

**VILLAGE OF MONROE
PLANNING BOARD
WORKSHOP MINTUES**

**MONDAY MARCH 14, 2022
7:00 P.M.**

Present: Chairman Boucher, Members Hafenecker, Karlich, Umberto, Attorney Cassidy, Engineer O'Rourke, Building Inspector Cocks, PB Secretary Doherty.

Absent: Member Allen, Planner Fink and PB Secretary Charles

Chairman Boucher opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Boucher explained where the exits are for the 2nd floor board room.

Chairman Boucher stated the agenda is being moved around. The local law for hotels will be the last item discussed on the agenda.

125 Elm Street - Informal

Joel Mann, from Brach & Mann Associates

Mr. Mann stated that at 123 Elm there in an existing motor vehicle repair shop. The owner of 123 Elm Street property bought the 125 Elm Street property. The property is located in a GB zone. The 125 Elm Street property had a limousine business which the owner thought was a similar business to his motor vehicle repair shop so he expanded his business to the 125 Elm Street property. The limousine business was not permitted and so it was closed. The 125 Elm Street property lot is not being used at this time.

The owner would like to use the property at 125 Elm Street for his motor vehicle repair shop business. The owner was referred to the Building Department. The zoning for that area states no motor vehicle repair shop cannot be within 200 feet of a school, public recreation, church, hospital or any other place of public assembly. 125 Elm Street is 89 feet from Crane Park and The Heritage Trail is right behind the property. The Building Department's letter stated the applicant needs to go to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) for variances to operate a motor vehicle repair business at that location. The owner would like to hear the comments and concerns from the Planning Board before going to the ZBA. The owner wanted to know if there any other variances that would be needed.

Engineer O'Rourke stated the applicant will have to go before the ZBA for any variances. If they need a use variance, they should get all variances such as set-backs etc. at the same time. If the applicant gets the variances, the Planning Board would need a site plan that includes ADA parking, stripping, dumpster, etc. which are typical for a site plan. Because, The Heritage Trail is right behind the property, a 239-county referral would be required. The ZBA would also need to get the 239-county referral and it may include screening for The Heritage Trail. There is a motor vehicle business on 123 Elm Street but that business pre-dates the zoning for the area.

Jim Cocks, Building Inspector, stated if the properties were merged it would change the number of variances needed, for set-backs, etc. It would be in the applicant's best interest to merge the

properties. Chairman Boucher asked the Board members for comments. Member Hafenecker asked if the applicant plans on keeping the motor vehicle repair shop. Mr. Mann stated yes, this project is just to expand the current business. Jim Cocks, Building Inspector, stated there is storage/impound lot on the 123 Elm Street property so there would not be a need to have that as part of the 125 Elm Street Property. The 123 Elm Street property was before the Board for an expansion for office space. Jim Cocks stated the applicant could get an informal letter from the building department outlining everything that needs to be done for merging the lots/properties and a list of vacancies needed. Member Umberto asked if both properties have the same owner. Mr. Mann stated yes, both properties have the same owner.

The Pets I Love Veterinary Hospital

David Niemotko Architect for the applicant

Engineer O'Rourke comments for The Pets I Love Veterinary Hospital were emailed March 2, 2022. The plans still reference two lots going together this needs to be fixed. The applicant did get the variance from the ZBA for the rear set-back for the new rear addition. The EAF was submitted and was fine. The Board also needs to submit a 239-county referral. There were no public present at the public hearings held by the ZBA so not sure if a public hearing would be needed for this Board.

Chairman Boucher read planner Fink's email comments. There is a comment about "see sheet C4" there is no sheet C4 in the site plan. Section 200-32 the trees and landscaping should be reviewed, and an updated plan submitted. These comments were just received and will be sent to David Niemotko's office. Also, needed is the specific tree species and size of the plants at the time of planting. The Board needs to know what is existing and what is proposed for the screening for the Heritage Trail. A note should be added to the landscaping site plan that plants will be replaced if they do not survive one year of growth. A bond needs to be posted for the landscaping. A note must be added about the planting dates. The note should also include information about maintaining landscaping in perpetuity.

Engineer O'Rourke stated that Planner Fink's comments about bonding for landscaping may not have to be done if the Building Inspector does the inspections. This will save the applicant money and this has been done for other small businesses in the Village. Chairman Boucher asked if Attorney Cassidy is good with that as well. Board Attorney Cassidy stated yes, she is good with that as it is only a small check that is held back. Member Umberto asked what is the amount of a small check is. Board Attorney Cassidy stated it depends on the value of the landscaping. Member Umberto stated he did not believe that 2 feet high planting was sufficient. Board Engineer O'Rourke stated the shrubs are 2 feet high but the trees need to be at least 6 feet high. Chairman Boucher asked if there was anything else the board wanted to talk about.

Board Attorney Cassidy stated she has a resolution to get the 239-county referral prepared but she needs to know if the Board wants to waive the public hearing or set the date for a public hearing. The project has already had two public hearings with the ZBA so it may be not be necessary for this Board to hold one as well.

160 Stage Road informal review.

Shemuel Sandel, Project Manager with Hartman Designs, presented for the applicant.

