

Planning Board Meeting Minutes
Village of Ballston Spa
Held on February 12, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chairman O'Connor

Chairman present: Rory O'Connor

Members present: Scott Burlingame, Peter Martin, Alternate Member Paul Dunkelbarger, Alternate Member Mathew Ercoline, Attorney Stefanie Bitter

Members absent: John Battenfield, Mike McNamara

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman O'Connor stated the Board needs to delay approving the minutes of the January 8, 2025 meeting because tonight we do not have a quorum of members who were present at that meeting.

Old Business:

Larry Heid/The Still at the Speckled Pig – 17 Washington Street (Tax ID #216.32-1-29). Applicant wishes to convert an auto repair shop into a craft distillery with a full-service kitchen (Continuation). Chairman O'Connor asked if Mr. Heid had forwarded the updated site plan incorporating the items discussed at the last meeting. Mr. Heid said he has forward them to the clerk. Chairman O'Connor stated that he expedited this application to the Saratoga County Planning Board for their review. He received a letter from the Saratoga County Planning Board on February 10, 2025 regarding the Saratoga County Planning Board Referral Review #25-15MOU – Site Plan Review – The Still at Speckled Pig. A proposal to convert a former auto garage into a distillery/restaurant on a 0.09-acre parcel fronting Washington Street and adjacent to a brewery of the same owner. Location: Washington Street (NYS Rt 50) Tax Map #216.32-1-29. The application was submitted on January 23, 2025. Their decision stated there is no significant County-wide or intercommunity impact. Their comments stated that in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Village of Ballston Spa Planning Board and the Saratoga County Planning Board, the Site Plan Review application has been reviewed by staff and with the necessary concurrence of two Board members has been deemed to present no significant county-wide impacts. The Board noted that the Village conducted an off-site parking survey previously and

the survey should be considered with this application. The Board also recommended that area's sidewalks should be reviewed and upgraded where necessary. Please contact the Saratoga County Planning Department if you have any questions regarding this matter. Signed by Jeffrey Williams, Planner. Chairman O'Connor stated that we have done SEQR and determined it was a Type 2. Attorney Bitter said that is correct. Member Martin made a motion to approve application for the renovation of 17 Washington Street, Tax ID number 213.32-1-29) for the Still at the Speckled Pig as submitted. The motion was seconded by Alternate Member Ercoline. The motion passed. Chairman O'Connor stated that Mr. Heid is all set to go to the Building Department to get his building permit.

Chris Boyea c/o 11 East High Street LLC – 11 East High Street (Tax ID #216.40-1-17) (Continuation) Applicant requested discussion regarding parking. Chairman O'Connor stated that the applicant requested further discussion regarding parking. This is a discussion only. The Board will listen again to Mr. Boyea, but there will not be a vote on the application. Mr. Boyea stated that after the last meeting, he was given a list of items to work out before coming back to the Board again. He stated that these items are expensive and he has no problem doing them. He noted that one of the things not on the list was parking, but that they did talk about it. From that conversation, he feels the parking is a problem that needs to be worked out before he goes any further with his application. He stated that the property has been a 3 unit apartment building for many years, dating back to the 1960's, utilizing on street parking. The property currently has 3 spots behind the building now on the property which are assigned to the current apartment tenants, noting one off street parking space per unit is allocated. To demolish the carriage house would cost \$15,000 with no return on investment. He is willing to make the investment to renovate the carriage house in order to obtain a return on investment. He is looking to invest in the community, not make a quick buck. This property predates all Village zoning and is allowed to stay as is. The new code is 2 parking spaces per unit. He can get 2 more parking spaces where the gravel is now, totaling 5 spaces. He wants to get the Board's thoughts on his logic. Member Martin stated that he would need 8 spaces. He asked if the electrical truck always parks on the street. Mr. Boyea said that he does not allow that truck to park on the property now and that it is not part of his rental agreement. Mr. Boyea stated that prior to signing the lease, the tenant reached out to the Village to ask them if it was OK to park the truck on the street. The tenant told him that the Village gave him permission to park on the street.

