

CITY OF LEWISTON
PLANNING BOARD MEETING
MINUTES for August 28, 2017

- I. **ROLL CALL:** The meeting was held in the Administrator's Conference Room on the first floor of City Hall and was called to order at 5:30 p.m. Chairperson, Bruce Damon, chaired the meeting.

Members in Attendance: Bruce Damon, Pauline Gudas, John Butler, Normand Anctil, Sandra Marquis, Paul Madore and Michael Marcotte

Associate Member Present: Kristine Kittridge

Associate Member Absent: Zachary Pettengill

Staff Present: David Hediger, City Planner, Gil Arsenault, Director of Planning & Code and Linda Tripp, Administrative Assistant, Planning & Code

- II. **ADJUSTMENT TO THE AGENDA:** None

- III. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None

- VI. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:** None

- V. **OTHER BUSINESS:**

- a) A request by St. Martin de Porres Residence, Inc. to contract zone the property at 2 Central Avenue from the Office Residential (OR) district to Neighborhood Conservation "B" (NCB) to operate a women's shelter limited to ten beds.

David Hediger read staff comments. Scott McClelland of South Hatch Hill Road, Greene and Muriel Hamann of 36 Ashmount Street, Lewiston both presented on behalf of St. Martin de Porres Residence, Inc.

Sandra Marquis question where referrals come from and the success rate of the program. Scott McClelland responded that while the success rate is not measurable the referrals come from a variety of sources that include Probation Officers, Mental Health Service Providers and Correctional Facilities.

Muriel Hamann spoke of the recent passing of attorney John Whalen who had a significant role in the effort to establish the women's shelter.

Pauline Gudas spoke in favor of the proposed shelter and stated that she has had many positive experiences with St. Martin de Porres in the past. She stated that she considers them to be an amazing resource to the community and that she was pleased to see that signatures obtained for the petition came primarily from surrounding neighbors.

Scott McClelland spoke of the requirements, policies and procedures for

admission. Paul Madore spoke in favor and stated that he feels there is a real need for this type of shelter in the community. Muriel Hamann stated that she believes that the shelter will save the city future expenses. Michael Marcotte questioned zoning of the nearby cemetery as OR and David Hediger responded that the line could be moved as it not a permitted use in the OR and that the cemetery predates the zoning.

Bruce Damon spoke in favor of the proposed shelter.

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Paul Madore** pursuant to Article VII, Section 4 and Article XVII, Section 5 of the Zoning and Land Use Code to send a favorable recommendation to the City Council to contract rezone the property at 2 Central Avenue from Office Residential (OR) to Neighborhood Conservation “B” (NCB). Second by **Normand Anctil**.

VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)

- b) An amendment initiated by Bates College to Appendix A – Zoning & Land Code, Article XI. District Regulations, Section 23. Space and Bulk Requirements to add academic institutions to the allowed uses for which the minimum front setback and front yard requirements are zero provided the lot directly across the street is in the Institutional-office (IO) district.

David Hediger read staff comments. Presenting on behalf of Bates College were Pam Wichroski, Jeff Swift, Chris Streifel all with Bates College and Jan Wiegman, Project Manager with Wright-Pierce.

Bruce Damon clarified that the request was not for an existing project but for future growth only. John Butler requested more detail regarding future growth and how Bates College intended to proceed if the change is approved. Pam Wichroski stated that they would likely create more dormitories as well as academic and administrative structures in the future. A discussion regarding future uses and the effects on the tax base took place. Paul Madore commented that tax revenue in Lewiston is very difficult to replace and that the tax burden is a heavy load for everyone. He then commented that Bates College has a very attractive campus which he has enjoyed frequently over the years.

Zachary Pettengill joined the meeting at 6:10.

Discussion regarding modifications and setbacks took place.

