



City of Barre, Vermont

“Granite Center of the World”

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**Development Review Board
Agenda for the Regular Hearing on
Thursday, June 3, 2021
Virtual Hearing via ZOOM**

<https://zoom.us/j/9474828561?pwd=d3RMY0lUZUVnTGx4OFJXNUdOL0xxdz09>

Meeting ID: 947-4828-4561

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A regular meeting of the Barre City Development Review Board held by video conference was called to order by Vice-Chair Jeffrey Tuper-Giles (Ward I) at 7:14 pm. In attendance, participating on video or phone were Board Members, Ward II David Hough, and Ward III Board Member Katrina Pelkey, and At-Large Member Denise Ferrari and Jessica Egerton. Also in attendance was Heather Grandfield Permit Administrator. The Chair determined a quorum was present.

Absent: Board Member James Hart III, Ward III, and arriving late due to technical difficulties Chair Linda Shambo, Ward I and Board Member Richard Deep, Ward II.

Adjustments to Agenda: None

Visitors and Communications: None

Old Business:

Consideration of minutes from the May 6, 2021 Hearing:

- Motion to approve the minutes made by Board Member Hough and seconded by Board Member Pelkey, *on a roll call vote motion carried unanimously.*

Consideration of May 6, 2021, 2020 Decision:

- Motion to approve the decision made by Board Member Pelkey and seconded by Board Member Ferrari, *on a roll call vote motion carried unanimously.*

Vice-Chair Tuper-Giles went through the basics of how the hearing will work. In order for an application to receive approval, there must be a minimum of five (5) affirmative votes. Because there was not a full board this evening, the Vice-Chair afforded the applicants the opportunity to table their hearing until a full board was present to receive full review. The applicants chose to proceed. The Chair also stated that anyone wishing to speak or be on record must sign in, and would be sworn in when testimony was to be

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New Business:

Capstone Community Action (Applicant) & Al Flory and Keith Clark (Property Owner), 111 Seminary Street, Barre, VT seeks Site Plan Approval and Conditional Use approval to demolish the existing building and create a new parking lot. The project is located in the MU-1 Zoning District and the AE Flood Hazard Area.

Christy Swenson, Capstone Community Action was sworn in at 7:19 PM.

Ms. Swenson spoke to the mission of Capstone and how Brook Street School works to help the community. They have decided to open two more classrooms for their infant and toddler programs. That they had looked at other sites but found they were either in the flood plan or hazmat contamination. That they really wanted to stay within Barre City so decided that they needed to address the parking issues at Brook Street School. At this time, they have opened up these two new classrooms but only at half the capacity due to COVID-19. With this opening up fully and the other programs run from this facility that the parking does not meet the needs. They only have six parking spots for 20 staff members along with all the parents and other community members taking classes or using their facility. The safety issue is the crux of this application. As it is now when parents drop, their children off they have to park on the street and walk them up the sidewalk to the school. In the wintertime, there are snow banks to walk over and icy conditions. This year alone there have been five accidents involving staff cars that were damaged because of the congestion on the street.

Michelle Cottle, abutter was sworn in at 7:25 PM.

Spoke to the congestion all the street along Brook Street, Seminary and Maple Avenue intersection. How difficult at times it has been to get children to and from the school with all the traffic.

Al Flory, owner of 111 Seminary Street was sworn in at 7:30 PM.

Discussion took place about the building that would be removed and whether it was rental property. This is a three-unit rental property. At this time, there is one unit that is vacant with anticipation of this project and the other two units are rented.

At this time Chair Shambo and Board Member Deep joined the meeting in progress 7:33 PM.

At this time, Permit Administrator Heather Grandfield read into record two letters. The first was from State of Vermont, Department of Historic Preservation and the second was a letter of testimony from parents and staff of the Brook Street School.

Frank Kochman, was sworn in at 7:35 PM.

Discussion took place about whether or not the building could or could not be demolished according to the Unified Development Ordinance. Zoning does not require a zoning permit.

Michael Hellien, was sworn in at 7:40 PM.

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Discussion took place on whether or not this was an appropriate project for the City to consider or not. At this time, it would alleviate the congestion, parking issues. However, in the end is this what the City really needs. It does not take care of all of the parking that is needed. Is this project compatible with the neighborhood? Discussion about a parking lot adding to the devaluing of the other properties next to it.

Samantha Hiscock, abutter was sworn in at 7:44 PM.

Discussion about the housing crises in the state. Discussion about removing a three-unit structure for a parking lot. What is being done to replace these units? Is this an appropriate choice? Discussion took place about assisting the current residence of this property to find new housing. Discussion about possible other options instead of removing a viable three-unit building. Discussion took place about whether or not other properties within the City could absorb the loss of these three units.

Comments were made about the loss to the grand list. The fact that Capstone is in a difficult position. Making the City safer for pedestrians and more bike able and walkable. That the decision needs to be made on whether or not this meets the Unified Development Ordinance or not.

Comments were made about the difficulty of making this decision to proceed with this project. Discussion about the work that Capstone is doing working with Downstreet. Discussion about the safety aspect of the situation at Brook Street School and the possibility of a child getting hurt. That they will continue to work with the needs of the community for housing.

