

CITY OF LEWISTON  
PLANNING BOARD MEETING  
MINUTES for April 8, 2013

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- I. **ROLL CALL:** The meeting was held in the City Council Chambers of City Hall and was called to order at 5:30 p.m. Chairperson, Bruce Damon, chaired the meeting.

**Members in Attendance:** Bruce Damon, Kevin Morissette, Eric Potvin, Paul Robinson, Walter Hill and Michael Marcotte

**Members Absent:** Sandra Marquis

**Associate Member Present:** Paul Madore

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

Paul Madore was appointed full voting member for this meeting.

- II. **ADJUSTMENT TO THE AGENDA:** Addition of V d) Amendment to the Zoning and Land Use Code to allow existing non-conforming two-family dwellings in residential zoning districts currently subject to abandonment provisions of Article VI, Section 4(c)

- III. **CORRESPONDENCE:** None

IV. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

- a) **An application submitted by WBRC Architects – Engineers on behalf of the Lewiston School Department to construct a new three story building addition on the existing Lewiston Middle School building and additional parking at 75 Central Ave.**

Michael Marcotte said that because Bruce Damon was a contractor, there may be a conflict of interest because he could bid on the project and benefit financially. He thought that Bruce should recuse himself from voting. Most members did not think it was a conflict but after further discussion, they asked staff to check with Maine Municipal Association and discuss further at the next meeting.

The following motion was made:

**MOTION:** by **Eric Potvin** to move that Bruce Damon does not a conflict of interest and should be allowed to discuss and vote on this project. Second by **Walter Hill**.

**VOTED:** **4-1-1 (Passed)**  
**Michael Marcotte Opposed**  
**Kevin Morissette Abstained**

The following motion was made:

**MOTION:** by **Kevin Morissette** to consider an application submitted by WBRC Architects – Engineers on behalf of the Lewiston School Department to construct a new three story building addition on the existing Lewiston Middle School building and additional parking at 75 Central Avenue. Second by **Paul Robinson**.

**VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)**

John Kenney, Civil Engineer and Jeff Davis, Architect from WBRC Architects-Engineers were representing Joe Perryman from the Lewiston School Department who was also present. John showed site plans to the Board of the proposed addition and site development at the Lewiston Middle School. He explained where the buses would exit and enter the school and also showed where the parents picking up their children would be.

Paul Madore asked if the bus parking area was adequate especially with the hospital and Bates next door and Joe Perryman told him they took that into consideration when creating the plan. Eric asked if the historic façade of the building would be seen and Jeff said the existing façade would be maintained as is within the proposed addition. Kevin asked why the front of the building was chosen to do the addition and Jeff said it was in part due to existing security issues and the location of offices being on the second floor.

Michael asked how many new classrooms there would be and Joe Perryman said they were not exactly sure and he would find out. Michael commented that the front of the building was “butt ugly” and looked like a hospital or a prison.

Paul Robinson asked about the timeframe for the project, and John said they would break ground in July and it would be completed by the end of 2014.

Paul Madore asked what the timeframe for the Planning Board to act on this was and did it have to be decided at this meeting. Bruce said it was not necessary to act today if all members were not ready to vote. It could be tabled until the next meeting.

Public Comment:

Roland Gerardin, of Chadbourne Road in Lewiston said he was not for or against the project. He asked how much the project would cost and Bruce said \$9.1 million. Bruce also said that they were not just adding an addition to the school but renovating the existing building to bring it up to code. Roland asked about the 84 classrooms and Joe Perryman stated there would be eight new classrooms and other classrooms would be upgraded.

Public Comment Closed

Paul Madore asked what the additional upgrades were to the building and Jeff explained that they would be doing cosmetic and systems work to 120,000 SF

of the school including ceiling replacement, new lockers, bathrooms, heating and air ventilation, electrical and lighting. Right now the sprinkler system is in 60% of the building and they will be upgrading to 100% of the building. All improvements will be bringing the building up to code. Paul Madore asked if there were hazardous materials and Jeff said there were five classrooms that had asbestos floor tiles which will be abated.