Michael Marcotte stated that his major concern with the request would be regarding future limitations to widen streets in the area. Zachary Pettengill spoke in favor of Bates College. He stated that while future loss to the tax base is a possibility it is important to acknowledge that Bates College is a large employer in the city. He referenced a presentation given at Lewiston City Hall in February where it was noted that due to Bates College 46,000

visitors had come to Lewiston. He feels this project would benefit the city. Bruce Damon and David Hediger discussed existing setbacks and zoning in the area. Paul Madore stated that the setbacks are an issue for him and because of that he is not in favor. Jeff Swift provided details regarding which Bates College owned properties were dormitories and which were rental properties. Norm Anctil spoke in favor of the request and feels they should have the ability to do things right. Pauline Gudas complimented Bates College for past construction projects and stated that in her opinion they have for the most part proven to be a good partner for the city. She expressed that in the future she would however like for Bates College to address parking concerns with regards to White Street and Ware Street in order to eliminate some of the neighborhood complaints.

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Pauline Gudas** pursuant to Article VII, Section 4 and Article XVII, Section 5 of the Zoning and Land Use Code to send a favorable recommendation to the City Council to amend Article XI. District Regulations, Section 23. Space and Bulk Requirements to add academic institutions to the allowed uses for which the minimum front setback and front yard requirements are zero provided the lot directly across the street is in the Institutional-office (IO) district. Second by **Normand Anctil**.

VOTED: 4-3 (Passed. John Butler, Michael Marcotte and Paul Madore Opposed)

- c) An amendment initiated by the City Council to Appendix A – Zoning & Land Use Code, Article XV. Significant Buildings & Districts, Section 6. Designated Historic Structures and Historic Districts to create the Lewiston Canal Water Power Historic District.

Gil Arsenault summarized the request. Bruce Damon opened the discussion and expressed concerns regarding a memorandum from the State Planning Office indicating that the proposed amendment would have a negative effect when it came to federal oversight to protect the historic district. Gil Arsenault explained the existing and future role the State Historical Preservation Office with regards to district.

Pauline Gudas questioned what the tax loss would be to the City if the amendment is approved. Gil Arsenault advised it would be approximately \$60,000.00 annually. Pauline Gudas then inquired how many buildings are included and what would be the cost to maintain them. Gil Arsenault stated that while there were three substantial buildings the cost to maintain them was currently unknown. He then assured the board that the Historic Preservation Review Board had the same concern regarding necessary future maintenance and therefore included a second motion in their recommendation to the Council to clarify the City's obligation and required commitment. Pauline Gudas then inquired about the current condition of the

buildings to which Gil Arsenault stated all buildings are supposed to be turned over to the city in good repair.

Pauline Gudas then questioned if this was an issue that would be best addressed after the vote to merge Lewiston and Auburn. A discussion regarding the effects of the Lewiston Canal Water Power Historic District took place. Michael Marcotte questioned which properties were included in the district proposal and potential grant availability. Gil Arsenault stated that the city would certainly explore all options with regard to funding.

The following motion was made:

MOTION: by **Michael Marcotte** pursuant to Article VII, Section 4 and Article XVII, Section 5 of the Zoning and Land Use Code to send a favorable recommendation to the City Council to amend Article XI. District Regulations, Section 23. Space and Bulk Requirements to add academic institutions to the allowed uses for which the minimum front setback and front yard requirements are zero provided the lot directly across the street is in the Institutional-office (IO) district. Second by **Paul Madore**.

VOTED: 6-1 (Passed. Pauline Gudas Opposed)

- d) Any other business Planning Board Members may have relating to the duties of the Lewiston Planning Board.

Members of the Board noted that 2-26 Oxford Street is being used for parking but has not been improved or maintained. Staff noted the matter had been brought to Administration's attention several months ago. Staff will remind the City of the need to either loam/seed/ barricade the lot or improve for parking.

VI. ADJOURNMENT: The following motion was made to adjourn.

MOTION: by **Sandra Marquis** that this meeting adjourns at 7:15 p.m. Second by **Normand Anctil**.

VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)

The next regularly scheduled meeting is for Monday, September 11, 2017 at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

John Butler, Secretary