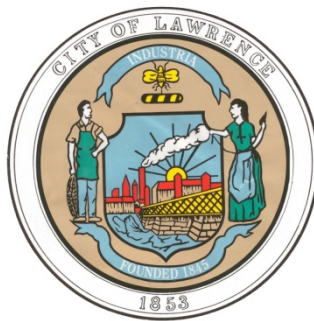


# PLANNING BOARD



# LAWRENCE MASSACHUSETTS

**Vice Chair**  
Vacant

**Voting Members**

Antonio Reynoso

Brenda Rozzi

Betty Camilo-Correa

Manuel Nunez

**Associate Voting Member**

Kelvin Moreno

**Administrative Assistant**

Jorge O. Martinez

**Land Use Planner**

Daniel A. McCarthy

**CHAIR**

Tamar Kotelchuck

## LAWRENCE PLANNING BOARD

*Due to the COVID-19 Outbreak and the policy changes made by Governor Baker and Mayor Rivera, this meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals was done remotely.*

April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Minutes to the Meeting/Hearing

This meeting was held using the GoToMeeting Platform

**Upon a roll call the following members were present:**

Tamar Kotelchuck, Chair

Brenda Rozzi

Betty Camilo-Correa

Manny Nunez

**Upon a roll call the following members were absent:**

Antonio Reynoso

Kelvin Moreno

Also Present:

Daniel McCarthy- Land Use Planner

Michael Armano- Acting Inspectional Services Director

Jorge Martinez- Minute Taker

Lt. Graeme Millar- Fire Prevention

Pedro Soto- Planning Director

*Ms. Kotelchuck took a poll of everyone in attendance to determine the order of the cases and the results were as follows:*

1. *15 Union Street (Stone Mill)*
2. *53 Kingston Street*
3. *170-180 Common Street*
4. *20 Boehm Street*
5. *8 Rollins Street*

***Upon a motion made by Ms. Rozzi and seconded by Ms. Camilo-Correa, the members of the board unanimously decided to open the public meeting.***

***15 Union Street  
Stone Mill***

Present to address the members of the board were Paul Magliocchetti, Josh Biren, Conor Nagle, Ken Cram, Lawrence Curtis, Adam Stein, Scott Maenpaa and others.

Attorney Magliocchetti then stated that everyone present at the meeting was present on behalf of Winn Development who is proposing to redevelop the Stone Mill into 86 residential apartments. he then gave Mr. Curtis the opportunity to speak.

Mr. Curtis stated that he has worked with many of the city officials in the past with the renovation of the Malden Mills and Loft 550. He then stated that he is proud of his and his company's efforts to redevelop the vacant industrial buildings into vibrant housing that the community can live in and be proud of. He then stated that he was proud of the work that was done at the Greenway and he is proud of being a citizen of the Merrimack Valley community. He then stated that he and the group has been working on this project for the past 7-8 years and at this point, it is time to bring things to reality. He then stated that the effort to redevelop the building has involved historic public funding as well as architectural, structural and environmental undertakings. He then added that his firm has undergone more historic redevelopments in New England more than any other firm.

Mr. Magliocchetti then stated that he was going to give a brief summary to support some of the documents that he submitted for the meeting.

He then stated that he and his group are present at tonight's meeting pursuant to the City of Lawrence zoning ordinance section 29-19c, Lawrence's ordinance governing the Downtown Smart Growth overlay. He then stated that Winn Development wishes to substantially rehabilitate the old industrial site and turn it into 86 residential units. He added that it meets Zoning requirements by right but is before the LPB for plan approval. He then stated that Winn Developments was established in 1971 and is an award-winning company that develops multi-family communities and other mixed-use buildings. He then stated that with help of the city a proposal was submitted to convert the building which is the oldest and most prominent building in Lawrence and turning it into residential apartments. He then read off the remainder of the brief to the board which is on record at the Lawrence Planning Department. He then stated that he believes that the developers have complied with the DSGO design standards set forth in the

ordinance. He then stated that according to the ordinance, the developers must meet several different criteria that he feels that the project will follow.

