

Joint Public Hearing Minutes
City Council Ordinance Committee / Planning Board
Zone Change – Limited Business (BL) to General Business (BG) and/or General Industry(IG)
79 & 83 Lower Westfield Road / Dennis Croteau
(meeting is being recorded)

On Tuesday, December 8, 2015, the Holyoke Planning Board held a Joint Public Hearing with the Ordinance Committee of the City Council to hear a Zone Change Petition from BL (Limited Business) to BG (General Business) and/or IG (General Industry) for the land in Holyoke, Massachusetts identified by the City’s Assessors as Map 117, Block 00, Parcel 003/004 also known as 79 and 83 Lower Westfield Road, submitted by Dennis Croteau. The meeting was held in the City Council Chambers, 536 Dwight Street, Holyoke, Massachusetts at 6:30 p.m.

Attendance:

Planning Board

Mimi Panitch Chairman
Christian LaChapelle..... Vice-Chairman (Acting Chair)
Eileen Regan Member
Harry Montalvo Associate

Planning Staff

Marcos Marrero..... Director
Jeffrey Burkott Principal Planner
Sharon Konstantinidis Head Clerk

City Council

Joseph McGiverin..... At Large Councilor

Ordinance Committee

Rebecca Lisi At Large Councilor
Gordon Alexander..... Ward 7 Councilor
Linda Vacon..... Ward 5 Councilor
David Bartley At Large Councilor

Others Present

Kara Cunha..... 2nd Assistant City Solicitor
Dennis Croteau 32 Concord Avenue
John Radner 18 Forest Ridge Road, Agawam

MIMI PANITCH at 6:36 p.m., called for a motion to reopen the Public Hearing. A motion was made by MIMI PANITCH and seconded by HARY MONTALVO. The motion carried 4-0.

COUNCILOR LISI explained that the Public Hearing had been continued from September 8, 2015 mainly due to the fact that additional information was needed relative to amending the petition to accurately represent the preferred zone.

JOHN RADNER stated that after learning of the City’s plan of a text change to the current Shopping Center (SC) zone and the creation of a new large scale Shopping Center district, they requested waiting until the outcome of those petitions to determine which zone would be the best going forward. There were currently two interested parties in purchasing the property. COUNCILOR LISI responded that the current application listing BG or IG was the only zones that can be considered; the current application can not be amended. Going forward, he would have to choose to either keep the Public Hearing open or resubmit a new application with the new desired zone.

COUNCILOR LISI asked if hotels would be allowed in the proposed SC zone. CHRIS LACHAPELLE replied yes.

COUNCILOR ALEXANDER stated that the current petition could not be acted upon as a zone needs to be determined; to consider an SC zone would require the applicant to require a Leave to Withdraw and resubmit for the SC zone; and whatever the project is proposed to be cannot be considered as zoning encompasses all the available uses within the zone. JOHN RADNER responded that he believed that having a signed contract to submit would help influence the decision of the Planning Board as he has seen other zone change petitioners make a presentation such as Gary Rome.

EILEEN REGAN responded that the Gary Rome project for the most part was not the deciding factor as was the other available uses allowed for that parcel. However, that project did slightly influence her decision. JOHN RADNER responded that the applicant would not jeopardize the integrity of the area. The proposal would take into account the aesthetics, traffic, tax base, and would not put a strain on City Services.

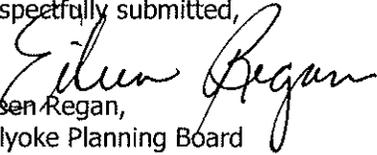
COUNCILOR VACON reiterated that the current amendment needs to also identify the two different addresses (79/83) and to which zone the change was for. She added that she concurred that having a Purchase & Sale Agreement with Gary Rome absolutely influenced the decision.

ATTY CUNHA noted that since the legal notification referenced the 2 addresses as having a zone change, it was not necessary to re-file the application. A letter submitted by the petitioner clarifying each address and their zones would be sufficient.

The Ordinance Committee reviewed the statute regarding legal publication requirements, timing for a decision, and procedures going forward.

At 7:03 p.m., a motion was made by MIMI PANITCH and seconded by EILEEN REGAN to continue the Public Hearing until February 9, 2016. The motion carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,


Eileen Regan,
Holyoke Planning Board