Planning Board Meeting
(meeting is being recorded)

On Tuesday, September 15, 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 6:00 p.m.

Attendance:
Planning Board
Mimi Panitch.................. Chairman
Christian LaChapelle........... Vice-Chairman
John Kelley.................. Member
Eileen Regan.................. Member
Harry Montalvo.............. Associate

Planning Staff
Marcos Marrero.............. Director
Jeffrey Burkett.............. Principal Planner
Claire Ricker.............. Senior Planner
Sharon Konstantinidis........ Head Clerk

Others Present
Gayle Keith.................. 6 Farnum Drive
Helene Florio.................. 31 Wellesley Road
Thomas Wilson, Atty........... 18 Carlton Street
Tim Ferreira.............. 1000 Main Street
Jim Richmond.............. 120 Whiting Farms Road
Kim Masiuk.............. Associated Builders
Tim Houle.............. Associated Builders
Gary Rome.............. 1000 Main Street
Jane Rome.............. 1000 Main Street
Jerry Rome.............. 1000 Main Street
Kevin Schechterhe........... 1000 Main Street
Juliet Locke.............. Vanesse Hangen Brustlin (VHB)
Keith Wenners.............. Vanesse Hangen Brustlin (VHB)

OPEN
At 6:02 p.m., MIMI PANITCH called for a motion to open the Planning Board meeting. A motion was made by EILEEN REGAN and seconded by CHRIS LACHAPELLE. The motion carried 4-0.

RECESS
At 6:02 p.m., MIMI PANITCH called for a motion to recess the Planning Board meeting for purpose of opening up the Joint Public Hearing with the Stormwater Authority to hear a petition for a Site Plan Review regarding Gary Rome Hyundai, Inc. A motion was made by EILEEN REGAN and seconded by CHRIS LACHAPELLE. The motion carried 4-0.

RESUME
At 8:49 p.m., MIMI PANITCH called for a motion to reopen the Planning Board meeting. A motion was made by EILEEN REGAN and seconded by CHRIS LACHAPELLE. The motion carried 4-0.

ZONE CHANGE/ SITE PLAN REVIEW (SPR)/ SUBDIVISION /SPECIAL PERMIT (SP)

1. Special Permit to Exceed Fence Height- Gary Rome Hyundai, Inc.
The Board reviewed the draft Notice of Decision with Conditions. A motion was made by JOHN KELLEY and seconded by CHRIS LACHAPELLE to approve the Special Permit for an increase in fence height to 8 feet. The motion carried 4-0.

2. Special Permit for Multiple Signs- Gary Rome Hyundai, Inc.
MIMI PANITCH noted that the silence by the Board in reviewing the non-controversial Notice of Decision for a sign indicated to her that the Planning Board was just staring blankly at the page. She added that having just received a great deal of information during the Public Hearings, she was not comfortable to rush into reviewing the Notice of Decision/ Findings and the many conditions until there was time to process the information and not just give due consideration.

EILEEN REGAN noted that she relied on staff’s thorough review of the project when drafting the Notice of Decision; she felt that she had already processed the information.

GARY ROME suggested that since the Special Permit was for multiple signs (appearing to be non-controversial), perhaps the conditions could be slowly reviewed.
MIMI PANITCH stated that every time the Board rushed into rendering a decision, a relevant condition has been inadvertently overlooked. She was adamantly opposed to rushing to render a decision. EILEEN REGAN responded that there had been several Gary Rome Public Hearings where the proposed project had been discussed which had allowed her time to process.

MIMI PANITCH stated that the issue was not in rendering a vote, but in finalizing the Notice of Decision.

JOHN KELLEY noted that historically the Board has done it this way.

After reviewing the Notice of Decision, Findings, and Conditions, a motion was made by EILEEN REGAN and seconded by CHRIS LACHAPELLE to approve the Special Permit with conditions as amended. The motion was 4-0.

A draft Notice of Decision with Conditions was submitted and reviewed by the Board. MIMI PANITCH reiterated her preference to postpone finalizing the Notice of Decision.

MARCOS MARRERO offered language to support the preference of the Board to protect to abutters relative to the landscape and open space.

A motion was made by JOHN KELLEY and seconded by CHRIS LACHAPELLE to approve the Site Plan Review Notice of Decision with 13 Conditions as amended. The Motion was 3-0-1 (MIMI PANITCH abstained).

EILEEN REGAN stated that the Site Plan Review passed. Sharon Konstantinidis noted that 4 affirmative votes were required. JEFFREY BURKOTT responded that he also believed that 4 affirmative vote were required to act favorably. Following a brief discussion, staff would seek an opinion from the City Solicitor.

A) Project Updates/Old Business/New Business
- Lyman Terrace – MARCOS MARRERO stated that the project received critical State financing and was ready to receive $20 million in Federal tax credit. Breaking ground was expected next week.

B) Meeting Schedule
The next meetings scheduled were:
Sept 22, 2015 – No meeting due to the Primary Elections.
Sept 29, 2015 – Designated to discuss Board procedures. JOHN KELLEY stated that the Board needed to discuss the importance of setting deadlines and adhering to them. The position of the Board during the Gary Rome discussions was less than professional.

C) Minutes - There were no minutes to approve.

D) Election of Officers – Tabled

E) Other Business
CLAIRE RICKER noted that she had accepted new employment in Lowell and thanked the Board for the opportunity.

F) Correspondence - There was no correspondence to come before the Board.

Adjournment
There being no further business to come before the Planning Board, MIMI PANITCH, at 9:50 p.m., called for a motion to close the Planning Board meeting. A motion was made by EILEEN REGAN and seconded by CHRIS LACHAPELLE. The motion carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

John Kelley, Secretary Pro Tempore