Attorney Magliocchetti then stated that he would like to commend the Planning Department and the work that they have done. He stated that they were very cooperative and that they have done a lot in cooperation with Winn Development on the project. He then stated that Winn Development has been a cooperative partner with the city on this project. He stated that through these efforts the city will add significantly to the mixed income housing units in the city which will benefit the Stone Mill itself as well as other commercial and industrial businesses. He then stated that the project also enhances what is going on with the commercial industrial base nearby. He then stated that the development will exceed the required affordability component listed in the DSGO.

He then added that the development will also comply with required set aside percentages set by state and federal LIHTC programs. He then stated that the development will be targeting a mix of income tiers. He then stated that the development addresses many of the major concerns of everyone involved. He then stated that the project has received several letters of support, all of which are included in the materials that were sent to the board members. He then stated that the initial plan included 105 units, but to collaborate with the city and some discussions, the total number of units was reduced to 86 total units to address some of the concerns raised by the city. He then stated that the site plan meets the requirements set forth in section 29-19 as well as the design requirements. He then summed up his portion of the presentation and gave Mr. Nagle the opportunity to speak.

Mr. Nagle then presented a Google Maps image to the members of the board. He then stated that he is sure that everyone on this call is familiar with the Stone Mill which is just North of the North Canal and the Merrimack River surrounded by Union Street, Canal Street and General Street. He then stated that the parcel in question is a small sized lot of about 2.3 acres surrounding the Stone Mill building. He then stated that the parking lot is contiguous to the rest of the parking lot that serves the other surrounding uses and that it is in no way separated. He then stated that there are no setback requirements, and the building will be made fire code compliant. He added that the parking lot will serve as a mean of access for the residents as well as emergency access to the rest of the building. He then stated that the open space is going to be increased from 6% total to 23% total. He then stated that the area around the building is going to consist of some lawn area and tree plantings to provide some shade and some areas to sit down. He then stated that there will be other amenities provided as well. He added that the parking lot itself was improved approximately 10 years ago with the developments to the East end of the building.

Mr. Nagle then stated that his intent is to confirm that the catch basins within the property meet current stormwater standards, understanding that the discharge has been taken care of in terms of stormwater management. He then stated that the utilities will be served from the mains and that he and the rest of his group would trace them back to the mains of the surrounding parking lot in the street. He stated that this will be worked on with DPW as well as engineering. He then stated that the group is also proposing pedestrian lighting around the building. He added that the main parking lot already has existing lighting and that this lighting will not change. He then stated that

the proposed lighting will be code compliant. He then added that the trash for the facility will be internal and a trash chute would lead to an approximate location that he pointed out on the plans. He added that they would be rolled to the curb for the scheduled pickup and then wheeled back into the building when the pickup is completed. He then stated that the group is also proposing more than adequate parking to meet the needs of the 86 units.

Attorney Magliocchetti then asked if the board would be open to questions now or after the presentation has concluded. Ms. Kotelchuck stated that she would be open to answering questions after the presentation was concluded.

Mr. Ken Cram then spoke and stated that a traffic impact study was prepared and the site was examined and an assessment of what the impacts would be was prepared. He then stated that the access routes to the 86 units would primarily be out of General Street where there are three driveways from the site. He then stated that there would be three existing driveways out to Canal Street that are referred to as the East, middle and West driveways. He then stated that the West driveway is not recommended for usage only because it is so close to the intersection of Canal Street and Union Street. He then stated that the recommendation was made that this driveway not be used. He then stated that the applicant has taken that one step further and even made it part of a lease agreement that this part of the driveway cannot be used for safety reasons. He then stated that the engineers went out and gathered some data for General and Canal Street and the traffic volumes were collected and adjusted to account for the low volumes of the month.

