

**CITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK  
PLANNING BOARD  
MAY 12TH, 2015  
MINUTES  
7:30 p.m.**

**I. ROLL CALL**

X	Suzanne Ludwig
	Andy Kaplan
X	David Fitzhenry
X	Jeff Crum
X	Carly Neubauer
X	Clary Barber (Class I)
X	Chris Stellatella (Class II)
	Betsy Garlatti (Class III)
x	David Fresse (Alternate #1)
	(Alternate #2)

Staff Attending:

X	Board Attorney Aravind Aithal
X	Board Secretary/Director of Planning Glenn Patterson
X	Principal Planner Mark Siegle
	Board Planner Henry Bignell
x	Board Planner Todd Bletcher
X	Board Engineer Tom Guldin
	Conflict Engineer Chas. Carley

**II. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT (OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT)**

**III. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

**IV. MINUTES OF THE BOARDS APRIL 14TH, 2015 MEETING**

Motion to approve the minutes: Barber

Second: Stellatella

Approved by unanimous voice vote

**V. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS**  
**Resolutions of Memorialization**

**A. Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, PB-2015-01**

Site plan and variance application for the installation of various signage on the property at 25 French St., Block 24.01, Lot 1.01, Zoning District D-Hi  
 Motion to Approve: Barber  
 Second: Stellatella

	YES	NO
Suzanne Ludwig	X	
Andy Kaplan		
David Fitzhenry		
Jeff Crum	X	
Carly Neubauer	X	
Clary Barber (Class I)	X	
Chris Stellatella (Class II)	x	
Betsy Garlatti (Class III)		
David Fresse (Alternate #1)		

**VI. OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. New Brunswick Board of Education, S31-2015-01**

Master plan consistency review for the plans to renovate the existing school building for use as an elementary school located at 65 Somerset St., Block 51, Lot 2.01, Zoning District R-5A

The district requested to postpone the review until the June 9, 2015 meeting. The review will be scheduled at that time.

**B. Construction Management Associates, Inc. PB-2015-03**

Site plan and variance application for construction of a multi-family residential building located at 17 Mine St., Block 71, Lot 4.01, Zoning District R-5A/College Avenue Redevelopment Area 2

Thomas Kelso, Esq. – This is a new application. It modifies the plan that was previously before the Board and denied. The applicant has since met with the objecting neighbors to attempt to address their concerns. The project proposes a multifamily building with 26 units, instead of 52 units. Parking is being provided at 36 spaces. This still requires a variance but it is more than one space per unit. There are no other variances.

The applicant has been back to the Housing Authority acting as the City's redevelopment agency and received their approval of this new plan as compliant with the redevelopment plan.

Mitch Broder, Principal – The plan has been significantly revised and they have worked with the neighbors to try to address their concerns. The plan reduces the number of apartments by half and the parking is planned at 36 spaces. The New Brunswick Seminary will have exclusive access to 10 apartments with the balance being rented on the open market, but with residents likely to be students. The units will have modern safety features, laundry areas and a fitness area. There is also a stormwater management system on site. There will be upgrades to the City's sanitary sewers and water system that will benefit the entire neighborhood. The parking will be hidden behind the first floor and will be at a higher ratio than they normally construct in this area. Parking will be controlled by hang tags and violators will be towed. The proximity to transit at this location will reduce the need for a car for residents. Parking is the only variance sought.

The building will also provide tax revenue to the City on a parcel that was previously tax-exempt.

Steven Schoch, Architect –  
A-1, Rendered Site Plan.

The site is in the College Ave Redevelopment Area. Low and mid-rise housing is a permitted use. The building is half the size of what was proposed before. It is 3-stories high and is set back to the maximum allowable setback of 20 feet. There is also an open porch. The portion of the building nearest to 15 Mine Street is setback further. This allows for more landscaping in the front yard.

