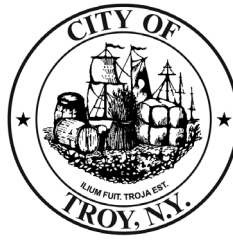


Wm. Patrick Madden
Mayor

Christopher Nolin
Deputy Mayor



Dylan Turek
Commissioner of Planning

Phone: (518) 279-7166
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Planning Commission

433 River St., Ste. 5001
Troy, New York 12180

MEETING MINUTES

The Planning Commission of the City of Troy, New York, conducted a public meeting at **6:00 P.M. on Wednesday, July 19th, 2023**, in person for the Board and available via Zoom conferencing, to act upon the following requests, referred by the Bureau of Code Enforcement of the City of Troy, for review and approval.

6:04 pm – Meeting called to order.

Commissioners in Attendance

William Comiskey (WC), Suzanne Spellen (SS), Roddy Yagan (RY), Anthony Mohen (AM), Sara Wengert (SW), James Rath (JR), Stephen Maple (SM)

Also, in Attendance

Andy Brick (Planning and Zoning Attorney), Eric Ferraro (Assistant Planner), Dylan Turek (Commissioner of Planning), Richard Morrissey (Corporate Counsel)

Administrative Items

Adoption of Meeting Minutes from June 21st, 2023, by Resolution

- **.. Motions to: Adopt June PC meeting minutes . . . seconded.**

	Absent	Yes	No	Abstain	Recused
Roddy Yagan		X			
Sara Wengert		X			
Suzanne Spellen		X			
Anthony Mohen		X			
James Rath	X				
William Comiskey		X			
Stephen Maple		X			

- **Motion to: Adopt June PC meeting minutes . passed 6-0**

*6:06 PM, Commissioner Rath enters.

*Chairman Yagan makes an adjustment to the agenda’s order, bringing ‘New Business’ as the first to present:

New Business

[PLPC 2023 0039](#) –1011 2nd Avenue (70.64-1-1, 70.56-1-6) [Planned Development District]
Concept/Site Plan Review – SEQRA (Type I)

The applicant, Starlight Development LLC, is proposing to construct 3 multifamily apartment buildings (231 units) with underground parking and surface parking, travel lanes, sidewalks, and multiuse path on an undeveloped 11-acre parcel. Site enhancements include private connections to municipal water/sewer as well as on site stormwater management.

Written by Eric Ferraro, On Behalf of the Executive Secretary

Additional information regarding the above listed actions is available by contacting the Planning Commission’s Assistant Planner, eric.ferraro@troyny.gov.

As required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, auxiliary aids and services are available upon request. Please give one-week advance notice for services needed.