He stated that they were adjusted to represent the average month condition. He then stated that the volumes for Canal Street and General Street are about 15% less than normal operating condition. He then stated that the volumes were adjusted to account for the pandemic as well. He added that General Street carries about 6,000 vehicles per day in both directions. He then stated that Canal Street carries about 15,500 vehicles per day in both directions. He then added that the speeds for the street are within recommended standards as well. He added that a crash assessment was also done and there were no significant crashes. He added that there were no traffic related fatalities and that the area is well serviced by public transportation as well. He then stated that the development would create a traffic flow of 300 cars in 300 out. He then stated that the projected peak hour car number is relatively low. He added that it is expected that most people who live in the apartments will work at the hospital which is in close proximity as well.

Scott Maenpaa then spoke. He stated that the building will not have any additions nor will it be demolished due to the fact that it is historic. He then stated that any portion of the building will be creating entry vestibule right off the main parking area mainly consisting of storefront or some other type of material that will not mimic the existing construction, but enhance it and also draw attention to the main entrance of the building. He added that there is a ground floor trash collection room that will contain the trash containers that will be wheeled out. He then stated that they will also have direct outside access and dumpsters will be brought on site at the appropriate times during the week for scheduled pickups.

He then stated that the west façade is underground subterranean so that it will be programed as tenant amenities as well as tenant storage and utility space. He then stated that there are 12 units on the first floor and there are windows as well. He then stated that there will be one bedrooms,

two bedrooms and three bedrooms. He then stated that the number of units was reduced from 105 to 86 and that the unit sizes will be increased. He then stated that there will be 50 one-bedroom units, 20 two-bedroom units and eight three-bedroom units. He added that the one-bedroom units are about 710 square feet, the two bed-room units will be 1,115 square feet and the three-bedrooms will be about 1,330 square feet. Mr. Maenpaa then used the plan displayed to show the unit layout and how each unit will be oriented. He then stated that the two bedroom units will have two bathrooms as well. He then stated that they will be set up roommate style. He added that there will be a common laundry on each floor. He then stated that there will be a cold attic space and some of the mechanicals will be kept there as well. He added that the renovation of the building will be done in a way that is consistent with historic preservation standards as well as the approved state and federal historic applications that have been submitted for the project. He stated that this would include masonry restoration, replacement of windows that are not like any other kind and also the repair and replacement of the existing slate roof. He added that when this is all done the building will retain its historical character, but that will also convert it into a contributing member of the community.

Mr. Magliocchetti then stated that he believes that the project meets all of the DSGO requirements and will help enhance the building so it can be an asset to Lawrence's future.

The board members indicated that they do not have any questions or concerns at the moment.

***Upon a motion made by Ms. Camilo-Correa and seconded by Ms. Rozzi, the members of the board unanimously decided to open up the public hearing.***

Present to address the members of the board was City Councilor Marc LaPlante. Mr. LaPlante indicated that he was having some using the share feature. Ms. Kotelchuck then asked Mr. McCarthy how the city felt in regards to the proposal. Mr. McCarthy then stated that he passed around a document with the site plan review criteria on it. He then stated that the city has spent a lot of time working with the applicants and have conducted several meetings in regards to the proposal. He added that the city has been supportive of the project from the very beginning. He then stated that the applicants have been very accepting of all input especially the breakdown of the units and the input that the Office of Planning and Development provided in regards to the size and unit types. He then stated that the design has satisfied the historical design requirements as well. He then stated that in terms of landscaping the applicant has done the best that they possibly can do with the amount of land that they have. He then stated that several trees will be planted along the four corners of the building which will provide some screening and amenities will be provided to the residents as well. He then stated that the building is going to represent the city and the restoration will go a long way in improving the city as a whole. He then stated that the city does not have any conditions that they would like to propose either. He then stated that the board members can ask those questions to vet the proposal. He then stated that it may be best to put things to the rest of the public and see what kind of comments they have.

Mr. Lawrence Curtis then stated that the city as well as the development team has made quite an effort to make the project happen. He then stated that the mill is being converted from commercial to residential. He then stated that the project is representative of the type of projects that the city and developers can work on to have both commercial and residential development

happen within the city. He then stated that he would like to commend the Planning Department and all of the departments within the city for all of their help.

