Durkee st project

2 messages

John Seiden <johnseiden7@icloud.com> Wed, May 6, 2020 at 10:26 AM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

"Plattsburgh the land of miss opportunities"

My name is John Seiden I live in Plattsburgh New York I have been a redeveloper of real estate since 1987 putting most of my energies in the redevelopment of downtown Plattsburgh. Most notably converting "Skid Row" on City Hall Pl. four buildings thirty Apartments seven store fronts, the old Merkel Department Store building at 43 Durkee St. conversion of 15,000 ft.² of high-end office suites which sat vacant for four years, converting the old grand union grocery store at 159 Margaret St. into 30,000 ft.² medical suites. Moving Plattsburgh City Court out of City Hall to a brand new state of the art facility at 22 US Oval are just a few of these projects. In all these developments the spirit of a win win win collaboration between myself city officials, lending institutions And countless building professionals was the better meant of our community. I served on two downtown commissions Under two different mayors, and was on the city zoning board for nearly 20 years. I was appointed by Governor Cuomo to the DRI committee through Mayor Colin Read to facilitate the Best and highest use of the $10 millions awarded to Plattsburgh . So I believe that I have the knowledge and standing to point out a few observations and my total dismay and heartbreak to what our community is witnessing with the "Durkee Street Scam" The hijacking of would could be an opportunity of a lifetime.

The project as being presented is no way in the spirit of what the DRI program was meant to be used for in the reimagining And renaissance of our downtown. This project as presented is nothing more then what I will refer to as a "gated community" for high-end renters and provides almost zero Creativity to the proposed residence and our community as a whole. The over-utilization of the template of land borders on the bazaar in no way way fits in to the character of our downtown not only in the visual aspects With the five story Behemoth but in the holistic spirit and soul of our historic roots. The lack of sensitivity of prime development corporation to this fabric shows their interest is solely economic to maximize their profits which by the way all city residents should be up in arms of the giveaway not only by the city of Plattsburgh but the $4 million that will create no real jobs the fact of the matter of them paying no taxes to a city in such dire straits magnified by coming out of this pandemic loss of city jobs borders on criminal. Over the last several weeks I have witnessed the dog and pony show of their high-priced Prime lawyers telling us Plattsburgh we have it all wrong and they have all the answers we are to trust them, if we have learned nothing from all our squandered miss opportunities of the past I don't believe the snake oil salesmen. They have nothing invested in our community and we will witness them taking the cream off the top and put nothing back in.

First and most importantly is parking it's parking it's parking it's parking I have paid into the special parking district tens of thousands of dollars for many years for a reason tenants need a place to park where they live and work, folks going to the restaurants need a place to park where the restaurants are that has been the success of the parking lot I find it extremely interesting that we're giving this parking lot away and have demolished a bank building to create parking somewhere else and in my opinion not where it is now needed. The manipulation of calculations of needing parking to this day is still a moving target but let me make it personal my building that I own at 43 Durkee St. (which is directly across the street of this proposed development) daily uses 50 parking spaces for my tenants I have noticed now in the current Prime plan there is not enough parking just for my building what about the other buildings and the other tenants what are they to do what is the Clinton county employees supposed to do. This Administration is bending backwards to accommodate this miss guided scheme with the notion that this development is going to be on the The economic catalyst . you're missing the fact of the harm that it's going to do to all the existing businesses and people that utilize this parking lot I have already been given notice by several tenants that lease in my 43 Durkee St. building if this goes forward they will have no place to park and will not renew their leases with me now how is that good for economic development explain that to me. I hear the prime lawyers talk of the minimal effect they are delusional they are greedy pigs at the trough only worried about themselves and could care less of the harm they're doing to the existing fabric the existing need of that parking lot not only to me but to affordable furniture the co-op irises restaurant the Mexican restaurant Hoboes to Our House Bistro. You must hold their feet accountable do not put these people out of business for the sheer greed and the over use of this template of land for their own financial gain this is not economic development this is economic disaster. I've been listening to prime and their presenter utilizing all the buzz words like" walkable city" but yet in their plan they they are providing a minuscule walkway from Durkee Street to the river by their dumpster this is bordering on sad they want to take 8 foot sidewalks to 4 foot once again just showing nothing more than their incompetence and sheer lust for greed. Our Gateway to downtown at the intersection of Bridge and City Hall and Durkee street at peak hours in the morning and at 5 PM has created a traffic jam already this development press the boundaries to an unacceptable levels and should be addressed. The west edge of the bridge will be a crosswalk connecting the river trail the over congestion at this location will certainly create additional chaos at The same location is their underground parking entrance and exit this needs to be looked at with a fine tooth comb. The propose sidewalk on the south end of Bridge Street only being 4 feet once again shows their insensitivity of the true nature of our downtown and I missed opportunity for widen sidewalks to create outdoor cafés etc. etc. Which again boils down to the overuse and lack of creative design. They wine because of the incline commercial would not work but let's remember years ago that was all commercial and by the way across the street has the same elevation and the co-op etc. works just fine with the same elevation so don't buy that crap. Creating residential at street level is beyond the norm and should never take place ever , this alone creates a very dangerous president and will dramatically affect the new streetscapes remember downtown is for commercial at street level period. And as far as the gateway to downtown this will be the first thing you see.

