

**MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING
HELD BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
JANUARY 22, 2014**

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Eric Prause, Chair
Horace Brown, Secretary
Michael Stebe

Alternates: Susan Shanbaum
Julian Stoppelman (sitting)
Donald Palmer (sitting)

Absent: Andy Kidd, Vice Chair
Chirag Thaker

Also Present: Mark Pellegrini, Director of Planning
Renata Bertotti, Senior Planner
Matthew Bordeaux, Environmental Planner
and Wetlands Agent
Ginger MacHattie, Recording Secretary

The Chairman opened the Public Hearing at 7:05 p.m. The Secretary read the legal notice for the application when the call was made.

DAVID BERTRAND – special exception under Article II Section 18.03.01(b) to allow a personal service in an existing building at 148 Forest Street, Historic zone – Special Exception (2013-090)

David Bertrand, 983 Main Street, runs a personal training business and would like to relocate to 148 Forest Street. The property is currently zoned for retail and he is looking for a special exception. Mr. Bertrand said he would not be making changes to the building; the aesthetics are stunning. The building will be a good fit for him.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause, Mr. Bertrand said his business is generally quiet as he gives one-on-one training. He would be located between a residential neighborhood and the mills. In the evening, one other trainer is present who also does one-on-one training. The building is located in a quiet neighborhood and the intimacy of the area is ideal. He has found that generally people are not comfortable on Main Street as they feel they are on display. This location will be more discreet.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause, Mr. Bertrand said his business open Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 or 11:00 a.m. and then again from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. On Saturdays it is open from 6:00 a.m. to noon.

In response to a series of questions from Mr. Brown, Mr. Bertrand said he does not intend to change the outside of the building. There is one sign existing from the Hunting Horn and he will place his freestanding sign there. There will be no change in the size of the sign.

In response to a question from Mr. Brown, Mr. Pellegrini said there have been a number of proposals for this building. It has been approved for apartments on the upper floors and retail use on the lower floors. Mr. Bertrand would be moving into what is the retail space. This property is located in the Historic District and this use requires a special exception. It is a personal service business, as opposed to a retail use.

In response to a question from Ms. Shanbaum, Mr. Pellegrini said it is a special exception and the Commission can place limits on the approval. The personal service approval would run with the property. Other personal service uses include financial advisor, nail salon, etc. The Commission could put limits on the property by the number of clients and employees.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause, Mr. Bertrand said the parking is outlined on the map and there is plenty for his use.

Ms. Bertotti said Town staff reviewed the application and has no concerns or technical comments. The applicant went before the Cheney Brothers Historic District Commission, which recommended approval.

Chairman Prause asked if any member of the public wished to comment either in favor of or in opposition to this application. No member of the public came forward at this time.

Ms. Shanbaum said, as a neighbor, she has no problems with this application. She would like reasonable restrictions placed on the number of clients allowed.

Mr. Bertrand said training is usually one-on-one. It would be adequate to limit parking to 5 cars.

Mr. Pellegrini suggested limiting clients to between 3 and 5 at any given time.

Ms. Shanbaum said 2,500 sq. ft. is a large size. If the use turned into a beautician's business it could be large. It is a good idea to put limitations on the approval.

Mr. Palmer asked what the maximum room occupancy is for that space. He would not want to limit the applicant's business. Based on the six parking spaces, the business would be limited by parking.

Mr. Stoppelman proposed limiting the business to three employees and six clients at any given time.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause, Mr. Pellegrini said retail and general service businesses require 4 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet. In this case, about 8 spaces would be required. He thinks there are probably 8 spaces on the property.

Mr. Stebe agreed that parking spaces may be the limiting factor. Adding another limit on the business sets the wrong image. Having this type of business near the mills makes sense. He doesn't see anything that would hinder the neighborhood.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause, Mr. Bertrand said he has outlined five parking spaces on his plan, including one handicap space.

The Chairman closed the Public Hearing portion of the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

I certify these minutes were adopted on the following date:

May 5, 2014
Date

Eric Prause, Chairman

**NOTICE: A DIGITAL RECORDING OF THIS PUBLIC HEARING CAN
BE HEARD IN THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT.**