Councilor LaPlante then spoke. He presented a slide show to the members of the board. He stated that the issue he raises is prominent with the proposal for the Stone Mill, but also extends beyond the proposal for the mill itself. He stated that the city is facing a period of growth and housing and the Planning Board plays an important role in the growth process. He then stated that the city council had to go through something in regards to the city's growth during a discussion last night which was a 132 million dollar bond authorization for the Oliver School. He then stated that the city has seen the inclusion of 2,100 units from 2009-2020. He then stated that since then over 450 units have gone through rezoning and permitting processes as well. He then stated that when being examined, the city is just getting more and more dense. He then stated that total that is about 2,500 new units which is a substantial amount. He then stated that the land within the city can only hold so much as well. He then showed a graph to the board members which showed Lawrence's size in relation to some of the other communities within the area to show how small our city is land wise compared to the rest of the cities in the area. He stated that the increase in housing in Lawrence is so substantial because it is a city that is substantially smaller than any other city in the area. He then stated that with the increase in housing comes the increase in automobiles within the city. He stated that from 2010-2020 the city has seen a 20,000 car increase within the city which just adds to the traffic congestion problem the city has had in the past. He stated that all throughout the city the parking problem is intense. He then stated that the housing problem also puts strain on other city services such as schools.

He then stated that the growth within the city is not being well thought out, rather it's just growing at a whim. He then stated that most of the people on the board pay taxes in Lawrence and that the board members need to know how this growth will affect the city as a whole in the future. He then stated that there have been years where the city has enough revenue and others when it does not. He then stated that the city may either have to spend its free cash or increase taxes to each taxpayer as much as \$239 annually. He then stated that this may cause the city not to be able to do as much capital spending in the future. He then stated that there was a public hearing last night and only one person spoke up. Councilor LaPlante's connection then froze and he was unable to reconnect.

Ms. Rozzi then asked if the smokestack that is currently on the site will be maintained. Mr. Mike Binette indicated that the smokestack will be staying. Mr. Curtis indicated that there will be no demolition of any of the buildings. He then stated that the smokestack will be kept in order to make it the icon that the city deserves.

Ms. Kotelchuck then asked if the development will be paying taxes or if it was going to be tax abated. Mr. Lawrence indicated that the development will be paying full taxes based on the value and income just like any other apartment complex in the city. Ms. Kotelchuck then asked if the project would be in compliance with the landscape ordinance or the satellite landscape ordinance.

Mr. Nagle then stated that he believes that the project is meeting all of the bylaws and the greenspace is being increased from 20% to 23%. Ms. Kotelchuck then asked if it was based on

the number of trees that were able to be placed on site. Mr. McCarthy then stated that he can analyze this, but there is no opportunity because of the tree canopy that is already on the lot therefore there is no opportunity to plant more trees than what are already there. He stated that there are at least 15 trees and shrubs and many ornamental grasses. He stated that he could go over the total budget and work with the applicant on what the appropriate types would be, but there is a lot of discrepancy. He then stated that he could work with a landscape engineer.

Ms. Kotelchuck then stated that it is all about making sure that the applicant meets the requirements or they contribute to the city tree fund or plant somewhere else in the city. Mr. Curtis then stated that the group will comply with the requirements regardless of what they are.

Councilor LaPlante then indicated through Mr. McCarthy that he is having trouble getting back on the call, but that his presentation was nearly over. He then told Mr. McCarthy that he would like to thank everyone present for listening to him.

*Upon a motion made by Ms. Camilo-Correa and seconded by Ms. Rozzi, the members of the board unanimously decided to close the public hearing.*

Ms. Camilo-Correa then stated that it appears that the city is happy with the project and that she would consider approving the project.

Ms. Kotelchuck then stated that it appears that the applicant and the team have taken the cities input seriously and she appreciates how large the units are as well.