Paul Madore asked if the parking at the school would affect the armory and Joe said there would be no difference in the parking conditions. Most activities at the armory happen after school and there would be ample parking.

Kevin said he appreciated the explanation of the additional renovations and was in favor of the project.

Michael said he was still waiting on the answer of how many classrooms and Joe said eight. Michael said he would vote for the project since it meets the approval criteria, but does not like it. He thought it was too expensive for the community for exchange for what they are going to get.

The following motion was made:

**MOTION:** by **Paul Madore** finds that the application is complete and 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 the City of Lewiston School Department for construction of a new three story building addition to the existing Lewiston Middle School building and additional parking at 75 Central Avenue. Second by **Eric Potvin**.

**VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)**

- b) **An application submitted by Survey Works, Inc. on behalf of Marc A. Pellerin to divide Lot 1A of the Pond Ridge Acres Subdivision located at 551 Pond Road with remaining undeveloped land to be combined with the abutting property at 22 Pond Ridge Drive.**

The following motion was made:

**MOTION:** by **Michael Marcotte** to consider an application submitted by Survey Works, Inc. on behalf of Marc A. Pellerin to divide Lot 1A of the Pond Ridge Acres Subdivision located at 551 Pond Road with remaining undeveloped land to be combined with the abutting property at 22 Pond Ridge Drive. Second by **Paul Robinson**.

**VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)**

Jim Courbron, the representative from Survey Works explained to the Board that Mark Pellerin, the owner of 551 Pond Road and 22 Pond Ridge Drive would like to divide Lot 1A of the Pond Ridge Acres subdivision located at 551 Pond Road with remaining undeveloped land to be combined with the

abutting property at 22 Pond Ridge Drive. He referred the Board to the subdivision plan in Section 5 of the application.

Bruce asked if it was in the Rural Agricultural district and David said yes, and it meets the space and bulk requirements.

Public Comment: None

The following motion was made:

**MOTION:** by **Michael Marcotte** finds that the application is complete and 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 Marc A Pellerin to divide the existing Lot 1A of the Pond Ridge Acres Subdivision located at 551 Pond Road with undeveloped portion of Lot 1A to be combined with the abutting property at 22 Pond Ridge Drive and for remaining developed land to be identified as Lot 1B. Second by **Paul Madore**.

**VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)**

#### V. OTHER BUSINESS:

##### a) Riverfront Master Plan: Simard Payne Park Improvement Update

David Maynes of Richardson Associates explained the planned improvements to Simard Payne Park and the entrance to the park. He showed the Board renderings of the site. He said they would like to emphasize the canals and maybe have some type of water feature within the canals.

Walter commented that they did a great job on the plan and it really showcases Lewiston and the river.

Eric liked what he saw, but would like to see more connectivity to the river. The majority of the plan's concentration is 100 feet off the shore. He suggested maybe cleaning up the invasive species which would be relatively inexpensive. He also mentioned that there may be grants available to apply for sculptures and to remove and maintain invasive plants.

Paul Robinson asked if they thought about adding permanent toilet facilities in the park where this will be an attraction. David Maynes said they thought about it but they did not place it in the park yet, but in final stages it could be.

Michael asked if there will be picnic tables in the park and David Maynes said yes and showed him where. He also asked if the tables would have rooftops on them and David Maynes said they had not thought about roofs, but they could be positioned under trees for shade. Michael also said he was concerned about the cost of the sculptures that were going to be placed in the park.

Kevin said he was disappointed that the amphitheater that was in the original master plan was not in this plan. He thought that it was one of the most important additions in the park. He said he liked the plan in general except for the serpentine path through the middle and suggested getting rid of it. His opinion was that connecting to the river, cleaning of the river and the look of the river would draw more people to the park. He also thought that not including the amphitheater is a missed opportunity. There needs to be more attention to the riverfront.

Paul Madore suggested summer symphonies like in Auburn could be held which would attract people.