Joel Swartz, consultant was sworn in at 7:57 PM.

Discussion took place about the security issues that the school suffers. That there have been altercations between staff and parents at the school. Discussion took place about the specific pains that have been taken to light this parking lot.

Discussion took place about what the board is to consider on this application in regards to whether it meets the Unified Development Ordinance.

Comments from Don Marsh on the points that they directly meet the UDO. Storm water will not be directed onto any other properties. The plan has five trees, grassy swales and a lighting plan that meets all standards.

At this time, Vice-Chair Tuper-Giles thanked the participants and advised them that the board would be entering into deliberations and they could contact Permit Administrator Heather Grandfield in the morning as to the outcome or wait for the written decision.

At this time, Chair Shambo took over the duties of running the remainder of the meeting 8:07 PM.

Michael & Margaret Lannen (Applicant & Property Owner), 47 Orange Street, Barre, VT seeks a Variance for a second curb cut for their duplex. This project is located in the R-8 Zoning District.

Michael & Margaret Lannen, applicant sworn in at 8:10 PM.

The Lannens presented their reasons for requesting a Variance for a second curb cut. The Lannens had purchased the property about five years ago and until a month ago, they had lived there. Now that they have moved out, they feel a need to supply their new tenant with a safe and adequate driveway for their duplex

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to accommodate both units. They presented that they feel that their property is unique as they cannot park behind the home and that the current driveway is too narrow for more than one car. This creates a stacking situation, which then makes it difficult for tenants to leave without blocking each other and asking another tenant to move their vehicle.

Discussion took place about trying to configure a different possibility for parking. Discussion took place about not being able to park in the rear due to a bank that drops off. Discussion took place about the narrowness of the current driveway.

Discussion took place about how wide the proposed drive way would be. Discussion took place about the placement of the driveway being closer to the structure than closer to the property line. Discussion took place on how close this would entrance would be to the power pole. Discussion took place about why the original driveway was not considered being widened. Discussion about whether or not both units were filled and whether or not how many cars would be allowed per unit.

Jessica and Brandon Vest, abutters were sworn in at 8:17 PM.

Jessica read into record a letter that they had written and submitted to the Zoning Administrator on June 3, 2021.

Discussion took place about the putting in an attractive driveway as possible with a 6' privacy fence. Discussion took place about how will this effect Orange Street.

Michael Hellien read into record his memo sent into the Zoning Administrator on June 1, 2021.

Lynda Blu and Eric Parker, commented that they own and live in the duplex directly across the street from this property. They spoke to the issue of safety and that they have had to when extra family members come to visit either stack up or park on the lawn. They oppose the application under the current regulations.

Tiki Amber Meaker Ward, current tenant of 47 Orange Street, commented that she felt there was a prejudice against this application. Feels that that this will not make a big change to the neighborhood. Feels that this will make it safer. She currently uses part of the driveway as her patio because she does not have a green space. That it is very important to her that and she cannot risk being blocked in for health reasons and that she has two young children. That she feels this is her home and does her best to make it look and feel like a home.

At this time, Permit Administrator Heather Grandfield read into record two letters from Pamela Wilson, and Amber Collett Terway.

Dillion Sickles, new tenant of 47 Orange Street was excited to have moved to Vermont. They look forward to having parking for their two vehicles. Mr. Sickles will be starting a new job in the area and has three children that will be starting school.

At this time, Chair Shambo thanked the participants and advised them that the board would be entering into deliberations and they could contact Permit Administrator Heather Grandfield in the morning as to the outcome or wait for the written decision.

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Other Business: None

Roundtable:

Board Member Hough requested that Code Enforcement look into a camper that is parked at the intersection of Patterson and Washington Street.

Board Member Deep asked about next month's applications. At this time, there is none.

Executive Session: Not needed.

Deliberative Session: On a motion by Vice-Chair Tuper-Giles and seconded by Board Member Deep (*on a roll call vote, Motion carried unanimously*) the board entered deliberative session. Permit Administrator Grandfield was invited into the session at 8:55 PM.

On a motion by Board Member Deep and seconded by Board Member Hough (*on a roll call vote, Motion carried unanimously*) came out of deliberative session at 9:20 PM.

A motion was made by Vice-Chair Tuper-Giles and seconded by Board Member Hart to approve as presented the application for Site Plan Review and Conditional by Capstone Community Action *on a roll call vote, motion carried 7-0 unanimously.*

A motion was made by Vice-Chair Tuper-Giles and seconded by Board Member Hough to approve as presented the application of a Variance for a second curb cut by Michael and Margaret Lannen, *on a roll call vote, motion failed 3-4 with Vice-Chair Tuper-Giles, Board Members Hough and Deep voting in favor and Chair Shambo, Board Members Ferrari, Pelkey and Egerton voting against. A vote of (5) five in the affirmative is needed in order to secure an approval.*

The Development Review Board adjourned at 9:25 PM on a motion by Board Member Ferrari, and seconded by Board Member Pelkey; *motion carried unanimously.*

An audio & video recording of the hearing is available through the City's Planning and Permitting Office.

Respectfully Submitted,
Heather L. Grandfield, Permit Administrator