

February 8, 2001

Planning Commission

Proceedings by Authority

State of New York,
City of Jamestown, ss:
Council Chambers Room

A special meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Jamestown, New York was held on Thursday, February 8, 2001 at 6:30 p.m.

Members Present: Chairman Gregory Rabb, Joan Shevory, Martha Zenns, Director of Public Works Jeffrey A. Lehman, Martin Adams

Members Absent: Jeffrey L. Nelson, Assessor John Barber

Others Present: Principal Planner William Rice, Zoning Officer Lawrence Scalise, City Clerk Shirley A. Sanfilippo, Corporation Counsel Marilyn Fiore-Nieves, Councilwoman Lillian Ney, Fire Chief Samuel Arcadipane, James Isaacson, Julia Ciesla of WJTN

Chairman Rabb called the meeting to order.

Public Hearing for the Downtown Jamestown Redevelopment Plan

Chairman Rabb stated that Bill Rice, the City Planner would be available to answer questions. He then asked if anyone wanted to speak regarding the plan.

Jennifer Harkness, Downtown Jamestown Development Corporation, 15 W. 3rd Street, Jamestown, wanted to state the support of DJDC. She just wanted to make known that the tourism figures are actually higher, it's more like one hundred seventy five million that come into the County.

John O'Brien, Jamestown Community College, 525 Falconer Street, Jamestown, wanted to state that he supports the Plan. He expressed his desire for the Commission to give consideration to preservation of the railway station.

Mr. Rice responded by saying the plan prepared calls out for an area plan as well as an urban design plan. The criteria used to develop that will have the preservation of existing buildings as one of the main focuses.

Russ Margaglio, 304 North Main Street, Jamestown, stated his support. He said that he hopes the projects are done in a quick and efficient manner.

Philip Morris, 410 Lakeview Avenue, Jamestown, stated his concern with the walk-able downtown. He also stated his concern with the focus of a certain kind of development on the West Side that will be potentially damaging to a walk-able downtown or contrary to a walk-able downtown.

Chairman Rabb responded by asking if he understood Philip by saying, he thinks that the Plan is focusing too much on the West Side.

Mr. Morris responded, yes. That was the notion of what was possible or is possible in the West End, is potentially contrary to having a walk-able place in the rest of the downtown.

Chairman Rabb asked Mr. Morris if there were any suggestions on achieving a walk-able downtown.

February 8, 2001

Mr. Morris stated that with hundreds of thousands of empty square feet in the walk-able downtown making them occupied, is a priority to make them walk-able. There is concern about it emerging to look like Brooklyn Square. He feels that Washington Street is a divider and there should be balance between the East and West Side.

Chairman Rabb wondered if there were any comments.

Mr. Rice shared Mr. Morris' concern in regards to the use of the West End as a development generator. He also answered to the issue of Washington Street being a divider. He felt it could be bridged some way for pedestrian movement.

Ms. Zenns wondered if there was any way of improving that to make it more walk-able.

There was discussion regarding the walk-able downtown, the ice rink and Washington Street being a divider.

Chairman Rabb stated that there needs to be an urban design plan to keep the downtown walk-able.

Mr. Rice stated that the intention of this plan is to bring tourism, the plan is supposed to draw people in. He questioned what do you do about the structures between. The plan doesn't touch on that as much. That is why he is calling for an urban design plan to do that.

Mrs. Harkness talked about Norman Mintz coming into town and what he will be trying to achieve on this trip.

Mr. Rice said that its time to get something happening.

Mr. Margaglio talked about the area in the mid 1970's. There was a plan back then to make Third Street a pedestrian walk way only. They narrowed the street for that plan, which made it impractical. The plan was never carried out. He hopes that this plan is practical and works for the City of Jamestown.

Todd Trantum, Executive Director of the Manufacturers Association, spoke in regard to empowering organizations.

Chairman Rabb called three times for anyone who wished to speak, there being no one, the Public Hearing was adjourned.

Office Lease & Resale Used Car Lot – 1801 Washington Street

Larry Barmore, Rt 60, Gerry, stated that he has been leasing from the property owner of the former Parkside Used Auto Dealership since November, with the intention of expanding his business. The City has been working toward cleaning up Washington Street and he is willing to work with the City with landscaping issues. Due to the City's plan he has been unable to obtain a license from the Department of Motor Vehicles because the City will not sign off and so the lot is empty.

Chairman Rabb stated that they have not heard from the owner of the property, regarding the situation. He also stated that there has been no site plan submitted to the Commission to act upon.

Mr. Barmore stated that they are leasing a place that has always been a car dealership and it should be grandfathered in.

Mr. Lehman questioned whether any sort of preliminary sketch had been drawn up.

February 8, 2001

Mr. Barmore responded by stating that he has not made a sketch because he doesn't know what they are looking for. He also stated that within a few days, if not approved, the license will be canceled and they will be out of business.

Mr. Rice stated that the problem has been in getting the property owner to agree to make the necessary changes.

Mr. Lehman questioned what temporary changes were being proposed.

There was discussion of landscaping, parking and the building itself.

Ms. Zenns had some questions regards to the potential loss of the license.

There was discussion about getting an extension until the next meeting.

Mr. Scalise clarified that the time delay which occurred with their licensing, occurred at the state level. Mr. Scalise talked with a representative of DMV who asked if they could have the license there. He could recommend another extension to DMV, but it may be unlikely. He does not want to put them out of business, but there are guidelines in the zoning code. A possible suggestion was that a temporary certificate of occupancy from the City be issued in order for the DMV to issue the license. This would allow them to get up and running.

There was discussion whether they could grant him an extension. If granted a temporary permit, liability was discussed.

Chairman Rabb questioned who had authority of granting on occupancy permit.

Mr. Scalise said that he takes care of that.

Mr. Adams wondered what they were willing to do with the leased property, in regards to the site plan.

Mr. Barmore stated that he would be more than willing to plant some trees and grass by tearing up some black top.

Chairman Rabb questioned if a temporary occupancy requirement was granted, would that satisfy the State and does Mr. Scalise have the authority to issue a ninety (90) day occupancy permit.

Mr. Barmore stated yes to the question regarding the State.

Mr. Scalise answered yes, he did have the authority.

Mr. Barmore was under the understanding that within the ninety (90) days he is to come up with a site plan. The work is not to be done.

Mr. Adams again stated the liability issue.

It was stated that this idea should be run by the Corporation Counsel.

Mr. Lehman made a motion to recommend that the building inspector issue a temporary occupancy permit contingent upon a site plan being submitted within ninety (90) days and the Corporation Counsel's approval.

February 8, 2001

Ms. Zenns seconded.

Carried: 5 ayes, 0 nays

It was discussed whose responsibility it is to inform property owners of the situation on Washington Street. Also discussed was the issue of good faith by Mr. Davis, the property owner.

Mr. Rice then talked about the appraisal in the packet. This will be on the agenda for the meeting of the twentieth.

Mr. Adams questioned the action on this appraisal.

City Clerk Sanfilippo stated that the Gebbie foundation has exercised the option to purchase the property.

Chairman Rabb reviewed the action required.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Shirley A. Sanfilippo, CMC, RMC
Secretary
Planning Commission

February 8, 2001