Mr. Jay Samuels, who was retained by the applicant, to do the site plan, was only present to hear the Board's comments. The property is located on the corner of Stage and Rt 17M in the

CB zoning district. The proposed office building will be thirty-five feet high and will have three stories. The owner will have his business in the building and will rent out the other parts of the building. The building will have a foot print of 40,000 square feet plus parking. They want to hear from the Board in regards to height, size, how much parking is needed, before they go into detailed design. Chairman Boucher asked what would the business be? Mr. Sande stated the owner's business is an Amazon business for small products. Chairman Boucher asked what type of business with Amazon? Mr. Sandel stated the owner buys and sells on Amazon so he would like to use the basement for storage and use the first floor for loading and unloading the trucks that would come in and out. The upper two floors would be rented out. Board Attorney Cassidy asked if the building will be all commercial. Mr. Sande stated yes. Chairman Boucher asked how many parking spots? Mr. Sande stated they had forty-seven at present. But, he is not sure how many parking spots are needed for the square footage of the space they are proposing. Member Hafenecker asked if the primary Amazon business, would have tractor trailers in and out. Mr. Sande stated no tractor trailers but UPS and other delivery trucks would be coming in and out.

Engineer O'Rourke's comments: This building would be in the historic district, there is a house on the property but it is not on the historic registry but it could be. It is the Judge William Seaman House. This would be a Type One action under SEQRA. The bulk table was not used in the site plan. If the basement is used for storage and UPS will be in and out that is considered warehouse and that is not permitted in the CB zone. Under the zoning code the basement cannot be used as a warehouse and cannot be opened to the public. The basement could be used for storage but not to store items that will be sold on Amazon and no UPS coming in and out, that is not permitted in the CB zone.

The building will be a big impact to that corner, traffic will be an issue, storm water drainage will be an issue as there will be a lot more paved area. If the building is over an acre a full storm water drainage system would have to be in place but if it was less than an acre a full storm water drainage system does not need to be in place. Mr. Sande stated for the purposes of traffic they made the entrance from Maple Street and the entrance that goes in and out and is wide enough for a fire truck. Board Engineer O'Rourke stated the traffic information would include how the delivery trucks travel through the village, the routes in and out of the Village.

Board Engineer O'Rourke stated he did not go into the details in regards to fire safety. They may have to go for aerial access so the driveway would need to be 26 feet wide and the building would need a sprinkler system. All these items will be discussed when the application is reviewed. While this property is in the CB district there are residents, churches, a masonic hall all of which will need to be considered. As this is the historic area how the building fits into the character of the neighborhood will need be considered. Residential buffers will also need to be considered.

Building Inspector Jim Cocks, stated there is a ten-foot set back requirement so some of the parking will have to be pulled back and screening will have to be done for a buffer. Fire access needs to be considered while it is good that the project has three entrances, it will need to be discussed in further detail. If the parking is not adequate a one-time fee will be imposed.

This would be a Type 3 construction which requires sprinklers. The first step in the process is a land determination letter from the Building Department. If there cannot be a warehouse in the basement as it is not permitted, it may not be cost efficient to have a basement. Parking is determined by the square footage of the building. If the offices are used for medical offices

more parking is required. In the Village code there is a section about all this that will need to be reviewed.

Chairman Boucher stated the character of the neighborhood is a big concern. It is a big building for that lot. Member Hafenecker asked what value this building would bring to the Village of Monroe. Monroe currently has excessive office space. The Board would like to know what cliental would go into the building and what do they offer for the Village of Monroe? Mr. Sandel stated there is no vision for the building at this time. The owner does not want retail on the first floor. Member Hafenecker stated there are other businesses in the area that are Amazon businesses and they have tractor trailers in and out all the time but this is not permitted in the Historical District.

The Judge William Seaman House currently on the property is from 1826. The historic house is not registered. Registration of the building is up to the owner. Board Attorney Cassidy stated the lot can be used for a sub-division and it would be a good use of the lot. The lot is an acer. Member Umberto stated this will be a modern building. Mr. Sande stated he could design the building to fit into the area. Chairman Boucher stated the first step is a land determination letter from the Building Department.

Local Law – Hotels

Board Attorney Cassidy provided a memo from the Village Planner. The Trustees are changing parts of the zoning. This is a new change and needs to be distributed to the Planning Board. Chairman Boucher stated that according to the memo there will be 3,000 square feet per guest room for a hotel. There was a discussion on what properties a hotel could be built on. The new Local Law is written in a way that makes it a better option for a small to medium size hotel. The hotel does not need to be a national chain. Board Attorney Cassidy stated this could help some of the older larger homes as they could be turned into bed and breakfasts. The three-thousand sq. ft. per room can be used for parking, pool etc. The hotels can be up to four stories. Building Inspector Cocks, stated the building department is concerned with what happens when a hotel no longer wants to use the four-story building. What can be done with the building as Monroe does not have four-story buildings. A discussion took place about hotels in the area and how tall they are built. Board Attorney Cassidy stated the Board has choices on if they want to reply or not. There is a time limit on when a reply can be made. Member Umberto stated what was the rush and has the Building Department had inquiries into hotels. Building Inspector Cocks stated no one has discussed hotels with the Building Department at this time. But, there is a time requirement for the Board to review the new Local Law. Board Attorney Cassidy stated there is a shortage for hotel rooms in Orange County. Chairman Boucher asked why there is no AirB-N-B's in the Village. Building Inspector Cocks stated there was a bad actor who had a party house so there are no AirB-N-B's in the Village of Monroe. Chairman Boucher stated this will be discussed at the next meeting and can decide then what the Board will want to do.

On a motion by Member Allen and seconded by Member Kelly Umberto it was unanimously resolved: **The meeting be adjourned at 8:02.**