Only the first floor is immediately adjacent to the 15 Mine St property, but the side yard setback complies. The two upper stories are setback further from the side property line. There are 18 studio/1Br units and 8 2BR units. All the apartments are on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors. Parking is provided at ground level but concealed by the lobby entrance portion of the building in the front and the building walls on the side and rear.

#### A-2 Front Elevation Perspective from the South

The building presents as 3-stories with a center focus. There is a screen wall in the front to conceal the transformer and other utilities. This conforms to the setback requirements. The exterior is a mix of brick and different siding colors. The 3<sup>rd</sup> floor uses a Mansard roof.

#### A-3 Front Elevation Perspective from the North.

The perspective shows the building setback being further back adjacent to 15 Mine Street. The 2<sup>nd</sup> story is setback further from the front yard above the 1<sup>st</sup> floor garage entrance. There are two driveway openings to allow for 1-way in, 1-way out. The exit drive is wider to allow a trash truck to back in for collections. There are two exterior parking spaces adjacent to the entrance on the south side of the entrance drive.

The forms and materials of the building are intended to complement the existing vernacular styles in the neighborhood.

The handicapped entrance to the building is from in the garage area and is out of the weather. All the units will have sprinklers.

The redevelopment plan seeks to create greater density on the site but has design guidelines to allow the project to fit into the neighborhood. The design elements are compatible with the design styles in the neighborhood, such as proportions, trim and porches. The setbacks, landscaping and building articulations help to make for a pleasant pedestrian experience, as called for in the plan. A step-design is used to preserve light and views. The use of materials are harmonious with the other buildings in the area.

The building is broken down into bays and articulations to comply with the plan guidelines. The building is also wall-dominated to comply with the plan standards. Human scale is emphasized at ground level through the use of the building design elements. The

height of the building is de-emphasized through the use of setbacks and articulations.

Mr. Fitzhenry asked why the underground parking was eliminated. Mr. Schoch said the smaller project size didn't support the economics, but also concerns about digging in the area that some objectors raised. The surface parking also provides for better on-site circulation.

Fitzhenry asked about the siding composition. Schoch said it was hardi-plank that resembles clapboards.

Mr. Crum asked about access to the roof over the garage entrance. Schoch said it would not be accessible to residents.

Mr. Bletcher asked to have the side elevations discussed. Schoch showed sheet A202 of the plans, showing the side elevations. The side openings are sized at residential window size but have no glass so that the garage can ventilate. He added that the front yard transformer enclosure is a solid wall that will use brick on the lower portion with siding above the brick, so as to blend with the rest of the building.

Ed Bogan, Engineer

A waiver is sought for the foundation landscaping plantings as they would not be visible due to the boundary fence. Additional landscaping has been provided along the front and the side of the property in front of the building. Arborvitaes have been provided along the north side of the building.

A-4 Rendered Existing Conditions Plan

The plan showed the conditions that previously existed including the buildings that have since been raised.

The ground floor will provide for 34 covered spaces and 2 exterior spaces. The circulation system is one-way in, one-way out with 16 ft drive aisles. The garage height accommodates vans for handicapped drivers. Garbage is stored inside. A trash vehicle can share the exit drive to pick up the garbage. It can also be used by delivery trucks.

The transformer location is in conformance with the setbacks and is screened.

An underground stormwater detention system has been designed. They will also add storm sewer in Mine Street to accommodate the discharge.

The site lighting has some spillover, but this will be diminished by the 6 ft high fence.

Trash will be picked up privately.

A bicycle rack facility is provided inside the garage to accommodate about 18 bikes.

A 5 foot easement to 15 Mine is shown for a potential driveway for a driveway for 15 Mine. The hydrant is located between the potential driveways. Patterson raised that the hydrant may be very near the proposed driveway. Guldin said there are discussions about moving the hydrant to another location.

Charles Olivo, Traffic Engineer

He prepared a new traffic and parking analysis based on the new plan. There are 1.3 spaces per unit or 1.06 per bedroom. There is also great accessibility to transit from the site including buses, Rutgers buses and the train. There are also bicycle provisions provided to provide further car alternatives.

