

CITY OF LEWISTON  
PLANNING BOARD MEETING  
MINUTES for May 14, 2012

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I. **ROLL CALL:** The meeting was held in the City Council Chambers on the first floor of City Hall and was called to order at 5:30 p.m. Chairperson, Lucy Bisson, chaired the meeting.

II. **Members in Attendance:** Lucy Bisson, Bruce Damon, Kevin Morissette and Walter Hill

**Members Absent:** Eric Potvin, Trinh Burpee and Paul Robinson

**Associate Member Present:** Michael Marcotte and Sandra Marquis

**Staff Present:** David Hediger, City Planner, Gil Arsenault, Director of Planning & Code and Cathy Lekberg, Administrative Assistant, Economic & Community Development

Lucy appointed Michael Marcotte and Sandra Marquis as full voting member for this meeting.

III. **ADJUSTMENT TO THE AGENDA:** None

IV. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None

V. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

- a) An application submitted by TFH Architects on behalf of Veterans, Inc. to convert the existing St. Josephs School located at 393 Main Street into 11 residential dwelling units for veterans. The remaining space will be office space incidental to the residential use.

David read staff comments to the Board.

Ryan Senatore of TFH Architects told the Board that the St. Josephs School site fits best for their client's program. He described the site as being a three story structure which has two floors on Main Street and three floors on Oak Street. There would be a recreation area in the rear which would be protected from the elements and parking would be in the rear of the building with 27 parking spaces which is the same amount of parking as the original school. He stated the residential units would be located on the upper levels on Main Street. He told the Board there is a handicap access which would be improved at the Main Street entrance. He stated that the classrooms will be turned into two and three bedroom units. The only thing they will be adding to the building is a new elevator that will serve all three floors.

Lucy stated that the project letter dated October 4, 2010 did not list the proper project address and listed the address of 70 State Street in Augusta. She told them this needs to be updated and Denis Leary of Veterans, Inc. stated they would send a revised letter.

Bruce asked about transitional housing and will they allow women veterans in this facility. Vincent Peronne of Veterans, Inc. stated that veterans can stay up to two years at the facility which will allow them to attend training classes and to find employment and eventually go out on their own. He stated they do not allow women at this facility, but they have other facilities that do.

Denis stated that some of the veterans are homeless and some are in unstable housing. They are able to stay at the facility while transitioning into new homes and finding employment. Vincent stated the unemployment rate of veterans is high. This facility will also assist veterans in finding jobs.

Bruce asked if this project was subsidized by the Veterans Administration and Vincent stated yes.

Kevin asked if there would be individual suites, not just units and Denis stated there were no individual suites at this facility. Veterans are encouraged to interact with fellow veterans. Bruce asked if there were age restrictions and Denis said no.

Mike asked if they accept veterans from other states and Denis said they accept Maine veterans only at this facility. Mike asked how many full time jobs would be created and Vincent stated there would be six employees at the facility and the command post at the entrance would be manned 24 hours. Denis stated that this is a drug and alcohol free environment. He said that family and friends are welcome at the facility but are only allowed in the group rooms, not the veterans units. Mike asked if they had plans for the additional space at the school and Denis stated there are no plans now, but they are open to any suggestions. He also said that any of the common areas can be used by people in the community.

Lucy opened the item up to the public.

Denis Fortier stated he lives at 79 Wellman Street. He said that he served four years in the Air force and was very supportive of this application.

Lucy closed the item to the public.

Bruce stated that these veterans have come home after serving honorably and deserve our support. He said this was a good project and he hopes they will expand and find other buildings to renovate.

The following motion was made:

**MOTION:** by **Walter Hill** to find that the application meets all of the necessary criteria contained in the Zoning and Land Use Code, including Article XIII, Section 4 and 5 of the Zoning and Land Use Code and to grant approval to Veterans Inc. to convert the existing St. Josephs School located at 393 Main Street into 11 residential dwelling units for veterans, subject to any concerns

raised by the Planning Board or staff and subject to the following conditions:

1. A signature block is added to the plan.
2. No building permits are issued until the applicant has demonstrated to the City's satisfaction that adequate water supply can be provided for installation of a sprinkler system.
3. Updated project letter be provided to staffs satisfaction.

Second by **Sandra Marquis**.

**VOTED: 6-0 (Passed)**

- b) An application submitted by Summit Geoengineering Services, Inc. on behalf of White Rock Distilleries to construct parking for tractor trailers at 33 Saratoga Street.