Bruce noted there were some elements from the master plan were missing and some of the people involved with the original plan were disappointed. He said if this is truly going to be a park, the one thing to do is discourage all types of vehicles from entering. Adding additional paving is the last thing he would want. He also was concerned about the reduction in the open space that supports the Balloon Festival. By shrinking the space as much as they are planning on doing, what happens to all the vendors and the ancillary stuff while still providing room for the balloons? It will be very challenging when the field is made smaller. Other than that there are some great elements in the plan. He thought that cleaning up the river and clearing the shores will allow views from Auburn to the park. This should be considered

Paul Robinson said that the Balloon Festival was a "sacred cow" and any restriction of vehicles into the park would meet resistance from people.

Walter added from a safety prospective, clearing the riverfront shores makes it safer for people walking because it is all open.

Kevin said that if they chose to put some type of water feature in the canal, it would be nice if it was something fixed and not water jets because if people wanted to kayak in the canals, they would not want water shooting at them.

Bruce said it is an interesting plan and does incorporate some elements that were originally intended for the use of the park. It has become more of an event type facility and the utilization for the Recreation Department makes a lot of sense.

#### **b) Disposition of 147 Sabattus Street**

Eric and Kevin recused themselves from voting on this item.

Bruce said that it seems like a good opportunity to put this building back on the tax rolls.

Michael said it makes no sense to him and he has no idea who was involved in the potential purchase and use of this property; there are not enough facts at this time. He would not support this.

Paul Robinson said that this is only a recommendation to City Council. Michael said he could not make a decision without understanding what the impact and future use may be.

Bruce asked about the zoning. Gil explained the property is located in the NCB district and is nonconforming with respect to setbacks, density, parking, and number of structures in residential use on a lot. Demolition of the structure would require conformance with today's ordinance.

David said the building has been abandoned since 2007 when the water was shut off. Paul Madore asked if someone was interested in the property and Gil said yes, but that Administration plans to ask the Council to move forward with a request for proposals being sent out and the applicants would need to state what their plans were for the building. Gil stated that this property has been condemned because of its condition and being vacant, but it could be renovated and used.

The following motion was made:

**MOTION:** by **Paul Madore** pursuant to Article VII, Section 4(h) of the Zoning and Land Use Code to send a favorable recommendation to the City Council for the disposition of 147 Sabattus Street.  
Second by **Paul Robinson**.

**VOTED: 3-1-1 (Passed)**  
**Michael Marcotte Opposed**  
**Bruce Damon Abstained**  
**Eric Potvin & Kevin Morissette Recused**

Michael said he opposed this item due to the uncertainty of the future use of the property and the existing nonconformities with the Zoning and Land Use Code.

**c) Housing Density throughout New England and Proposals for Lewiston: Bates College Intern.**

Jedd Countey, Bates College Intern explained to the Board the research he did on housing density throughout New England. He contacted the cities of Burlington, VT, Portland, ME, Biddeford, ME, Brunswick, ME, Lawrence, MA, Lowell, MA and Worcester, MA for this information.

**d) Staff request to initiate an amendment to the Zoning and Land Use Code to allow existing nonconforming two-family dwellings in residential zoning districts currently subject to abandonment provisions of Article VI, Section 4(c).**

Gil explained to the Board that they want to make this amendment because of the property at 299 Webster Street. The question is one of when does a property become abandoned and whether the ordinance should allow for

greater flexibility of nonconforming residential uses in residential districts so that they are not deemed abandoned after a 24 month period.

After discussion of this amendment, the members decided to table this item until the next meeting when more information could be brought to them.

The following motion was made:

**MOTION:** by **Kevin Morissette** to table this item until the April 22, 2013 meeting. Second by **Walter Hill**.

**VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)**

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

**VI. READING OF MINUTES:** Adoption of the March 25, 2013 minutes

The following motion was made:

**MOTION:** by **Paul Robinson** to accept the March 25, 2013 Planning Board Minutes as amended. Second by **Paul Madore**.

**VOTED: 7-0 (Passed)**

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

**MOTION:** by **Walter Hill** that this meeting adjourns at 9:20 p.m. Second by **Paul Madore**.

**VOTED: 7-0 (Passed).**

The next regularly scheduled meeting is for Monday, April 22, 2013 at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



Paul Robinson Secretary *CLL*