

**MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING  
HELD BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
MARCH 18, 2019**

**ROLL CALL:**

Members Present: Eric Prause, Chairman  
Patrick Kennedy, Vice Chairman  
Michael Stebe, Secretary  
Jessica Scorso  
Timothy Bergin

Alternate Members: Teresa Ike  
Charles Sabia

Absent: Julian Stoppelman

Also Present: Gary Anderson, Director of Planning  
Matthew Bordeaux, Senior Planner  
Nancy Martel, Recording Secretary

The Chairman opened the Public Hearing at 7:00 P.M. The Secretary read the legal notice when the call was made.

SAINT JAMES PARISH CORPORATION – Resubdivision of 285 West Center Street from 21 Adams Street South. – Resubdivision (2019-010)

Attorney Karen Casey of the law firm of Cooney, Scully and Dowling, 10 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, CT 06106, introduced herself as representing Saint James Parish Corporation. Attorney Casey reported they are seeking the Commission's approval for the division of a residential lot from the Church of the Assumption campus, the owner of which is Saint James Parish Corporation. Attorney Casey proceeded to explain the lot details and compliance with the Zoning Regulations. She noted that the remaining campus would be left on 5.12 acres, also compliant with zoning. They are also seeking the Commission's agreement, she explained, to allow the parish to pay a \$2,000 fee in satisfaction of the open space regulations.

Attorney Casey described the history of the above parcel. She explained that the parcel is completely utilized and has been, without change, since its inception. In 2017, the Saint James Parish and the Church of the Assumption merged. With that merger, Father Cavanaugh became pastor of both church sites, which are still being used.

The total parcel on which the Church of the Assumption is located consists of 5.72 acres, according to Attorney Casey, which would be deemed a residential subdivision, which requires open space of 10%. She noted that the dedication of open space is not feasible, as the property is already constructed.

Mr. Prause reiterated that there would be no change to the lots other than the subdivision.

Attorney Casey concurred, stating it is the creation of one lot.

Mr. Prause sought clarification that the parcel conforms to Residence A standards for the zone, with which Attorney Casey agreed.

Mr. Bordeaux stated there are no outstanding comments from Staff, noting the proposed lot is in compliance with the zoning dimensional standards, has sidewalks and utilities, and for all intents and purposes is an existing residential home without its own property lines.

Mr. Prause commented that there is a request for approval relative to the lack of open space based on Section 4.07.06 (a) of the Subdivision Regulations, with a \$2,000 payment in lieu of open space. He questioned if that was the intent of that section of the regulations.

Mr. Bordeaux was unaware whether that was the intent when the section was drafted. In his opinion, the strict application would be unreasonable.

Mr. Kennedy noted that in the staff review, Mr. Bordeaux said the plans must be tied to the Town of Manchester control coordinates, and asked whether that was in the staff memoranda from Mr. DiBiasi referenced in the proposed motion of approval. Mr. Bordeaux confirmed it was.

Mr. Kennedy questioned whether the \$2,000 fee must be listed in the motion. Mr. Bordeaux reported it would be appropriate to amend the motion to include the \$2,000.

There were no members of the public to speak.

**MOTION:** Mr. Stebe moved to close the public hearing on application 2019-010. Mr. Kennedy seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

**SIDEWALK AND CURB PLAN 2019-2024** – Proposed amendments to the Town Sidewalk and Curb Plan.

Mr. Matthew Bordeaux, Senior Planner, stated that his plan is to discuss and gather feedback from the public and the Commission concerning the required update to the Town's Sidewalk and Curb Plan pursuant to the Town's Sidewalk and Curb Ordinance. He explained that the plan must be updated every five years and was last updated in April 2014.

The previous plan update, he noted, included editorial improvements to the plan itself; there were no recommendations of changes to the plan other than to update the dates of the upcoming plan period. Mr. Bordeaux reported recommendations for priority streets to be considered by the Commission that the Engineering Division sees as the potential for the next round of gap closures. He also noted deletions for streets that were approved in the last five-year cycle. Mr. Bordeaux comprehensively detailed the map of proposed projects to the Commission. He explained that the recommendations from the Engineering Division and the Planning Department would be to add some additional streets to the list of priority streets, noting that his information does not reflect a schedule.

Mr. Bordeaux reiterated that there are not many proposed revisions to the plan itself; the five-year plan would be replaced and updated, and the list of priority streets would be improved. The map will then be amended to show the improvements that have been made in the previous five-year period and to eliminate the removal area.

The next steps in the process, according to Mr. Bordeaux, would be to gather feedback, make any revisions considered necessary and then share the proposed plan with the Board of Directors.

Mr. Bergin questioned whether the financing of the bituminous connections to the greenway are any different from the actual expansions of sidewalks being proposed. He asked about the criteria for determining that the sidewalk or path is in an inappropriate location.

Mr. Bordeaux proceeded to explain the funding options. He reported that if a path or sidewalk has no connections or accessibility, Engineering may determine to hold off on the connection until the entire project could be completed.

Mr. Bergin asked whether there are any other considerations, such as utility poles.

Mr. Bordeaux replied that the Engineering Division would determine the logistics.

Mr. Prause questioned if there are regional bike path plans for trail extensions.

Mr. Bordeaux asserted that the bituminous paths are not trails, and have been determined to be more appropriate than a concrete sidewalk due to the rural character of the area. He noted that the regional bike path is shown on the plan, and where appropriate they do integrate.

Mr. Prause noted the map legend and inquired about the proposed removals; Mr. Bordeaux explained the areas marked for removal.

Mr. Anderson clarified that there is a regional bike and pedestrian plan by CRCOG, which utilizes a proposed multi-use path map that highlights connections which are to be made regionally. He reiterated Mr. Bordeaux's point that many proposed connections are to connect to the regional assets.

Mr. Stebe referred to Line Street and a prior discussion about the current plan and questioned whether Birch Mountain Road would be a good idea, similar to Line Street, or if it is even feasible.

Mr. Bordeaux suggested that the Commission could consider adding Birch Mountain Road to Dennison Ridge North to ensure that gap closure is more of a priority than the entire street.

Mr. Stebe referred to the “payment in lieu of” provision for sidewalks and assumed there is nothing in the regulations that differentiates between a sidewalk and a trail bike lane. Mr. Anderson explained that there is no distinction, though that could be looked into.

Ms. Christine Ladd, 14 Niles Drive, introduced herself. She asked whether residents are required to shovel bituminous paths.

Mr. Bordeaux noted that the subject had arisen at the Hillstown Road meeting. He reported that, at this time, the bituminous paths are considered rural in character and there would not be a requirement for the homeowner to remove the snow.

A general discussion was held to determine whether the hearing should be held open, and there was a suggestion to change the color for proposed sidewalk removals.

Mr. Bergin commented that there is value in connecting the recreational systems and neighborhood assets. However, his priority would be the walkability of neighborhoods, rather than holding all segments of the plan equal.

**MOTION:** Mr. Kennedy moved to close the public hearing. Ms. Scorso seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The Chairman closed the public hearing at 7:55 P.M.

I certify these minutes were adopted on the following date:

April 1, 2019  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Eric Prause, Chairman

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