Planning Board Meeting
(meeting is being recorded)

On Tuesday, December 8, 2015 the Holyoke Planning Board held a Public Meeting in the 4th Floor Conference Room, City Hall Annex, Holyoke City Hall, Holyoke, MA 01040 at 5:00 p.m.

Attendance:

Planning Board		**Planning Staff**	
Mimi Panitch	Chairman	Marcos Marerro	Director
Christian LaChapelle.....	Vice-Chairman	Jeffrey Burkott	Principal Planner
Eileen Regan	Secretary	Sharon Konstantinidis	Head Clerk
Harry Montalvo	Associate		

Others Present			
Robert Neth	Ct Signcraft	David Bartley	Ward 3 Councilor
Dennis Croteau	32 Concord Avenue	John Radner	18 Forest Ridge, Agawam

OPEN

At 5:03 p.m., CHRIS LACHAPELLE called for a motion to open the Planning Board meeting. A motion was made by EILEEN REGAN and seconded by MIMI PANITCH. The motion carried 4-0.
Due to illness, MIMI PANITCH asked CHRIS LACHAPELLE to take over the duties of the evening.

ZONE CHANGE/ SITE PLAN REVIEW/ SUBDIVISION/SPECIAL PERMIT

1. Special Permit Signage (Sect. 6.4.6.4) – City Gas, 3 Brown Avenue – Makkah, LLC
The Board reviewed the Draft Notice of Decision with Conditions. A motion was made by MIMI PANITCH and seconded by EILEEN REGAN to accept the Notice of Decision with Conditions as amended.

2. Site Plan Review Amendment Continued – So Summer St Self Storage (File #89), J. Gonzalez Enterprises, LLC
Tabled; the continuation was scheduled for January 12, 2016.

3. / 4. ZC Recommendation – Create SC Zoning for Large Scale District and Amend SC Zoning District
The Board reviewed the final amendment changes to: Section 2 Definitions; Section 5 Setbacks; Section 6.4.6 Signs in a Business District; Section 4.3 Table of Principal Uses; and Section 8.3 Shopping Center District as discussed November 24, 2015.

The Board reviewed the neighboring parcels and zones that surround the proposed SC Zoning District and discussed their possibility of changing to the new zone.

A motion was made by EILEEN REGAN and seconded by MIMI PANITCH to accept the proposed new SC Zoning for Large Districts and amendments to the SC Zoning District and recommended it be submitted to the City Council Ordinance Committee. The motion carried 4-0.

MIMI PANITCH noted that she would draft a report to support the Board's decision.

5. Zone Change Petition Continuation (9/8/15) BL to BG and/or IG – 79 & 83 Lower Westfield Road, Dennis Croteau
Tabled until after the Public Hearing.

6. Zone Change Petition Continuation (7/14/15; 9/8/15) – Table 5.2 Table of Dimensional Regs: change BH Zone
The Public Hearing was continued until Feb 9, 2016.

7. Zone Change Petition Continuation (7/14/15; 9/8/15) – Review the BG, BH, SC, and IG zones to consolidate or reformulate
The Public Hearing was continued until Feb 9, 2016.

PLANNING BOARD BUSINESS

A) Project Updates/Old Business/New Business

Solar SPR – The remaining two solar projects of the initial five proposed was forthcoming, and possibly two additional Solar projects.

Library Commons SPR – Scheduled for January 12, 2016.

YMCA Special Permit Parking Lot – Scheduled for January 12, 2016.

Mt Tom Power Plant – Scheduled before the DGR Committee on Wed. Dec 9, 2015 to present the final Mt Tom Power Plant Reuse Study.

Lynch School – Another contractor was viewing the school to verify the additional costs associated with the asbestos removal.

B) Meeting Schedule (tentative):

December 22, 2015 – No meeting

January 12, 2016 – SPR Library Commons / Special Permit YMCA Parking Lot / SPR Solar-Forestdale / SPR 2 solar projects / 2 additional SPR Solar possible.

C) Minutes

A motion was made by JOHN KELLEY and seconded by CHRIS LACHAPELLE to approve the Meeting minutes from October 13, 2015 and Public Hearing minutes from November 10, 2015. A motion was made by MIMI PANITCH and seconded by EILEEN REGAN. The motion carried 4-0.

D) Other Business

There was no other business to come before the Board.

E) Correspondence

There were no correspondenc to come before the Board.

RECESS

At 6:29 p.m. a motion was made by EILEEN REGAN and seconded by MIMI PANITCH to recess the Planning Board meeting for the purpose of attending the joint Public Hearing with the Ordinance Committee. The motion carried 4-0.

RESUME

At 7:10 p.m. a motion was made by EILEEN REGAN and seconded by HARRY MONTALVO to resume the Planning Board meeting while in the Council Chambers for the purpose of discussing SC items #6 & #7 on the Planning Board agenda. The motion carried 4-0. (Ordinance Committee present: Alexander, Lisi, Vacon, and Bartley)

ZONE CHANGE/ SITE PLAN REVIEW/ SUBDIVISION/SPECIAL PERMIT

5. Zone Change Petition Continuation (9/8/15) BL to BG and/or IG – 79 & 83 Lower Westfield Road, Dennis Croteau

The Public Hearing was continued to February 9, 2016 @ 6:30 p.m.

PLANNING BOARD BUSINESS

6. Zone Change Petition Continuation (7/14/15; 9/8/15) – Table 5.2 Table of Dimensional Regs: change BH Zone and 7. Review the BG, BH, SC, and IG zones to consolidate or reformulate

JEFFREY BURKOTT submitted the Planning Board's recommendation to the Ordinance Committee including Section 2 Definitions; Section 5 Setbacks/Dimensional Regulations; Section 6.4.6 Signs in a Business District; Section 4.3 Table of Principal Uses; and Section 8.3 Shopping Center District.

The documents were reviewed and some of the rationale of the changes were explained.

COUNCILOR VACON noted her continued objection in creating a zone that the only SC zoned parcel in the City that contains one business owner would benefit.

COUNCILOR LISI explained that the driving force behind the proposed changes were due to the fact that the retail market is changing. MIMI PANITCH added that the purpose was to find out what the various business interests were looking for and create

a harmonious zone attractive to all of the businesses in the business zones, and not only for the one parcel that happens to be zoned SC.

After a lengthy discussion and suggested amendments to the presented documents, JEFFREY BURKOTT stated that the approved documents submitted to the Ordinance Committee were the Planning Board's recommendations excluding the typical accompanying formal letter. An additional document was offered to be written by the Planning Board Chair to address the rationale behind the new or revised Ordinance and the various changes to the existing SC Ordinance.

MIMI PANITCH concurred that typically a bare bones recommendation is submitted. Due to the nature of the proposed amendments, she had offered to submit a written explanation of the rationale behind the changes.

COUNCILOR LISI stated that since this letter would be forthcoming to explain the rationale of the changes, the submitted documents did not need further review this evening.

CHRIS LACHAPELLE stated that he understood the need for scrutiny, but hoped moving forward that the Ordinance Committee would take into account, that the job of the Economic Director is to bring in business and stimulate economic growth in the City and he is in favor of the amendments. The task of the Principal Planner is to review all those plans for development to which he does with the utmost professionalism and attention to detail. He added that the proposed Ordinance would not be a detriment to the City.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Planning Board, MIMI PANITCH, at 8:00 p.m., called for a motion to close the Planning Board meeting. A motion was made by EILEEN REGAN and seconded by MIMI PANITCH. The motion carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Regan

Eileen Regan, Secretary