want to see in addition to the plan he submitted already. D. Arthur stated a standard site plan for this property would show the 2 additional entrances because they are changing the building structure. With that, they would need to see a drainage plan, a lighting plan, etc. to review. J. Schanzenbach stated the Board has been very lenient with their requirements for site plans. They have not asked for a full drainage report and have been lenient enough to say "just show us how the water drains out of the site." They have not required a utility plan in many cases. They are only asking for very simple things, but what has been submitted so far is just not enough. The plan that Widewaters submits will need to meet all the new requirements of the overlay district.

Chairman Pelcher stated they had a discussion regarding the easements on the rear of the building towards the Seneca River. Mr. Marzocchi stated it appears that the trail itself is off the easement in a couple of locations. He noted the survey shows the extent of the path and it is described as an easement. He indicated the areas in question where the path appears to encroach beyond the easement area.

Chairman Pelcher noted there are indeed two frontages with build-to lines on each side of the property. As they are not redoing the building, they are not held to that, but he is curious as to how far away the building is from the Village property along the river. B. Scherfling stated there is between 45' and 60' between the trail and the building. Chairman Pelcher also noted there is a guardrail on East Genesee Street right now. The overlay district requires ornamental fence along East Genesee Street. Mr. Marzocchi stated he understands this.

J. Schanzenbach stated this property presents a unique opportunity because it is located next to the new Village renovation. It is very important that it connects with the new Village square. This, however, was not addressed on the materials submitted and he would like to see it addressed on the next plan. Regarding Denio Street, the extension of that traffic flow is important and should be shown on the plans. The Village is not looking for them to use the same materials, however. T. Baker noted this had also been discussed with the previous applicant. It has been a goal of the Village to improve the local connection of the parking areas, but not make it a thru-street. Onondaga County Planning recommends that parking lots be interconnected to reduce traffic entering the street to go between parking lots.

Mayor Saraceni noted that he and G. Humphrey have had the opportunity to walk the site with Mr. Marzocchi and they have worked very hard as a Village to improve area with the new Village Square and the creation of overlay district. Anyone going into this space would be looked to as a partner to continue what the Village has started. He stated he would be willing to have a discussion with the Village Board regarding working with him to satisfy some of the requirements of the Planning Board and the overlay district in return for consideration of having Denio Street extend behind the building. Mr. Marzocchi stated he would be happy to work with the Village and they view it as a partnership as well.

D. Arthur stated he had heard that there has been discussion that the Planning Board is a difficult board to work with. He takes that to heart and noted the Planning Board works very hard with their applicants and are very open to ideas. He is not sure where these comments came from, but he wanted Mr. Marzocchi to be aware that the Planning Board takes a lot of time and care in working with the applicants. They can be

as flexible as the law allows them to be. They want developers to be successful. Mr. Marzocchi stated he has indeed heard these rumors as well, but assured the Board he formulates his own opinions and so far he has been before much more difficult boards. He feels he has been very warmly received by the Mayor, the Village Attorney, the CEO, the Chairman, neighbors, etc. He is hoping they can come to a meeting of the minds. D. Arthur stated the best advice he can give is to be open to discussion and the more contact the better.

Mr. Marzocchi stated their perspective is that they are paying top dollar for this building. This is a small project for them, which leaves little wiggle room to add to the expense. He stated Widewaters will not be willing to get into a project that loses money.

N. Schlater told Mr. Marzocchi that the EDR Master Plan for the Village created in 2006 was designed to spur development in the business district in a coordinated way. The overlay is intended to make it easier for developers by providing consistency so they can see what the Village requires for each area. The property in question is at the core of the Village. Mr. Marzocchi stated he understands this, but the challenging part is that overlays also need to have a practical impact and the Village should be mindful of how to marry the goals of the overlay with the economic factors. D. Arthur noted that the Village overlays are flexible and the Board was careful to consider materials and reasonable costs. He feels this property and this opportunity is more unique than Mr. Marzocchi is alluding to. N. Schlater agreed. The site is unique in part because of the Village Square, the goal of which is to draw more pedestrians. The Village is working to achieve the density to achieve that goal and this needs to be well-coordinated within this limited amount of space. Mayor Saraceni stated that overlay districts invite imagination and allow property owners to see the full potential of their properties.

T. King stated the Board had had a conversation with the owners of the B'ville Diner and asked if Mr. Marzocchi had seen their plans. Mr. Chemotti from the B'ville Diner is present and stated they had discussed their plan with Mr. Marzocchi. He noted, however, that this is just a conceptual plan and they do not own all the property yet. Mayor Saraceni stated the Village may be willing to commit some resources if Widewaters would honor the right-of-way for the B'ville Diner. The Village wants to eliminate curb cuts and would want the B'ville Diner and Widewaters to work together with the Village to eliminate curb cuts. Mr. Marzocchi stated his main concern regarding this is it cuts into the parking available for their property and the Diner. D. Arthur noted that there is Village parking right next door if he is concerned about there not being enough parking.

Chairman Pelcher noted eliminating a curb cut would go a long way with the Board. The board would prefer to see both existing curb cuts closed and have a new one more towards the center across from the Kinney Drugs entrance. Mayor Saraceni noted the goal of eliminating a curb cut is to improve the situation for all parties and enhance their properties. This would continue with the improvements along East Genesee Street.

Mr. Marzocchi asked what the next step is for their proposal. Mayor Saraceni stated they will meet as a group with Mr. Orlando and Mr. Chemotti, Chairman Pelcher, etc. for a brainstorming session. Mr. Marco stated he does not have a firm timeline, but does not want this to drag on. They will not be bringing the site to market until they know it will work. He feels it would be great to have a signature project of theirs in Baldwinsville, but they will go elsewhere if they cannot see a profit in it. D. Arthur suggested he familiarize himself with the codes and be creative.

Discussion/Action regarding 3rd overlay district

J. Schanzenbach stated he does not think the corner property by the Chinese restaurant is included in the first overlay like they had discussed at the last meeting. This was reviewed on the maps.

J. Schanzenbach noted they had discussed extending the 3rd overlay up to Oneida. However, he feels this is too far of an extension and does not see commercial moving that far north. He suggested using Elizabeth Street as the northern border and going in a straight line up to Spruce or Pine. T. Baker stated they could do that fairly easily and bring it up around Wacky Wyatt's and down the center line of Spruce. D. Arthur noted he still feels it should go down the east side of the backyards on Spruce. T. Baker stated he can do that too. T. King stated she agrees with J. Schanzenbach that they are going too far north with this overlay and she would vote for the boundary to be along the back of the Wacky Wyatt's property.

Chairman Pelcher sketched the overlay boundaries shaded in blue. T. Baker stated he will write up the parameters and the Board can make a motion regarding the 3rd overlay district at the next meeting.

Executive Session

Upon motion by D. Arthur and second by J. Schanzenbach, the Planning Board Members will go into executive session regarding potential sale of real property at 9:03 pm. ***Motion passed.***

Upon motion by D. Arthur and second by B. Scherfling the Planning Board Members will return to the open meeting at 9:35 p.m. ***Motion passed.***

The meeting was adjourned at 9:36 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 24, 2012.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan A. LaQuay
Planning Board Secretary