***A/V complications**

***Corporate Counsel Richard Morrissey stands in for Andy Brick, who has recused himself from this agenda item.**

- Applicant presentation: Brian Oysterhaut and John Ahearn
- Commissioner comments and questions to applicant:
 1. S.S. asks about an inclusion of recognition of indigenous peoples. Asks if there will be any intention to preserve some of virgin forest.
 2. J.R. echo's S.S. comment on forest. Has concerns about vagueness of open space. Wants to see as much vegetation preserved as possible.
 3. S.S. Comments on building design and wonders if architects can make less generic. J.R., S.W. & A.M. second.
 4. A.M. comments on parking. Thinks it's over parked. Would like to see less parking. Entertains idea of land banking parking.
 5. R.Y. asks about allotment of parking spaces: buildings. If parking spaces are reduced, there should be more investment on façade and other site features/public amenities (ex. Sporting amenities, playground, etc.). Wants to see more floral features. Talks about color tones on building panels/façade. Thinks they should activate rooftop. Asks about the multi-use path and what's being done to make it publicly welcoming. Suggests a water feature. Makes recommendations for kayak launch area, wonders if it's possible to put in a water line/hose.
 6. J.R. asks about width of multi-use path. Doesn't see bicyclists using but believes signage would assist in public recognition for use. Asks about the off-site sidewalk and if they're moving the curbing [of 2nd Ave]. If so, what the curb-to-curb width would be. Thinks current road is too wide without on-street parking. Talks about narrowing the avenue. Would like design team to look into this to make site amenities described in conversation.
 7. R.Y. about aesthetics. Talks about depth within façade, especially on the west [river] side. Potentially change color scheme for windows from white to black casements.
 8. S.W. After the project is completed, any of the forested area that's cleared and where lawn is proposed, would they consider planting meadow? J.R. seconds this.
 9. J.R. Asks about candidates of tenancy. Emphasizes need to have as little asphalt and lawn as possible.
 10. R.Y. Asks about a lighting plan. And timeline.
 11. S.M. Asks about what applicant is doing to avoid the archaeological sensitive areas of the project; Asks if there was there any thought about consolidating the buildings, maybe increase in height for more units? Seconds J.R.'s comments about the sidewalks and the width of the avenue. Believes it's too wide and encourages a narrowing of the avenue.
 12. R.Y. states to J.R.'s point, "it could meet the requirement of a sidewalk while being a multi- use path and still comply with your commitment in 3.7."
- Request for public comment: No public comment under "meeting" for conception/sketch plan review.
- Commissioner deliberation:
 1. S.M. →R.M. – "If there is a major/substantive change to the site, would that re-trigger the SEQRA process or would it be covered in current SEQRA?"
 2. R.M. – "A major/substantive change to the planned development could re-trigger SEQRA process."
 3. R.M. – "To supplement what John [Ahearn] said, the ordinance we drafted is in great detail." Reiterates previous comment about how SEQRA "could" be re-triggered. Doesn't expect a major change because the ordinance is specific.
 4. R.M. – Clarifies (in response to J.R.'s comments on a potential sidewalk along rode) that sidewalks cannot be asphalt and need to be concrete.
 5. J.R. – States that a shared use path 8-10 ft wide would not be a sidewalk.
 6. R.M. – the ordinance requires that they build sidewalks along the road so that pedestrians can get to and from the site to at least Hannaford.
- Applicant response:
 1. Responding to S.S., they intend to have some kiosk in the kayak launch area with some wayfinding. Thinks it would make a lot of sense to do a tribute to the history of the site and the

archaeological findings associated; virgin forest → to the extent they can maintain a vegetative buffer that didn't impact development, they did preserve. As part of the zoning ordinance, they're required to maintain at least 2.5 acres green space/vegetation.

2. Responding to J.R., addresses concerns about vegetation.
3. Responds to S.S. about architectural design. Must be a return on investment. Can bring in arch to address next time. If you could provide some specifics.
4. Wonders if PC could landbank parking.
5. Responding to R.Y. – thinks about 110 [parking stalls per building]. If we can reduce the amount of asphalt, that would be ideal.
6. Wonders if a sub-committee could work with architect to address façade features PC is looking for.
7. Still playing with layout of multi-use path. Responds to questions about the multi-use path, which is stated to be 10 feet wide.
8. To put the sidewalks in, the curb would have to be disturbed. Not sure what the curb-to-curb width would be. But there were talks with city council about narrowing the road to put in plantings.
9. Responds to S.W., “yes”, the lighter area on the site plan is proposed lawn. They can talk about planting meadow with the applicant.
10. Open to suggestions on the lighting plan. Timeline is arbitrary at the moment.
11. Responding to S.M. To the extent that we can stay away from [archaeological] concerns they will. They were able to avoid some but not all. To the areas that can't be avoided they intend to have a phase III data recovery plan. During construction, they [the archaeologists] will be right there.
12. In studying SEQRA, we incorporated a larger envelop [of consideration]. We're somewhat limited due to the details of the zoning ordinance, which defines the site plan.
13. Responding to S.M. – We are restricted in height per the ordinance.
14. [The ordinance] requirement to build 750 ft of linear sidewalk and it would need to be to the city's standards and to be in concrete.
15. Wonders if the board would consider application completeness and hearing date.

