

Village of Potsdam Planning Board  
Public Hearing  
September 17, 2015

**Convened:** 7:00 PM

**Board Members Present:** Jim Corbett David Trithart Will Sigfried  
Hugo Atteman Bob Josephson

**Board Members Absent:** Ted Prahl

A public hearing of the Village of Potsdam Planning Board was held on Thursday September 17, 2015 in the Civic Center Board Room, Park Street, Potsdam, New York.

Acting Board Chairperson, Jim Corbett, confirmed that the legal notice had in fact been published in the Courier Observer.

**Building Inspector's Report:**

Special Use Permit Application 2015-8-19.2, submitted by Clarkson University for the proposed construction of an Agbotics Lab at the North West Corner of Maple Street and the Clarkson University Loop Road.

**Applicant:** NONE

**Questioning of Speaker By Board Members:** NONE

**Those In Favor:** NONE

**Those In Opposition:** NONE

**Public Comment:** NONE

**Communication:** County Planning Board Review – Returned with suggestions.

**Adjournment:** 7:06

Planning Board

Regular Meeting

09-17-2015

A Regular Meeting of the Village of Potsdam Planning Board was held on Thursday, September 17, 2015 in the Civic Center, Board Room Park Street, Potsdam, NY.

Meeting called to order at 7:07 PM

Members Present: Jim Corbett            David Trithart            Will Siegfried  
                                 Hugo Atteman            Bob Josephson

Members Absent: Ted Prah

Approval of Minutes: Motion made by Jim Corbett to approve the minutes of the last meeting of the Village of Potsdam Planning Board – August 20, 2015. Motion seconded by Will Sigfried. CARRIED

Communications: St. Lawrence County Planning Board has responded to the application being reviewed tonight. The application were returned for local action.

Public Comment: NONE

Old Business: NONE

New Business:

- 1) **Site Plan Application #2015-8-19.1 submitted by Clarkson University for the proposed construction of an Agbotics Lab at the South West Corner of Maple Street and the Clarkson University Loop Road.**

- Present for Clarkson University: Ian Hazen and Ana Thomas

- Ian explained that due to the acquisition of the Robar property, Clarkson would now like to move the Agribotics Lab from its original site near the softball fields across the road on to the former Robar property.
- Ian explained that this site was much better for expansion.
- Brief discussion regarding the upcoming annexation of nearby property.
- D. Trithart questioned whether there would be any negative outcomes to the Agribotics Project should the annexation not pass. Ian explained that the annexation should have no affect on the proposed Agribotics Project.
- Jim Corbett questioned the ability of Clarkson to change the access road from its proposed Rte. 11 location to a location off the Clarkson Loop Road. Ian felt this was a possibility and could be worked into the upcoming facilities project. Fred Hanss pointed out that the County Planning Office had suggested that the access road be moved to the Loop Road location.
- Bob Josephson inquired as to the appearance of the proposed buildings. It was explained by Ian Hazen that the buildings would be similar in appearance to the DOT salt shed, except with a vinyl membrane cover. This lead to further questioning by Mr. Josephson regarding ambient light given off to surrounding properties. Mr. Hazen explained that the lighting within the structures would be intentionally directed towards the plants within in a manner to maximize plant growth and efficiency.
- Bob Josephson inquired as to the height of the builidings being proposed. Mr. Hazen explained that the buildings would be 22' 6" in height and would have a natural floor of dirt and gravel.
- Hugo Atteman asked what would happen should this project lose funding or interest in the future leading to abandonment of the structures. Ian Hazen further explained that should the program be abandoned at any point in the future, the buildings would be removed and any cement/concrete foundations removed as well.

- David Trithart made a motion for a Type II action under SEQR. Motion was seconded by Hugo Atteman. CARRIED
- Motion was made to accept Site Plan # 2015-8-19.1, to include County Planning suggestions, by David Trithart. Motion was seconded by Bob Josephson. CARRIED

#### **No Further Discussion**

#### **2) Special Use Permit Application #2015-8-19.2 submitted by Clarkson University for the proposed construction of an Agbotics Lab at the South West corner of the Clarkson University Loop Road.**

- Motion made by Hugo Atteman to approve the application as submitted. Motion was seconded by Will Sigfried. CARRIED

