

**MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING
HELD BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MARCH 1, 2021**

VIRTUAL MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM

ROLL CALL:

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

Alternate Members: Julian Stoppelman
Bonnie Potocki
Teresa Ike

Also Present: Gary Anderson, Director of Planning
Megan Pilla, Senior Planner
Nancy Martel, Recording Secretary

The Chairman opened the Public Hearing at 7 PM. The secretary read the legal notice when the call was made.

MARCOS A. MUESES – Special Exception under Art. II, Sec. 5.02.02 for a place of worship at 182 South Main Street. – Special Exception (2020-076)

Mr. Marcos Mueses, owner of 182-184 South Main Street, introduced himself. He stated that he would like to lease the property for a place of worship. The tenants will mark the parking spaces in the front of the property, enlarge the bathroom, repair the back exit, and repair the back stairs.

Mr. Prause asked if the church will be at 182 South Main Street, a separate building from 184 South Main Street. He asked for clarification of the location of the parking spots.

Mr. Mueses informed Mr. Prause that the parking will be in the front of the property. There are five spaces in the front, including the handicap parking space. For the tenants on the other side, there is parking space in the back.

Mr. Prause inquired whether the church parking lot will be on the south side of the building or between the building and the road.

Mr. Mueses replied that it is in front of the house, between the road and the house. It is a small church, currently about eight members, and he stated that he is a member of the church. The space has been well insulated, ensuring there will be no disturbance to other tenants and

neighbors. The congregation meets three times per week, though only one time per week currently because of the pandemic.

Mr. Prause stated that in the Commission's packet, it appears there are events on Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday for a few hours each day.

Ms. Poland referred to the insulation and questioned whether there are any tenants above the worship area. She pointed out that the letter said they do not have a live band yet.

Mr. Mueses responded that there are no tenants above the commercial space.

Mr. Kennedy noted that it has been referred to as commercial space and questioned how it has been used in the past.

Mr. Mueses explained that it was used as a pizza shop.

Ms. Potocki questioned whether there will be any outdoor events associated with the church.

Ms. Mueses reported that he does not know of any at this time, and understood he would have to follow all the Town regulations.

Ms. Pilla stated that there are no outstanding Staff comments. She noted that the Traffic Engineer sought to ensure that the handicap parking space is marked properly.

Mr. Prause commented that there is generally a landscape requirement for this type of application, and speculated on whether it would be appropriate to waive the requirement for screening or a landscaped border. Additionally, he questioned whether such a waiver should be part of the motion.

Ms. Pilla explained that the property shares a driveway so it is not possible to install landscaping. This is a case where the lot configuration makes it appropriate to waive the requirement. She was unsure whether that should be part of the motion.

Mr. Anderson explained that the waiver and the regulation should be cited.

Mr. Prause reported that it is referenced in the memo to the Commission, Art. II, Sec. 1. The motion should make the waiver a condition of the approval. He noted that the lot for the church will be the five spots on the east side of the building, though there is no curb cut. Mr. Prause questioned whether the Traffic Engineer approved the lack of a curb cut, and Ms. Pilla replied that he did.

Attorney Geoffrey Naab, 188 South Main Street, introduced himself, giving some history of the location. The location has been essentially vacant for quite a long time. He reported that he and his wife do not object to the application and welcome the church as new neighbors.

Mr. Mueses added that the Town may have concerns about the growth of the church. He commented that, if the church grows, they will relocate to a larger building.

Mr. Felix Castro, pastor of the church, said the church was founded in 2012. As a church, they have worked with the public schools, the Police Department and the Fire Department. Mr. Castro reported that he will be moving to Philadelphia, though his heart will be in Manchester. The group will still have their meetings, according to Mr. Castro. His church will be in Philadelphia and the Manchester location will be their daughter church, and will ensure that every Town regulation will be followed.

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

The public hearing was closed at 7:20 P.M.

I certify these minutes were adopted on the following date:

March 15, 2021
Date

Eric Prause, Chairman

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