- **B.C. Motions to: Declare the application complete . S.W. seconded.**

	Absent	Yes	No	Abstain	Recused
Roddy Yagan		X			
Sara Wengert		X			
Suzanne Spellen		X			
Anthony Mohen		X			
James Rath		X			
William Comiskey		X			
Stephen Maple		X			

- **Motion to: Declare the application complete . passed 7-0**

- **A.M. Motions to: Schedule hearing for the August 16th PC meeting. S.M. seconded.**

	Absent	Yes	No	Abstain	Recused
Roddy Yagan		X			
Sara Wengert		X			
Suzanne Spellen		X			
Anthony Mohen		X			
James Rath		X			
William Comiskey		X			
Stephen Maple		X			

- **Motion to: Schedule hearing for the August 16th PC meeting. passed 7-0**

Old Business

PLPC 2022 0097 –1818 Fifth Ave. (101.53-6-1) [DMU/DT I] Site Plan Review –SEQRA (Type I)

The applicant, The Rosenblum Companies c/o Bohler, proposes to redevelop the current site of a single story, former and vacant bank building into a 4-story, 71-unit, apartment complex that seeks to restore the continuous pre-urban streetscape. The building will be the city's first zero-emission multifamily building and will provide residential amenities, bicycle infrastructure and limited onsite parking with additional off-site parking.

- Applicant presentation: Jeff Mirel & Zach Ghol
- Commissioner comments and questions to applicant:
 1. S.S. – Asks about parking logistics; Asks about front setback/lack of light on the street (5th).
 2. B.C. –Concerns about parking. Thinks neighbors have legitimate concern. S.S. agrees.
 3. R.Y. – contextualizes the situation.
 4. J.R. – Asks about rear of building. Hears B.C.'s point but thinks there's too much blacktop and doesn't agree with 2-hour parking. Doesn't think it's fair to put it on applicant to address.
 5. A.M. – 2-hour parking being addressed could help alleviate the problem but it's outside the purview of the PC.
 6. R.Y. expresses comments in support of and in opposition to the proposal. Supports city comprehensive plan. Voices some concerns. Believes SEQRA concerns are present. Cites SEQRA concerns.
 7. J.R. comments on "affordability" [of housing] and how you get there. Wonders if there are some additional plantings that could go into the green spaces. Asks about universal access package. Asks about assurances to that program's longevity for tenants.
 8. S.M. agrees with J.R. on infrastructure. Comments further on concept of development/density and how it relates to infrastructural concerns/benefits. Asks applicant about community wash facilities and composting.
 9. S.W. Urges applicant to reconsider development of east façade and addresses Union St. Asks to allow PC to be involved in the design development of facades in general to be aware of.
 10. B.C. thinks there are a lot of good things to this project, despite stated concerns about parking. Asks about the park share program. Wishes applicant would commit offsite parking.
 11. R.Y. reiterates Union St. side development discussion points for clarification.
 12. J.R. asks applicant to provide concrete sidewalks over drive entrances. R.Y. seconds.
 13. A.M. Comments on communal washing facilities. Comments on conversation regarding the city comprehensive plan.
 14. R.Y. "Is there any potential to reduce either the number of units or provide a comparable number of units by expanding in any direction?" Asks for applicant to discuss pocket park.
- Request for public comment: Yes
 1. Vic Christopher – supports.
 2. John from CDTA – supports.
 3. Silva Menard – supports.
 4. Gerry De Seve – opposes.
 5. Jim De Seve – opposes.
 6. Richard Webster esq. – represents neighborhood opposition.
 7. Brian Barker – Supports
 8. Bruce Reuben – opposes.
 9. Tara Engstrom – opposes.
 10. Mary K. – opposes.
 11. Rene Panetta – comments on 'deconstruction'.
 12. Charlotte Heiden – supports.
 13. Marie Gavazzi – supports.
 14. Jeff Betts – supports.
 15. Zach Ghol – late entry letter of support from SHPO

