

**CITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK
PLANNING BOARD
JULY 10, 2012
MINUTES
7:30 p.m.**

I. ROLL CALL

Kevin Jones
Betsy Garlatti
Linda Hunter
David Fitzhenry
Luis Berrios
Tony Barber
Suzanne Ludwig

Board Staff:

Glenn Patterson, AICP, PP Board Secretary
Ben Bucca, Esq, Board Attorney
Mark Siegle, AICP, PP, CNU-A, Principal Planner

II. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT (OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT)

Mr. Siegle read this.

III. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

IV. MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S JUNE 12, 2012 MEETING

Unanimously approved.

V. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

Resolutions of Memorialization

- A. SPECTRUM CHEMICAL MANUFACTURING, PB-2012-13,** Site plan application for the construction of a parking lot located at 769 Jersey Avenue, Block 597.06 Lot 13, Zoning District: I-2

Motion to approve made by Mr. Fitzhenry, seconded by Mr. Jones

Kevin Jones- Yes

Linda Hunter- Yes

David Fitzhenry- Yes

Tony Barber- Yes

- B. MATRIX UPPER LOT URBAN RENEWAL, LLC, PB-2012-14,** Site plan and variance application for the construction of a multi-family dwelling with associated parking garage located at the intersection of New Street and Neilson Street, Block 117.01 Lot 3, Zoning District: C-4

Motion made to approve made by Ms. Hunter, seconded by Mr. Jones

Kevin Jones- Yes

Linda Hunter- Yes

David Fitzhenry- Yes

Tony Barber- Yes

C. SAINT PETERS UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL, INC, PB-2012-15, Site plan application for the construction of a parking lot located at 123 How Lane Block 597.04 Lots 2.01 and 1.01, Zoning District: I-2

Motion to approve made by Mr. Jones , seconded by Mr. Fitzhenry

Kevin Jones- Yes

Linda Hunter- Yes

David Fitzhenry- Yes

Tony Barber- Yes

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. SOMERSET STREET URBAN RENEWAL, LLC , PB-2012-17, Variance application for the installation of awning signs located at 5 Easton Avenue, Block 45, Lot 11.01, Zoning District: C-4

Applicant was represented by Tom Kelso, Esquire.

Kelso- Brother Jimmy's restaurant is part of the Gateway /The Vue project. Various sign variances re requested to have the restaurant meet the branding needs of the restaurant chain. There are four (4) variances, which are for an interior lit neon sign, multiple signs (8), awning made of steel as opposed to fabric, and an exterior neon sign.

Glenn Coben, Arhitect was sworn in.

Coben- Exhibit A-1 shows the proposed façade elevations with signage. At the corner is an internally illuminated sign. On the awning there are seven (7) logo signs plus small decals. The different levels of signage is to attract persons at different levels. The variance for corrugated metal awning instead of fabric is needed as the metal awning is prohibited. The neon is used in the principle corner sign. There is also internal illumination in the round part of the principle sign. The BBQ letters will blink

Josh Lebowitz, Principal of Brother Jimmy's, was sworn in.

Lebowitz- The chain opened in 1989 and this will be the seventh restaurant. The atmosphere attempts to have a southern them with a warehouse feel. It started out to be a "home away from home" for North Carolina graduates who had moved to New York. Branding is important to success. Exhibit A-2 shows photos of signs

on other Brother Jimmy's restaurants. The blinking sign is needed to draw attention. The lights will be off when the restaurant closes. Exhibit A-3 shows other neon signage that exists along the Easton Avenue corridor.

Public Comment:

None

Motion made to approve made by Ms. Garlatti, Seconded by Ms. Hunter

Kevin Jones- Yes

Betsy Garlatti- Yes

Linda Hunter- Yes

David Fitzhenry- Yes

Luis Berrios- Yes

Suzanne Ludwig- Yes

Tony Barber- Yes

B. COLLEGE AVENUE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Mr. Patterson was sworn in.

Patterson- The College Avenue Redevelopment plan was referred to the Planning Board by the City Council for their review to ensure that it is consistent with the goals and objectives of the City's Master Plan. The proposed area has been declared an area in need of rehabilitation, which does not allow for the use of eminent domain powers, but allows for the use of other redevelopment powers such as the crafting of special zoning. All of the land is owned by Rutgers or the Theological Seminary.

(Mr. Patterson went through and identified the site locations on a map)

Patterson- Area one is the current Seminary site. The proposed uses for the site are for higher education, housing and supportive services for higher education and retail. The proposed height limits for this area would be 80-125 feet depending on the building coverage. Proposed projects for the area include an Honors College, Arts and Science classroom/lecture space, and academic/office space for the Seminary. Area two is the lot of the former Catholic Center. The proposed uses for this area are for philanthropic organizations related to higher education or students attending institutions of higher education, fraternity/sorority uses, and low-rise housing. The proposed height for this area would roughly be 40 feet. Potential projects for this area include housing for the Seminary and a community center for the Hillel House. Area three, which is known as the "grease trucks lot" will be used as housing for students, retail, and a public plaza. The proposed height for this area is 100-300 feet depending on the size of the public plaza. Greater heights allow for more public space. Potential projects for this area include mixed-use with ground level retail with student housing on the upper

floors. The public plaza will be a privately owned, but publicly accessible plaza. The space can be seen as a place where the “town and gown meet.” **(Mr. Patterson described MetroTech Plaza in Brooklyn, NY).**

Patterson- The public plaza space can provide space for outdoor cafes and art, as well as space for special events such as concerts, movies, and screening of sporting events. Along with the proposed construction projects there are projected improvements to the bicycle and pedestrian realm in the area. The on – street parking on Seminary Place will be removed in order to provide a cycle track. There are proposed improvements to allow a pedestrian to walk from the Voorhees Mall campus to the Bishop House. **(Mr. Patterson described how the plan was consistent with the goals and objectives of the Master Plan).**

Fitzhenry- Are there private developers interested in the project?

Patterson- DevCo has been chosen by the Seminary and Rutgers Board of Governors

Fitzhenry- All three properties will be managed by DevCo?

Patterson- It will depend on the financing. The project will be privately developed and privately owned for a period of time—most likely the duration of the financial agreement—then it will be turned over to Rutgers/Seminary.

Hunter- Will tax abatements be used with this project?

Patterson- Hope so. Currently the properties do not pay taxes and an abatement would generate significant revenue for the City.

Public Comment:

Charles Kratovil, was sworn in.

Kratovil- Has the land acquisition been completed yet?

Patterson- No, this is still the beginning of the process.

Kratovil- 200 units equals 800 beds?

Patterson- Yes

Kratovil- Any building in Area 1 being saved?

Patterson- Gardner-Sage Library and the Presidents House

Mary Climak, was sworn in.

Climak- Retail businesses in central NJ are being overbuilt

Kratovil- Will the public plaza be open 24/7/365?

Patterson- The default hours of operation are 24 hours a day, unless circumstances arise that would call for the change of hours.

Motion made to approve made by Mr. Fitzhenry, Seconded by Ms. Ludwig

Kevin Jones- Yes
Betsy Garlatti- Yes
Linda Hunter- Yes
David Fitzhenry- Yes
Luis Berrios- Yes
Suzanne Ludwig- Yes
Tony Barber- Yes

VII. ADJOURNMENT