#### **No Further Discussion**

#### Other Business:

##### 1) Preliminary Review of Congdon Project

- Brooks Washburn stated that this is essentially the same plan, except that at this point Omni has separated the Snell and Congdon Projects. It was further explained that the Snell Project was much more complicated and it was going to take longer to get the necessary funding for Snell. Jeff Buell of Omni Development explained that all necessary Tax Credits should be in place by December leading to a projected start date of December or January.
- Brooks Washburn explained the following details of the project: 1) phase 1 is to be asbestos abatement 2) there will be 98 beds and the 1 parking spot per bed has been met 3) there is no formal contract linking Clarkson University to this project 4) the Fire Dept. has been consulted and there is, according to Brooks, no issues with Fire Department access 5) the Snell and Congdon parking areas will be landscaped in such a way that they will be kept separate 6) additional green space will be created and the pre-existing number of curb cuts will be reduced

- Jim Corbett stated that the elevations at the parking entrances will need to change as the fire trucks “rub” at entry to the property.
- Greg Thompson inquired as to whether the Fire Trucks will be able to make the swing with all spots filled. Brooks answered simply no.
- Fred Hanss stated that he would rather lose parking spots and be able to access in emergencies, if we have to give on something.
- Jeff Buell said that he believed losing spots to accomidate the FD would not be a problem.
- Brooks Washburn explained that the pellet tower will be demolished in phase 1 of the project.
- Jeff Buell explained that the target housing market would no longer be aimed primarily at the Clarkson students, but now would be more of an open market.
- Brooks Washburn explained that although small, all units will meet the requirements for sleep, cooking, and waste. Greg Thompson asked whether shared bathrooms would change the occupancy title. Jeff Buell explained that the prints we were looking at had the wrong layout and that would be changed to a 2 bedroom layout . Jeff also explained that the boiler house would have to remain for now to allow heat in Congdon Hall.

#### **No Further Discussion**

#### 2) Zoning Changes

- Bob Josephson commented on the advantage of the H-1 zone on Lawrence Avenue with the new focus being on the Canton Campus.
- Fred Hanss explained that Canton has provided CPH with much more room for growth, but concern is a normal reaction.
- Jim Corbett stated that the land in question was all owned by CPH and it only made sense to zone it H-1 for that purpose. There may not be any intense development but there will be expansion by the hospital at this location.

- Fred stated that we need to make the land they wish to use available for their wishes. He would very much like to see CPH remain in Potsdam.
- Hugo Atteman stated the rate of residential construction taking place won't be negatively affected by the H-1 rezone.
- Fred Hanss brought up abandoning the BLI-2 and going with BLI. The start-up incubator program did not play out in getting new business into the commerce park. There is not need for the BLI-2 at that location any longer.
- Fred felt the best fit for the now zoned BLI owned by Affinity Partners would be R-3 to match up with the proposed project of Ron Page. It wouldn't prevent further development in that area.
- Leehman Park would be rezoned to SCH as it is currently owned by SUNY and therefore would be used by them and only them for purposes they might set forth. We would have no jurisdiction in this area anyway. As well, the PUD area might be zoned SCH for the same reason.
- The currently zoned R-2 area owned by Clarkson turned into a SCH zone as it is owned by the University and will be used as such.
- The Market Street B-2 zone possibly change to R-2 or leave it alone. Hugo inquired why would change it. It is currently working and not harming any development.
- Fred Hanss explained that we would be expanding the CBD to Fall Island to help protect the church's historic value. He further explained that we should consider changing the BLI owned by Clarkson to ID to help with Clarkson development.
- Jim Corbett inquired as to why line 62 read that sandblasting, water blasting and chemical cleaning is an alteration and not merely a maintenance action. Fred explained that those methods can harm an exterior fabric of a historic building and further change its character. Jim felt it seemed like more of a surface treatment with note that it could be dangerous if performed improperly.

- Fred Hanss explained the process of annexation regarding the upcoming proposed annexation of Clarkson Property into the Village. He also encouraged all to attend the upcoming meetings regarding this issue if they had an interest.
- Jim Corbett felt we should make a motion tonight to rezone the annexed area and the current B-1 owned by Clarkson to SCH.
- Motion made by Hugo Atteman and seconded by Will Siegfried.  
CARRIED

October 1, will be the next meeting.

Hugo Atteman made a motion to adjourn.

Seconded by Will Siegfried. Carried

Adjourned at 8:24 PM