



Village of Saranac Lake

Planning Department
39 Main St.
Saranac Lake, NY
Phone (518)891-4150
www.saranaclakeny.gov

VILLAGE OF SARANAC LAKE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING MINUTES 1/5/2021

ATTENDANCE

Development Board Members:

Donna Difara, Chairperson, Present
Bill Domenico, Present
David Trudeau, Absent
Elias Pelletieri, Present
CJ Hagmann Present
Craig Catalano, Alternate, Excused

Paul Blaine, Development Code Administrator, Present
Cassandra Hopkins, Administrative Assistant, Present

CONVENE

Paul Blaine, Development Code Administrator, asked for a member of the board to start the meeting.

Bill Domenico opened the meeting at 6:06pm.

Motion to approve December 1, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes by Elias Pelletieri, seconded by CJ Hagmann.

Domenico asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Pelletieri, yes; Hagmann, yes; and Domenico, yes; all in favor, unanimous approval.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

BOARD ACTION

Champlain National Bank, Special Use Permit with Site Plan Review and Area Variance for a Drive Through Bank, 151 Church St.

Donna Difara asked Blaine to give the rest of the board an overview of the project.

Blaine stated that this project is requesting a variance tonight, and Special Use Permit with Site Plan Review. He **stated** that the property was previously occupied by a drive through bank. He added that a discussion can be had about the outstanding items for the project, some of which are listed on the agenda tonight as conditions of potential approval.

Difara asked for the applicant's architect to speak to the board about the project.

Jesse Schwartzberg, architect, addressed the board to state that the applicant is looking to work with the Village and the Development Board as they introduce this project and seek approval tonight.

Difara asked for public comment on this project.

Motion to close the public hearing by Pelletieri, seconded by Domenico.

Difara asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Pelletieri, yes; Hagmann, yes; Domenico, yes; and Difara, yes; all in favor, public hearing closed.

Blaine stated that there is one public comment that has been addressed to the Planning Department. He read an email from a neighboring property owner that stated concern over vehicle traffic and snow removal in the immediate area.

Domenico asked the applicant about the landscaping plan and the pedestrian walkway.

Schwartzberg shared the site plan and survey map of the project location with the board. He highlighted the improvements that focus on pedestrian access and shared the proposed flow of vehicle traffic. He added that the adjacent Village property exists as a right of way that is approximately 23ft. wide for vehicle traffic to use in that area.

Blaine asked about the property's deed.

Schwartzberg addressed the question to the satisfaction of the board and clarified the proposed use of the Village right of way.

Domenico asked about the proposed landscaping on the front of the property.

Schwartzberg explained that the access to the property may have to be adjusted, he suggested a curb cut.

Difara asked about the bank's willingness to plant additional screening for the proposed parking area.

Schwartzberg stated that the bank would be willing to include additional screening and he offered to work with Blaine on that.

Pelletieri expressed concern over the proximity of the proposed roadside sign to the access for the Village Riverwalk, citing a potential difficulty for motorists to see pedestrians.

Schwartzberg acknowledged the concern and stated that the placement of the roadside sign is flexible.

Domenico stated that the existing vegetation located in the parking area is a row of cedar hedges, which offers some screening. He pointed to the fact that the applicant may not want to wall that area off even more with more vegetative screening given that there is the Village public parking lot immediately behind the property.

Schwartzberg thanked the board members for their questions and stated that this really will make a huge improvement to the Church St. corridor, with the removal of some of the asphalt and a more defined area for a clear pedestrian walkway.

Blaine stated that he saw an opportunity to scale and fit the designated parking spaces in the parking area, while still allowing for the minimum 5ft. set back to be met from a neighboring property in the rear of the bank's property.

Difara suggested that the designated space Blaine just mentioned, be made greenspace or a sidewalk.

Blaine suggested using the designated space as a snow removal area as well.

Schwartzberg stated that yes, they will work with Blaine on reconfiguring that designated area.

Domenico suggested to the board that some of those details with the parking area and snow removal be worked out as the project moves forward and there are actually shovels in the ground.

Motion to issue a negative declaration for purposes of SEQR by Domenico, seconded by Pelletieri.

Difara asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Hagmann, yes; Domenico, yes; Pelletieri, yes; and Difara, yes; all in favor, declaration moved.

Motion to find the project in conformance with LWRP policy conditions and standards by Pelletieri, seconded by Hagmann.

Difara asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Pelletieri, yes; Domenico, yes; Hagmann, yes; and Difara, yes; all in favor, declaration moved.

Motion to approve Special Use Permit with Site Plan Review and Area Variance with the following conditions, 1) parking spaces to be setback a minimum of 5' from lot line shared with Village, 2) vegetative screening to be added and landscape plan to be submitted and approved by Administrator, and 3) revised Site Plan as approved to be submitted to the Development Code Administrator by Domenico, seconded by Hagmann.

Difara asked for a Roll Call Vote.

Roll Call: Hagmann, yes; Pelletieri yes; Domenico, yes; and Difara yes, all in favor, unanimous approval.

Parkview Development, Preliminary Site Plan Review for Multi Use, 120 Broadway.

Blaine stated to the board that the purpose of this is to allow the board to get a general idea of where this project in the Village is headed. He added that the applicant is here tonight to answer questions from the board as an exercise to develop the most comprehensive Site Plan with the goal of seeking approval in the next meeting or two.

Difara thanked Blaine and the applicant for allowing the board to see the early stages of this project, which will be a good project for Saranac Lake.

Sean Kearney, developer, introduced himself and his team. He emphasized the willingness to work with the Village and the flexibility of making changes as they go. He added that there is a rough timeframe for the project. He stated that he will be in touch with Blaine about submitting a complete application for approval.

The board in turn asked questions about the potential project. Questions from the board, directed to the project developer, the project architect, and the project engineer, ranged from design, development code standards, and general practices for tenants of the building.

Difara specifically stated that the fire safety will need to be more thoroughly thought out for this project. She suggested fire plugs, fire hydrants, and water runoff catch basins to begin.

Pelletieri stated that a more comprehensive parking plan may need to be constructed and submitted.

Domenico stated that the access to Broadway may need to be seriously looked at, just to try to create a safe corridor. He also asked the applicant to make considerations for the functions of community spaces within one of the buildings during this covid-era.

Hagmann also stated that the busy traffic corridor that is Broadway will be impacted by this proposed plan, specifically, the proposed flow from the parking lot back out onto Broadway. He asked that the applicant look at that corridor.

Difara mentioned including elevations with each floor plan to be submitted with a complete application.

Blaine stated that there may be time to explore changes to the property line in the northeast corner, thus benefiting the overall plan, especially parking and traffic flow. He stated that he looks forward to receiving the Site Plan.

Pelletieri stated that this is a good project and he knows that the Depot St. area, as a renter of a business space in the area himself, will benefit from this.

Domenico seconded Pelletieri's statement in voicing approval for the project at this stage.

Difara asked the other board member present, CJ Hagmann, for his reaction.

Hagmann stated that this looks good.

NEW BUSINESS

Blaine addressed the board in order to state that more communication and more effort will be made in order to get a full board (five members) present at each meeting. He stated that the board is still currently in search of an additional Alternate Member.

OLD BUSINESS

PUBLIC COMMENT

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Hagmann, seconded by Domenico. All in favor, meeting adjourned.

Meeting was officially adjourned at 7:47pm.

Meeting minutes prepared by Cassandra Hopkins, on January 14th
Community Development Administrative Assistant