With no further discussion,

The following condition was presented:

1. Applicant must abide by all landscape requirements.

**The members of the board voted and the results are as follows:**

**Tamar Kotelchuck, Chair-Yes**  
**Brenda Rozzi- Yes**  
**Betty Camilo-Correa-Yes**  
**Manny Nunez-Yes**

**The applicant's petition was unanimously passed with a vote of 4-0.**

Ms. Kotelchuck then stated that since there was only a four person board tonight all projects would need a unanimous vote in order to pass. She stated that the board would entertain any continuances in the event that the applicants want to wait for an extra member.

*53 Kingston Street*  
*Carla Morel*

Present to address the members of the board were Carla Morel, Marcos Devers and Lunara Devers.

Mr. Devers stated that he was before the board in order to request consent to re-petition the ZBA. He then stated that the change to the plans will be for a single-family home with an in-law apartment. He then stated that the petitioner and her family have been insistently attempting to make this project happen. He added that it is in an R-3 district and the density is below what is required. He then stated that the applicant has expressed her hardship to the members of the board. He then asked if he could present to the board members, which he was not able to do. He then asked Ms. Devers to present and she stated that she was not able to because the revised plans were not ready. She then stated that she thought that the project was going to be continued.

Ms. Kotelchuck then asked Mr. McCarthy what the requirements to reconsider would be. Mr. McCarthy stated that he was happy that the applicant was requesting a continuance because when there is a repetitive petition the board has to see substantive changes in the plans. He then stated that the ZBA was clear when they denied the proposal that the only proposal they would like to see was one for a single-family home. He then stated that the changes proposed on the submitted plans were not sufficient and these changes would be more to the board's satisfaction.

Ms. Kotelchuck then asked if the changes between both sets of plans can be included in the materials for next month.

***Upon a motion made by Ms. Camilo-Correa and seconded by Ms. Rozzi, the board members voted unanimously to continue the matter until the next meeting.***

***170-180 Common Street  
Gamal Salama***

Present to address the members of the board were Gamal Salama, Marcos Devers and Lunara Devers.

Mr. Devers stated that his client Mr. Salama is a distinguished investor within the city. He then presented a rendering to the members of the board of what the proposed structure is going to look like. He added that the building exists and has been underutilized for a while. He then stated that the ZBA had already approved 20 total units. He added that the bottom floors have offices and the top floors have 20 residential units. He stated that initially the proposal was a bit more ambitious, but as a result of conversations with the stakeholders a decision was made to keep the building the way that it is and develop the upper floors that are underutilized. He then gave the unit breakdown and the numbers of the units on each floor. He added that the smallest one bedroom unit is 511 square feet and another is 49 square feet. He then stated that depending on the geometric design some concessions needed to be made. He then stated that the area of work is also in between two buildings. He then stated that the minimum size for the two-bedrooms will be 780 square feet and the maximum for the two-bedrooms will be 1,056 square feet. He then stated that approval was based upon negotiation from many different parties. He then stated that some of the issues with the proposal were in regards to trash storage and other things as well. He then stated that the developer will be paying to dispose of the trash.



Mr. Salama then stated that he would like to thank all of the city officials present who have been helping him. He then stated that the units will be comfortable.

Mr. McCarthy then stated that the city is generally supportive of the project. He then stated that the mayor has written a letter of support for the project. He then gave the board members the procedural history of the project. He then stated that at the beginning the original project entailed the construction of two other stories of building and 36 total units. He then stated that some of the units will be three-bedrooms to meet the recommendations set forth by the Community Development Department. He then stated that the ZBA had some concerns about the parking on the North Common and the lack of structured parking in the immediate neighborhood. He then stated that Mr. Galama does have a letter from the city for parking at the Capital lot as well as an agreement for parking on the street. He then stated that 100% of the applicant's parking is covered and he did get a variance for density and parking. He then stated that historically the building contained medical offices and they have all for some reason left. He then stated that the building has an elevator and his concern is that a more in-depth refuse plan needs to be submitted. He added that this is a requirement to every project. He stated that there are no other conditions from the Planning Department.