David read staff comments to the Board.

Bill Peterlein of Summit Geoengineering Services presented a site plan of the improvements. He stated that White Rock Distilleries is a growing operation and they needed additional parking for the tractor trailers.

Lucy asked if this parking would alleviate the trucks backed up on Lexington Street and Bill stated it would help. Mike asked if there was only one light in the parking lot and Bill showed him the three lights in the parking lot on the rendering. Kevin was concerned about the wetlands in that area and Bill stated they are altering 15,000 SF of wetlands and received a DEP permit.

Lucy opened item up to public comments and there were none.

The following motion was made:

**MOTION:** by **Bruce Damon** to find that the application meets all of the necessary criteria contained in the Zoning and Land Use Code, including Article XIII, Section 4 of the Zoning and Land Use Code and to grant approval to White Rock Distilleries to construct parking for tractor trailers at 33 Saratoga Street, subject to any concerns raised by the Planning Board or staff and subject to the following conditions:

1. The project is located in the Hart Brook urban impaired watershed. The applicant has decided pay the compensation fee for the proposed site improvements. No signed plans or permits for construction shall be released or construction activities occur until White Rock Distilleries has paid its fee as determined by DEP to the city's compensation fee utilization fund.
2. No signed plans or permits for construction be released or construction activity occur until the storm water design has been reviewed to the City's satisfaction.
3. A note be added to the plan stating that prior to completion of the proposed improvements a performance guarantee must recorded in the Androscoggin County Registry of Deeds to the

city's satisfaction in accordance with Article XIII, Section 15(e)(3) of the Zoning and Land Use Code.

4. Upon completion of the proposed site improvements, written verification by a professional engineer is provided to the city that all storm water improvements have been completed in accordance with the approved plan.

Second by **Sandra Marquis**.

**VOTED: 6-0 (Passed)**

**VI. OTHER BUSINESS:**

- a) Request for a recommendation on capital expenditures costing \$200,000.00 or more which are not included in the annual capital program for the purpose of undertaking renovations to Social Services office space at City Hall.

Ed Barrett, City Administrator explained the proposed layout for the Social Services office space. He said that they have major issues with ventilation and security in the existing office. He told them that many of the clients have severe disabilities and mental issues and this office needs to be better secured. The client stations were also not confidential and the files were not located in a safe area. The caseworkers need more privacy when they are with clients and this new layout will provide this. The layout will be more like a doctor's office where there is a one waiting area and the rest will be caseworker offices. Harriman Associates recommended the layout and the estimate of \$200,000 was only an estimate and it could be lower.

Mike asked what was driving the cost of the renovation and Ed said breaking through the walls was a big expense. He also described all of the work that would be done for this estimate. Mike asked if it was in the five year plan and Ed said no.

Bruce asked if they would consider replacing the windows in the renovated area and Ed stated they could see if they could be added. Bruce commented that the Social Services is used every day and Ed stated it is a very busy office. He told the Board that because of the cuts in TNAF benefits, there will be an increase of people who will be eligible for general assistance. The Social Service office sees between 400 and 500 people a month for income verifications and statuses. Ed said that the renovation will isolate all functions of general assistance from the rest of the second floor.

Lucy opened item up for public comment.

Denis Fortier stated that City needs to provide a safe environment for their employees and he is supportive of this project.

Lucy closed public comment.

The following motion was made:

**MOTION:** by **Bruce Damon** pursuant to Article VII, Sections 4(f) of the Zoning and Land Use Code to send a favorable recommendation to the City Council for a capital expenditure costing not to exceed \$200,000.00 for the purpose of undertaking renovations to Social Services Office Space at City Hall. Second by **Sandra Marquis**.

**VOTED:** **5-1 (Passed)**  
**Michael Marcotte Opposed**

b) Zoning Matrix

David stated he was working on the matrix but was not done yet.

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

**VII. READING OF MINUTES:** Adoption of the April 23, 2012 Planning Board Minutes.

The April 23, 2012 minutes will be adopted at the June 11, 2012 meeting.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT:** The following motion was made to adjourn.

**MOTION:** by **Bruce Damon** that this meeting adjourns at 7:00 p.m. Second by **Walter Hill**.

**VOTED:** **6-0 (Passed)**.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is for Monday, June 11, 2012 at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

*Paul Robinson*

Paul Robinson, Secretary

*CLL*