

I. Call to Order

Members Present: Matt Bacewicz, Chair; Harland Miller, Vice-Chair; Elsie Goodrich, Secretary; Aaron Guyette (joined at 6:52pm); David Weissberger; Jordan Matte

City Staff Present: Elaine Wang, John Audy, John Rauscher, Barb Pitfido, Eric Vorwald

Guests Signed-in or On-line: Bob DiPalma, Myron Wheeler, Sue O'Brien, Judy Lance, Trent Chinnaswamy, Raymond Perron, Betsy Corlon, Bob Corlon, Bonny Picard, Diane Putnam, Sierra Makaris, Arthur Makaris, Scott Lewis, Dan McCornice, Bill Crenshaw, Louise Rocheleau, Petie Shea Gamache, Joe Gamache, Peggy Lisage, Sadie Khouri, Jean Saysani, Joshua Siegartel, Britta Tonn, Jeff Barron, Peter Schmidtle, Sam Cattalano, Douglas Currier, Jim Gribbin, Cindy Melvin, Monsignor Lavalley, Tom McCormick, Joseph Perron, Noemi Currier, Ann Lang, Jeff Nichelson, Carol Altobelli, Lillon Lane, Sean Bleything, Robert O'Brien, Jeffery Thomas, Dianna Harbaeu, Caroline Bergeron, Carolyn Gould, Ian Toudette, Emily Degice, Dave Marshall, Felipe Hoyos, Amy Houghton, King McMillan, Adam Dubroff, Aimee Germain, Amanda Goldstein, Brian Borah, Carol, Cathy, Jess Goerold, Jess Wignall, Jessica, Leslie Fry, Maximus, Mcponey, Megan Gonzalez, Michael Connolly, Mike Hoey, Moe, Murphy Anderson, Peter Rowan, Daisy Berbeco, Ron, Sarah Hotchkiss, Scott Newman, Shelia Cort-Derochers, Valeri, Kathryn Vreeland, Suzanne, Carl Severence, Collette Khajejali, Abby Bleything, Wesley, Vicki, Mary Hausmann, Ann Cousins

Call to Order by: Matt Bacewicz

Meeting Start Time: 6:31 PM

Minutes Recorded by: Eric Vorwald

II. Changes to the Agenda

None

III. Public Comment

None

IV. Approve Previous Meeting Minutes

Decision: 4 – 0 – 1

Motion by: Ms. Goodrich

Second: Mr. Matte

Motion to approve the November 17, 2022 Minutes as presented.

V. Public Hearing on Appeal of Decision of the Zoning Administrator – 115 Barlow Street

Mr. Vorwald provided an overview of the purpose of the hearing including a brief history of events

leading up to the intent to issue the zoning permit. He indicated that he would not be staffing the Board for this matter and the City's Attorney, would provide guidance during the meeting and in the deliberative session. Following this introduction, Mr. Bacewicz provided an overview of the proceedings including that a time limit would be set for each speaker. He provided general ground rules for the evening and what the charge of the Development review board would be. With that, he swore in those members present and on-line that intended to provide testimony.

A public hearing on the appeal was opened at 6:38 PM. Mr. Bacewicz invited representatives of St. Francis Xavier to provide an overview on their application. Mr. McCormick and Monsignor Lavalley provided an overview of the St. Stephen Parish and current status of the church. Specifically, they indicated that the St. Stephen Church and associated property was transferred to St. Francis Xavier Parish when it was determined by the diocese that operating two churches was not feasible due to staffing and other concerns. Mr. McCormick and Monsignor Lavalley provided additional information related to canon law and the intent of the reasons the parish is interested in demolition rather than reuse of the church structure. They also reiterated that this request was coming from the parish directly.