Member Burlingame stated code says 2 spaces per unit. He stated he is struggling with the parking on such a small lot. Useability is questionable, noting that there is not enough room to maneuver around. He feels the tenants will be using the neighbor's lot to get out. Mr. Boyea stated that the spaces are 18' with 23' in between them. Member Burlingame asked if the carriage house could be moved to the other side of the lot, which would help with maneuverability. Mr. Boyea answered that he wants to leave it

where it is, noting that it would keep the parking activity on the commercial side of the lot. He stated that he may be able to obtain an easement from the neighbor to drive out of the spaces easier.

Chairman O'Connor stated that he feels the applicant could create 1 or 2 spaces under the carriage house. He doesn't think there should be any on-street parking at that intersection because of the inability to see around the tenant's big truck. He could look into obtaining a lease from the neighbor to use part of their lot next door. There is no way to get enough parking on the property and he needs to keep on-street parking to a minimum.

Member Martin stated that he is also concerned about the parking. He asked Mr. Boyea how big each space is. Mr. Boyea answered 9'x18'. Member Martin asked if he could put the parking under the carriage house. Mr. Boyea stated that there is not enough room downstairs for parking and living space. He stated that it is possible to go up a floor, but that would add to the cost of the project.

Chairman O'Connor stated that there is not enough parking now. He feels the applicant could put the parking under the carriage house or obtain a neighbor agreement to use his property for parking space. He told Mr. Boyea to bring us a plan with 1 or 2 more spaces and the Board may be able to work it out. He suggested he find out from his neighbor if that agreement option is possible.

Chairman O'Connor opened Public Comment.

Kristina Maas (17 East High Street) –She stated that she would like to see the carriage house fixed up. She noted that one tenant backs onto their property to get out now.

Andy Maas (17 East High Street) – He stated that having the big truck parking on the street is not illegal, but he doesn't like it. It is a bad intersection now and the truck blocks the sight.

Elizabeth Kormos (89 Hyde Blvd.) – She stated that there is a need for additional housing in the Village. She noted that a new trend in municipalities is doing away with off street parking. Member Martin stated that we cannot do that with our code.

Karen Avenarius (10 East High Street) – She stated that the driveway is shared between #17 and #11 East High Street. In 2021 he created a parking lot on the property and reduced the green space in the back. She is concerned that the tenants are using the Cunningham parking lot.

Chairman O'Connor closed Public Comment

Mr. Boyea stated that 3 families are living there now, using the 3 rear parking spaces and 3 on street spaces, which is grandfathered in. Chairman O'Connor stated that in his opinion the applicant has options to either put the parking under the carriage house or obtain a neighbor easement. He feels the Board cannot support his plan without one of these options. He stated that 8 spaces are needed. He advised Mr. Boyea to come back to the Board with how he is going to do it. Mr. Boyea stated that he is trying to get as many as he can and asked if the Board could approve 6? Chairman O'Connor stated that he cannot answer that question without a full assessment of the materials we would need from you. He suggested that Mr. Boyea talk to professionals and see what they can do, then come back to the Board with the option chosen. He summarized by saying the problem is they need 8 spaces, and Mr. Boyea needs to figure out how to solve the problem. He feels a letter of intent from the neighbor is a solution and is putting 2 spaces under the carriage house is a solution. Chairman O'Connor summarized the discussion by stating that the problem is the parking, the problem is 8 spaces. You need to figure out a way to solve the problem. I don't think you have to spend any money to talk to your neighbor about a conceptual lease agreement. If the neighbor agrees to do that, bring us a letter of intent stating that and bring it back to the next meeting and say I solved the problem and here's what we decided on the parking. The easement will get drawn up when everything else has been approved. If you can't do it that way, come back and say I have talked to the architect, and we are going to put 1 or maybe 2 parking spaces under the building. That could be another solution that could be looked at as a reasonable option. You haven't given us a solution to the problem yet. Because of where it is and the size of the lot, the Building Inspector had a whole bunch of questions which we won't get into tonight.

Mr. Boyea stated he will come back with more information once he talks to an attorney.

New Business: None

A motion was made to adjourn at 7:50pm by Member Martin and seconded by Member Burlingame. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Barner
Building Department Clerk