- 16. Edwin Anchor – supports.
- 17. Emily Menn – supports.
- Commissioner deliberation:
 - 1. A.B. confirms PC ability to close public comment.
 - 2. R.Y. discloses a discussion was had with a Rosenblum employee. A.B. confirms not a conflict; If there is anything discussed that influences decision making, to disclose. R.Y. states there was not.
 - 3. J.R. – respectfully doesn’t share R.Y.’s points of concern and take on the city comprehensive plan. See’s new development as a means of bringing improvement on existing infrastructure.
 - 4. S.M. – Thinks the TDMP is excellent. Addresses subject of affordable housing.
 - 5. B.C. Thinks Union Street side of development could be appealing.
 - 6. R.Y. addresses concept of “infill”. Thinks the applicant could work out a detail of development over structured parking. Wishes there was a courtyard space.
 - 7. J.R. is glad there is no courtyard in this project.
 - 8. A.B. reiterates points of interest stated by the commissioners and the detail of a sub-committee.
- Applicant response:
 - 1. Responds to S.S.’s questions on parking, setbacks, and sunlight.
 - 2. Responds to B.C.’s concerns about parking.
 - 3. Responds to R.Y.
 - 4. Applicant responds to public comments.
 - 5. Addresses concerns and comments voiced by R.Y.
 - Addresses tenancy and the nature of apartment buildings.
 - 6. Has some concerns about the health of some of the existing trees. Intends to conduct more research on plantings and are open to suggestions.
 - 7. Responds to J.R. about the universal access package for tenants. States no cost to the tenants. It is a building amenity. Responds to assurances for longevity of the program.
 - 8. Addresses comments and questions from S.M.
 - 9. Addresses comments made on affordable housing.
 - 10. Responds to S.W., “happy to”.
 - 11. Responds to B.C. about park share program and other questions/concerns/areas of support.
 - 12. Responds to ideas of developing the Union Street side of the project.
 - 13. Responds to R.Y.’s questions about number of units/density and pocket park.

• **J.R. Motions to: Close public comment period . A.M. seconded.**

	Absent	Yes	No	Abstain	Recused
Roddy Yagan		X			
Sara Wengert		X			
Suzanne Spellen		X			
Anthony Mohen		X			
James Rath		X			
William Comiskey		X			
Stephen Maple		X			

• **Motion to: Close public comment period. passed 7-0**

• **S.W. Motions to: Make a negative declaration for SEQRA . A.M. seconded.**

	Absent	Yes	No	Abstain	Recused
Roddy Yagan			X		
Sara Wengert		X			
Suzanne Spellen		X			
Anthony Mohen		X			
James Rath		X			
William Comiskey		X			
Stephen Maple		X			

• **Motion to: Make a negative declaration for SEQRA. passed 6-1**

- **S.W. Motions to: Approve Site plan with the following conditions: for a sub committee consisting of S.W., J.R., and S.S., to review all facades and adjustments to and a landscaping plan, completion of and to be in satisfaction/compliance of a 3rd party P.E. review. J.R. seconded.**

	Absent	Yes	No	Abstain	Recused
Roddy Yagan			X		
Sara Wengert		X			
Suzanne Spellen		X			
Anthony Mohen		X			
James Rath		X			
William Comiskey		X			
Stephen Maple		X			

- **Motion to: Approve Site plan with the following conditions: for a sub committee consisting of S.W., J.R., and S.S., to review all facades and adjustments to and a landscaping plan, completion of and to be in satisfaction/compliance of a 3rd party P.E. review. passed 6-0**

Sub-committee consists of: James Rath, Suzanne Spellen, and Sara Wengert.

PLPC 2023 0031 –1776 Sixth Ave (101.54-2-16) [DMU/DT II]
 Change of Use/Site Plan Review –SEQRA (Type I)

The applicant, First Columbia, LLC., seeks a change of use of the existing 2 story office building from commercial to residential & to construct an additional 4 floors, creating 64 residential units (184 bedrooms) for graduate student housing.

