

CITY OF AUBURN PLANNING BOARD
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2014 6:30 PM, MEMORIAL CITY HALL

Present: Sam Giangreco, Anne McCarthy, Tim Baroody, Crystal Cosentino, Frank Reginelli

Staff: Stephen Selvek, Senior Planner; Andrew Fusco, Corporation Counsel; Brian Hicks, Code Enforcement Officer; Greg Gilfus, APD Traffic Officer

Agenda Items: Application for Minor Site Plan Review of 7 Catlin Street

Applications approved: SEQRA Action Lead Agency- 7 Catlin Street

Applications denied: None

Applications tabled: None

Chair calls the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance is recited. Roll is called.

Agenda Item 1: Approval of August 5, 2014 Meeting Minutes.

Chair asks for a motion to approve the minutes of the August 5, 2014 meeting. So moved by Tim Baroody, seconded by Anne McCarthy. All members vote approval. No members opposed. Motion carried.

Agenda Item: Application for Minor Site Plan Review for the installation of a 22-vehicle parking lot located at 7 Catlin Street to serve Kosta's Bar and Grill. Applicant: Ioannis, Inc.

Chair invites applicant to present the project.

Michael Palmieri- This application is for additional parking for Kostas Bar and Grill. There is an existing house on the lot and we are looking to do a parking lot with 22 spaces. The parking lot will be located on Catlin Street, across from Kosta's Restaurant. One of the problems is that on busy nights the parking spills out on the street. Employees alone on a Friday or Saturday night can be up to 20 employees can be working. Hopefully this will give us enough space for the employees to park and relieve that pressure of over populated parking that happens from the weekend. Currently the grade is high on the street and slopes from south (Catlin St) to north (the senior development) and we are looking at a cut and fill to level it out. The senior development to the west of the property has a driveway for emergency purposes so there is a division between this site and the residential neighborhood to the west. On the east side there is a vacant lot that belongs to the restaurant that is on the corner of Catlin and Grant Ave and to the South is Kosta's restaurant.

Chair opens public to be heard.

Dave Smith, 15 Catlin Street- For the past 15 years I have dealt with zoning. I have a double lot that is parked solid many evenings and since this has become a bar I have a lot of interesting litter than before. You would think I would want to get rid of those cars but I don't and here is why. When this was an ice cream stand and then a restaurant, it fit well. The bar is shoehorning a business into an ice cream spot. Having say that, if the owner is interested in commercial creep, as he also owns the house on the other side of the street behind his business, commercial use could spread along both sides of the street. So what is zoned RA1 would be changed and again change the zone. That is a bigger problem for me than the parking problem.

Betsy Walsh, 13 Catlin Street- I am against the building being demolished for a 22 car parking lot. Now, like Dave had said, we are going to have more commercial property on our street and what is our property value going to be? Our house is going to have no value with a development behind us and the smoke and music is loud. I have spoken to Mr. Kosta about these problems before, this is our quality of life. I have been there 47 years but I have about had it now. I do not begrudge his business but it seems to go his way. He can do anything while we do not have a say.

Deborah Smith, 15 Catlin Street- I appreciate Mr. Kosta having a business that has grown and that people are spending money in Auburn. We are happy to see people spending money in Auburn and the neighbors do not have a problem with that. Businesses can be good neighbors with residential neighbors and we would like to see Mr. Kosta being a little bit better neighbor with how parking is handled. The problem is commercial creep. If the R1 property is changed to a commercial property and the other property behind his business could be changed to a commercial property which would change a quiet residential neighborhood. Also, if a band is going to play, which he has every right to do, than the music should be turned off at 10pm. Some people need to sleep to get to a job in the morning. You'll find a friendly neighborhood on Catlin Street and we would just like to see a bit more friendly neighbor from Kosta's but we do not want commercial property creeping into the neighborhood.

Chair closes public to be heard.

Chair asks for staff comments.