The trip generation from the proposed project will not have a significant impact on the traffic volume in the neighborhood. There would be 16 peak hour trips in the morning and 32 trips in the PM peak hour.

The garage circulation system allows for separate ingress and egress. There is adequate sight distance for drivers exiting.

Keenan Hughes, Planner

The use is permitted at this location. It is a low-mid-rise residential building located near the Rutgers campus. It is 100% compliant with the bulk standards.

The redevelopment plan speaks of relating harmoniously to nearby properties. The roof lines, shutters and bays complement the neighborhood aesthetic. The height is consistent with the heights in the neighborhood. The building's bulk is broken down into bays to reduce the feeling of mass. The materials are of high quality and are consistent with the area.

The plan's parking standards reflect the State RSIS standards as required but the variance is justified on a C2 basis. The master plan re-exam report talks of 1 space per unit for student-oriented housing, which this project exceeds.

There are many destinations within a 5-minute walk of the site including the campus, Seminary, train station, car share at the Gateway deck and bus lines.

The parking ratio provided for this project is substantially higher than provided in other student-oriented projects that have been developed and which operate successfully.

The benefits from deviating from the standard are that there will be less traffic with less parking spaces. The building is better designed as the parking can be hidden. It also promotes a walkable, non-auto-centric environment. The project supports MLUL purposes A, E, G and H. The negative criteria are met as the use of cars is diminished and there are no negative detriments. It is a text-book example of a project that should deviate from the RSIS standards due to local conditions and the C2 standards for granting the variance are met.

The design waiver for foundation plantings is justified as more landscaping has been put to the front and there is little benefit from the side. The standard for the buffer of 10 feet from the parking area presumes a non-enclosed parking area whereas the parking is within a building and there is a fence.

Residential parking permits will be waived.

Public Comment:

Jennifer O'Neill, 15 Mine Street

She supports the new design as it addresses many of her concerns in terms of design and scale. They are grateful the developer has worked with them.

David Drinkwater, 13 Mine Street

He was glad he could make a difference regarding the building. The new design is still large but it is a big improvement. He supports the application.

Jonathan Mills, 13 Mine Street

He believes the new application is significantly different and is an improvement. The occupancy is much less and the parking variance is greatly reduced. The project height is reduced and the design is more respectful of the designs on Mine Street. The driveway circulation is improved and trash pickup is improved. He supports the application.

Alejandro Perioni, 15 Mine Street

He is pleased with the changes to the project. He is pleased there will be no excavation for the underground garage and that the building has been substantially set back next to his house. He supports the application.

Charlie Kratovil

He stated that this application shows that people can affect their community when they get involved. If the neighbors support the new design, he supports it also.

Board Discussion:

Ludwig – the project embodies what the process should be for figuring out what a building should be.

Fitzhenry – it has been a lengthy process and the Board listens to the public. The neighbors have been very upstanding in their opposition and the Board listened. It has been a model in civic engagement. The Board understands its role in the community and members are part of that community.

Crum – he applauds the collaborative approach taken.

Motion to Approve with the conditions cited by Mr. Patterson including the applicants waiver of on-street parking permits and a cap on the building occupancy at two persons per bedroom with a maximum of 68 persons: Fitzhenry  
Second: Stelatella

	YES	NO
Suzanne Ludwig	X	
Andy Kaplan		
David Fitzhenry	X	
Jeff Crum	X	
Carly Neubauer	X	

Clary Barber (Class I)	X	
Chris Stelatella (Class II)	X	
Betsy Garlatti (Class III)		
David Fresse (Alternate #1)	X	

**VIII. OTHER MATTERS OF INTEREST TO THE PUBLIC**

Charles Kratovil

He wanted to respond to some of the Board comments and that he did not mean the Board was not up-to-speed on their civics.

He asked about vacancies on the Board.

He also commented on the use of conflict counsel for this matter.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**