

Village of Canton

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

November 17, 2022

Boardroom, Canton Municipal Building

4:30 pm

Members Present

Chairperson Barry Walch; Kara McLuckie; Jennifer Girard

Recording Secretary Jeni Reed

Members Absent

Charles Rouse; Chris Rotramel

Others Present

Tim Nolan, Code Enforcement Officer

Call to Order

The meeting of the Village Planning Board was called to order at 4:38 pm by chairperson Barry Walch.

Agenda Items

1. Site Plan Review - 29 Main Street, Canton

A history of the situation was shared with the Board by Code Enforcement Officer Nolan: an individual was driving impaired and hit the railings at the location. Both windows of Josie's Restaurant were damaged, and the railings to the downstairs also had to be removed. The Contractor for the building owner installed two pressure treated wooden railings as a temporary safety measure. Now a building permit has been submitted to complete the project. The site plan proposes a knee-wall to the right hand side of the stairs (if facing the building), and a pressure treated wooden railing remaining on the left side. This project is located in the Historic District.

Recent pictures of the location were shared with the board by Code Enforcement Officer Nolan. It was noted that the proposed concrete knee-wall has been placed on the right hand side of the downstairs entryway; the other side of the entryway is currently a pressure treated wooden railing.

Important Notes:

- It was noted by the Code Enforcement Officer that no building permit was issued at the time the reconstruction was proposed; this was under the former Code Enforcement Officer, and the building owner claims a verbal "ok" was given.
- According to the Canton Village Code, all outward-facing building materials used in the Historic District should be brick or metal, and as such the pressure treated wood would not be permitted.

- As the proposal does not meet code, the Code Enforcement Officer cannot approve the permit; as such, a site plan review is required from the Planning Board.

Planning Board Discussion:

- It was agreed that there needs to be consistency throughout the Historical District. This particular location is part of an 1860-1880 historical period.
- It was noted that the requirements for businesses throughout the district should be consistent; as other businesses would be required to conform to the code, this business should meet the code as well.
- Code Enforcement Officer Nolan noted that the owner of the business claims a hardship in meeting the requirements due to the depletion of insurance money related to the accident.
- Review of the code, section 325-21.D.1.b, indicates “Nothing herein shall be construed to prevent the ordinary maintenance, landscaping, or repair of any exterior feature in or upon any property located within the HDO that does not involve a change in design, material, or the external appearance thereof.”
 - The original condition of the location (prior to the accident) was metal railings. A bare wood railing would constitute a change in design, material, and external appearance.
 - It was noted that no bare wood exists anywhere within the Historic District; permitting such a railing would not be consistent with the rest of the street.
 - It was also discussed whether brick facing would be required on the newly constructed knee-wall, as per code “new construction or rehabilitation must be faced with brick.”

A motion was made by Kara McLuckie to require that the wooden railing must be removed, but a metal railing consistent with other structures would be appropriate; or a concrete knee wall matching the completed one and consistent with such quality would also be acceptable; the motion was seconded by Jennifer Girard. All in favor; motion carried.

A Planning Board Action referral will be submitted to the Code Enforcement Officer of the decision by chairman Barry Walch for notification to the property owner; this will also be added to the minutes.

2. Site Plan Review - 3 East Main Street, Canton

Code Enforcement Officer Nolan stated that he had received a building permit from the St Lawrence County Historical Society, located at 3 East Main Street (Silas Wright House), to replace a current wooden fence in need of repair with a vinyl covered fence. Site plans and proposed materials were shared with the planning board.

Planning Board Discussion:

- It was noted that the proposed vinyl fencing does allow for a consistent appearance that potentially meets code, and would last a long time. In general, the board does not find vinyl fences to be objectionable.
- However, the board felt they should be maintaining the integrity of the fence as it was originally designed within the Historic District.

A motion was made by Jennifer Girard to allow the fence between the bank parking lot and the historical association driveway to be replaced with the specified vinyl fencing, but it is the opinion of the board that wood should be maintained for fencing around the lawn of the historical society; the motion was seconded by Kara McLuckie. All in favor; motion carried.

Other Items

It was noted by Code Enforcement Officer Nolan that the sign variance request reviewed by the board related to a signage project at St. Lawrence University and reviewed in October, will be presented to the Village Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) in the near future. An additional sign variance request will also be going in front of the ZBA.

Adjournment

Jennifer Girard made a motion to adjourn the meeting; the motion was seconded by Kara McLuckie. All in favor; motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 5:39pm

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Village Planning Board will be held at a date to be determined.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeni Reed

November 22, 2022