Stephen Selvek- This is an R1 lot therefore there is a two pronged approval. A use variance is needed by Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). A lot of the neighbor concerns regarding if that property can be commercially used should be brought to ZBA. The ZBA holds a yes or no answer on the use of this parcel. Once ZBA takes action on the application this Board reviews the application as to whether or not there is proper access to the site, if there are proper plantings, drainage and lighting are being addressed. However, the first step in the process is asking the Planning board to coordinate the Environmental Review with ZBA. If the ZBA signs off on the coordination, this Board can complete the Environmental Review process at the October meeting. What that does is give ZBA permission to move forward with the use variance application at the end of October. If that goes through than the application would come in front of this Board for consideration of the site plan in November. It is ultimately a three month process. Reviews Design Review Committee (DRC) comments with the Board.

DRC comments:

- Grading change is needed as the lot slopes front to back
- Drainage
- Plantings around the parking lot
- Site lighting
- Snow storage

Chair asks for Board questions

Frank Reginelli- Questions if the Board should be concerned with the noise factor with the loud music in the neighborhood

Stephen Selvek- Unfortunately, that is not under consideration by this Board because the purview of this Board is the development of the parking lot. With that said, we should look at whether this particular parking lot has the potential to increase the intensity of use of the site for which it is being designed for. So I would not say we should be looking at music or noise however if the Board feels that adding 22 parking spots is going to increase the number of users at the site and what the overall effect will have on the neighborhood.

Crystal Cosentino- It was brought up that there is a need for staff parking. Is there a way to identify or police that this will be used for employee parking? Employees may just go to their vehicles and leave the parking lot where patrons may linger and be more rowdy.

Stephen Selvek- That is a consideration that the Board should take into consideration. Staff parking would be less turn over and things of that nature but we cannot necessarily define who parks in that besides saying in the site plan that we want signage designating a number of spots to staff parking but ultimately the use of the parking lot is the responsibility of the owner.

Andrew Fusco- As a member of the Design Review Committee, I do not specifically recall the restrictions of staff parking only. To me there seems to be some inherent disadvantages with that. One of the advantages of this parking lot would be to take cars off the neighborhood streets and put them into a place. So I ask that this new wrinkle be considered and discussed by the DRC.

Tim Baroody- I was formerly a member and former chair of the ZBA and applaud them to get cars off Catlin Street as the people were concerned with the traffic and the clogging on Catlin Street. I think this may be a solution to getting 20-22 cars off the street. You do not have control over smoking or loudness or litter.

Crystal Cosentino- Was the property an owner occupied property when it was purchased?

Stephen Selvek- I am not sure of the status of it but it is a residential property. I can check to see if it was single family.

Frank Reginelli- We do have a noise ordinance and people need to have their sleep.

Chair asks for a motion to adopt the SEQRA Lead Agency Resolution. Motioned by Tim Baroody, seconded by Crystal Cosentino. All members vote approval. No members opposed. Motion carried

Crystal Cosentino- Questions the next ZBA meeting.

Stephen Selvek- It is the fourth Monday of the month which is September 22nd at 7pm.

Andrew Fusco- The ZBA will have its first discussion of this on September 22nd but Environmental concerns need to be addressed before ZBA can act. Therefore ZBA will act on the variance at the October meeting.

Agenda Item 6: Other Matters

Staff update regarding Tyburn Academy- Following presentation at the last Planning Board meeting, staff met with the applicant to discuss concerns brought up at the meeting and take a look at revised plans. The revised plans did not address fire access so the building may need to be shifted and a new foot print designed. The applicant will be working with the Fire Department as they move forward with the plans. Staff is looking forward to reviewing revised plans in the next week or so and will have comments for the Board at the next Planning Board meeting.

Tim Baroody- Questions the fire access

Stephen Selvek- Currently fire access serves the existing building, as soon as the addition is put on the rear, it pushes fire access to the rear side of the added building. Something needs to be developed as to providing access around that building or in between the buildings. The addition is creating problems with fire access to the existing building.

The date of the next Planning Board meeting is Tuesday, October 7, 2014 at 6:30 pm.

Motion to adjourn made by Frank Reginelli, Seconded by Tim Baroody. All members vote approval. None opposed. Meeting adjourned.

Respectively Submitted by Renee Jensen