Following several questions from the DRB members, Ms. Tonn was invited to speak as the appellant. Ms. Tonn provided an overview of the appeal that was submitted including the reasoning behind the appeal. She referenced the memo from the Zoning Administrator related to the listing of the church structure and stated that the absence of the church in the listing was not an indication that it wasn't listed. Members of the DRB asked about the state process and what documentation, if any exists at the state level or how to determine if this structure was listed or eligible for listing. Ms. Tonn indicated that a formal determination of eligibility would need to be requested from the state. She stated that this would need to be done by the property owner. Ms. Tonn also noted the possibility of this being viewed as an anticipatory demolition, which could have adverse impacts on future developments.

After Ms. Tonn concluded her testimony, Mr. McCormick and Monsignor Lavalley were invited back to provide any follow-up. It was noted that they only are requesting demolition of the church building. They also stated that there was not interest or intent to request a determination of eligibility from the state regarding the status of the church structure. The DRB asked if there was any concern related to the use or reuse of the rectory building. Mr. McCormick noted that there was no concern about the use or reuse of the rectory.

Following this testimony, Mr. Bacewicz invited members of the public to provide testimony. Mr. Vorwald indicated that there were several members of the public that signed up in advance and would be called on first. For the next hour, the DRB took testimony from the public. Members of the public provided information on multiple topics including the church's history and significance to the community; the interest to reuse the church; and similar topics. Following the public input Mr. Bacewicz invited both the applicant and the appellant back to provide any concluding remarks. Mr. McCormick and Monsignor Lavalley indicated they had nothing further. Ms. Tonn referred to the language in the Unified Land Use and Development Regulations regarding the demolition of buildings in the National or State registers and that this information should be considered with the DRB's decision. With no further testimony, the hearing was closed at 7:59 PM.

With the hearing closed Mr. DiPalma indicated that exhibits would be entered into the record. Mr. Vorwald stated that copies of the exhibit list would be provided to the applicant and the appellant and that the DRB would determine if additional correspondences would be entered into the record. Mr. Bacewicz call for a ten minute recess to allow members of the public to exit if they desired before the next hearing started.

VI. Public Hearing on Variance Request – 4 Winooski Falls Way

Following the ten minute recess, Mr. Bacewicz reconvened the meeting and a hearing on the variance request for 4 Winooski Falls Way was opened at 8:11pm. Mr. Vorwald provided an overview of the application including the current regulations related to parking in the Downtown Core. After Mr. Vorwald's overview, Mr. Marshall, representing the property owner provided background information on the redevelopment of the Downtown and history of the property in question. Specific information related to the master plan for downtown, and the expected development was provided by Mr. Marshall.

Following Mr. Marshall's overview, the DRB asked him to review the five criteria related to the variance request as included in his application. Mr. Marshall walked through each of the five parts of the variance test and explained how the project would meet each part. The DRB members asked questions related to the specific development including where parking may be located, why a hotel was chosen, and information about the development agreement that is associated with the property.

Following this discussion Mr. Wheeler, representing the Champlain Mill spoke against the request as it would have an undo impact on the Mill. Mr. Wheeler referenced an amendment to the master plan and Act 250 application that showed an office building in this location. Other references were made to the Act 250 permit, including the master plan. Following Mr. Wheeler's testimony, Mr. Bacewicz invited Mr. Marshall back to respond. With no other comments or questions, the hearing was closed at 9:13 PM.

VII. City Updates

Mr. Vorwald provided the Board with updates on several appeals including 41 Orchard Terrace, 401 Main Street, and 9 George Street.

VIII. Other Business

Mr. Vorwald indicated that Ms. Hayes had moved out of Winooski and therefore stepped down from the DRB. He also stated that he and Mr. Bacewicz interviewed a prospective applicant to fill Ms. Hayes' term and that they were recommending her appointment to the City Council. Mr. Vorwald also noted that the next meeting would be on March 17th if necessary.

IX. Adjourn

Motion by: Mr. Miller

Second: Mr. Weissberger

Meeting End Time: 9:21 PM.