***Upon a motion made by Ms. Camilo-Correa and seconded by Ms. Rozzi, the members of the board voted unanimously to open the public hearing.***

Mr. Nunez then asked what the sizes of the two-bedroom units would be. Mr. Devers stated that the minimum size is 780 square feet and the maximum is 1,056 square feet.

Ms. Kotelchuck asked if the applicant was applying under the underlying zoning and not the DSGO. Mr. McCarthy stated that they are applying under the underlying zoning. He stated that the special permit that is being applied for is allowed by-right under the DSGO.

Ms. Kotelchuck then asked if the applicant planned on making any of these units affordable. Mr. Salama stated that they will be relatively affordable. He then stated that he does not apply for any grants and that he does all the work by himself through private banks.

Ms. Kotelchuck then asked if there is a target rent for these units. Mr. Galama then stated that the target rent for the one bedroom units would be \$1,100 and the two bedrooms would be \$1,300.

Ms. Kotelchuck then asked if the project would have to go before a historic commission. Mr. McCarthy stated that it all depends on their scope of work. He stated that the exterior work and lighting will most likely have to.

***Upon a motion made by Ms. Rozzi and seconded by Ms. Camilo-Correa, the members of the board unanimously decided to close the public hearing.***

Ms. Kotelchuck then asked if the developers would be abiding by the city's landscape ordinance. Mr. Salama stated that they would.

Ms. Camilo-Correa stated that she would consider approving the proposal.

Ms. Kotelchuck then stated that the bedrooms are a little small for her liking, but because of the orientation of the building she understands why.

*With no further discussion,*

*The members of the board voted and the results are as follows:*

*Tamar Kotelchuck, Chair- Yes*

*Manny Nunez- Yes*

*Brenda Rozzi- Yes*

*Betty Camilo-Correa- Yes*

*The applicant's petition was passed with a vote of 4-0.*

*20 Boehm Street*

*Maria Y. Mejia*

Present to address the members of the board were Marcos and Lunara Devers and Maria Mejia.

Mr. Devers stated that his client would like to make their basement into usable space. He then stated that the purpose is not to create bedrooms like indicated on the plans, but to turn it into a space that the family can enjoy. He then stated that due to the pandemic families have needed dynamic spaces where they can do many things such as entertainment areas, offices and playrooms. He stated that the last thing he wants his client to do is create an illegal apartment or boarding room. He then stated that he is on the side of the city. He then stated that he would like the matter to be continued until the next month. His client then spoke and stated that she simply wants a laundry room.

Ms. Kotelchuck then stated that it may be a good idea to continue the presentation and see what the board members think.

Mr. McCarthy then stated that he sent some photographs around and the city does not have a problem with the proposal. He then stated that concerns have been raised about some of the multifamily homes that have built out basements that are strictly for revenue. He then stated that this home is a modest two-family home and what the applicant is proposing could be done. He then stated that the only way to access this area would be through the one family. He then stated that the basement windows will be new. He stated that the city is in favor of the proposal.

Lt. Millar then asked Mr. Devers where the mechanical section of the basement would be. Mr. Devers then stated that his associate architect missed that. Ms. Mejia then stated that there is a room where the utilities will be enclosed. He then stated that space can be taken from another room in order to fit a mechanical room.

*Upon a motion made by Ms. Rozzi and seconded by Mr. Nunez, the members of the board voted unanimously to open the public hearing.*

*Upon a motion made by Ms. Rozzi and seconded by Mr. Nunez, the members of the board voted unanimously to close the public hearing.*

*With no further discussion,*

*The members of the board voted and the results are as follows:*

*Tamar Kotelchuck, Chair- Yes*

*Manny Nunez- Yes*

*Brenda Rozzi- Yes*

*Betty Camilo-Correa- Yes*

*The applicant's petition was passed with a vote of 4-0.*

Mr. Martinez then indicated that he would resend the minutes from the last two meetings.

Conversation ensued regarding Councilor LaPlante's presentation.

*Upon a motion made by Ms. Rozzi and seconded by Mr. Nunez, the members of the board voted unanimously to adjourn the public meeting.*