- Applicant presentation: Nate and Chris Bette
- Commissioner comments and questions to applicant:
 1. S.S. thinks doing something with the color will help.
 2. B.C. comments on use of brick
 3. R.Y. offers suggestions on color scheme.
 4. S.W. chimes in on the brick, color scheme and states she likes the design of the 2nd floor.
 5. R.Y. asks about some skylights: design features. Asks to walk through renderings.
 6. J.R. comments on use of copper on exterior. Asks about other design features of building. Gives feedback on rooftop access and placement of features/greenery. Asks about a staircase to the 1st floor terrace. Wants to see deciduous trees in front area. Asks about windows and parking (greening up that area and directionals). Talks about bicycle amenities/infrastructure. Suggests a minimum 5 ft wide sidewalk instead of greenspace outside of bicycle room on rear. Asks about the concrete walkways around building. Suggests moving the bicycle room towards the front of the building to alleviate conflict.
 7. S.M. asks if discussion was had about not having 2 driveways. Suggests treatment to the driveway itself to indicate it's shared with bicyclists. Suggests concrete sidewalks across drive entrances.
 8. S.W. agrees with J.R. regarding a staircase to the terrace. Addresses color and design.
 9. R.Y. asks about window setbacks.
 10. E.F. asks about discussions with CDTA.
- Request for public comment: Yes
 1. Silva Menard – unsure of design
 2. Emily Menn - supports.
- Commissioner deliberation:
- Applicant response:
 1. Responds to commissioners about brick and color scheme.
 2. Provides detail of features seen in renderings
 3. Responds to J.R. – amenable to changes to the rooftop/greenspaces. Addresses comments on a staircase to the terrace. On terrace, responds with suggestions for planters and gas fire pits.
 4. Agrees to a 5 ft sidewalk per J.R.'s suggestion outside of bicycle room.

5. Responds to S.M. – It wasn’t because they can’t accommodate a 2 lane on either side. But pledges to dedicate some effort in providing additional pedestrian accommodations.
6. They intend to have discussions with CDTA for building amenities.

• **S.S. Motions to: Close public comment period . B.C. seconded.**

	Absent	Yes	No	Abstain	Recused
Roddy Yagan		X			
Sara Wengert		X			
Suzanne Spellen		X			
Anthony Mohen		X			
James Rath		X			
William Comiskey		X			
Stephen Maple		X			

• **Motion to: Close public comment period . passed 7-0**

• **S.W. Motions to: Make a negative declaration for SEORA . A.M. seconded.**

	Absent	Yes	No	Abstain	Recused
Roddy Yagan		X			
Sara Wengert		X			
Suzanne Spellen		X			
Anthony Mohen		X			
James Rath		X			
William Comiskey		X			
Stephen Maple		X			

• **Motion to: Make a negative declaration for SEORA. passed 7-0**

• **.. Motions to: To approve site plan with the following conditions: a subcommittee to continue working with applicant on façade aesthetics and minor site amenities including landscaping, access to terrace and pedestrian pathways. Additionally, a requirement to have DPU sign off and satisfying any conditions resulting from a 3rd party P.E. review . R.Y. seconded.**

	Absent	Yes	No	Abstain	Recused
Roddy Yagan		X			
Sara Wengert		X			
Suzanne Spellen		X			
Anthony Mohen		X			
James Rath		X			
William Comiskey		X			
Stephen Maple		X			

• **Motion to: To approve site plan with the following conditions: a subcommittee to continue working with applicant on façade aesthetics and minor site amenities including landscaping, access to terrace and pedestrian pathways. Additionally, a requirement to have DPU sign off and satisfying any conditions resulting from a 3rd party P.E. review. passed 7-0**

S.M. motioned to: Adjourn July PC meeting at: 10:39 PM . J.R. seconded.

	Absent	Yes	No	Abstain	Recused
Roddy Yagan		X			
Sara Wengert		X			
Suzanne Spellen		X			
Anthony Mohen		X			
James Rath		X			
William Comiskey		X			
Stephen Maple		X			

Motion to: Adjourn meeting at: 10:39 PM passed 7-0.