At the last zoning presentation on Zoom kept hearing about the economics it's all about the economics no that's incorrect it's all about greed. Remember they're paying no taxes they have a pilot no money is going into the city coffers Plattsburgh city school district is not getting any fair share either. The planning and zoning boards have a duty to preserve the integrity of our community by no stretch of the imagination is this five story gated community have any place being put in our downtown it overshadows every historic building it should not be allowed and has failed the DRI mission. As far as The building materials should be copacetic with the existing brick construction. They should also be demanded to go back to the original DRI and allowing only half of the residential units be built that will alleviate the parking nightmare this will create and I believe would visually be more in tune to what we already have in our existing downtown.

In closing I have sat exactly where you are sitting and it's hard sometimes to do the right thing. I'm tired of hearing the prime lawyers disrespect discount and belittle the citizenry of Plattsburgh with our concerns we are unlike them we have a much greater vested interest in the outcome of what happens in our community Because this is where we live, they don't

Hey Prime I don't want to hear about Saratoga springs Burlington Vermont or anywhere else in New York this is Plattsburgh we're not buying your BS

John S. Seiden
J.S.Seiden Real Estate and Commercial Development

Sent from my iPad

> On Apr 2, 2020, at 4:51 PM, John Seiden <johnseiden7@icloud.com> wrote:

Sent from my iPhone

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Wed, May 6, 2020 at 11:25 AM
To: Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

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Zoning Board of Appeals Comment 5-18-2020 Andrew Golt

3 messages

CORVAIRWILD UGLYTRUK <corvairwild@gmail.com> Wed, May 13, 2020 at 10:37 PM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Mr. Ronald Nolland, Chairman

City of Plattsburgh Zoning Board of Appeals

cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Re: ZBA comments 5/18/2020: Appeal 2232-Durkee St-SUP-amend boundaries + 1st floor Apts

May 13th, 2020

Dear Zoning Board members:

I grew up in Montreal and have visited many cities and walked through many a downtown district. What attracted me most to live in downtown Plattsburgh was the quaintness and its walkability. Wide sidewalks and non-congested streets. Plattsburgh's charming turn of the century architecture has always made it a pleasure to walk downtown. Locally owned shops and restaurants are vital to any downtown district and remind me of home.

As someone who has lived in walking distance to downtown Plattsburgh for close 30 years, I've always enjoyed the quiet serenity that afternoon walks provided me. I have witnessed first- hand how careful and thoughtful planning have transformed a neighborhood into a thriving community. Prime's current proposal to build 115 apartments plus 15, 800 square feet of commercial space in the center of our small downtown is too large to fit into such a small space and is not in keeping with the historic character of downtown Plattsburgh.

One of the most important assets of any downtown is free off street parking, especially in our region during winter months. As a native of Montreal, I know all too well the difficulties with finding off street parking space in the winter due to narrow streets and parking shortages. People who live, work and eat downtown have always been able to find year round off street parking even during the worst snow storms. Which is quite the opposite of any other city that I have lived in. I have always been amazed at how efficient Plattsburgh's public works department is in removing snow and plowing city streets, but realize that this is primarily attributed to the fact that we have had the luxury of having off street free parking in the center of our downtown. Removing all 3.3 acres of the Durkee Street parking would have a detrimental effect to our downtown and city.

I ask the members of both ZBA and Planning Board that they have Prime present a smaller project that would be built in phases rather than try to build such a massive structure in the Durkee Street lot. Furthermore, that the city retain at least ½ acre of the Durkee Street lot to guarantee that downtown property owners are able to continue to use a portion of it for free off-street parking in the center of downtown.

Finally, as both a landlord and long-time resident of both Montreal and Plattsburgh, I can attest to the fact that first floor apartments are a problem in the center of any downtown business district due to safety concerns and the fact that unlike Montreal, Plattsburgh has no public transportation and therefore such a design would add to the problem with lack of parking off street in center city.

Andrew Golt,

owner of 8 south Platt Street, Plattsburgh, NY

Virus-free. www.avg.com

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 12:41 PM
To: CORVAIRWILD UGLYTRUK <corvairwild@gmail.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com
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City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 12:41 PM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

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Re: May 18, 2020 ZBA comments: Appeal 2232-city's request to amend boundaries + Prime's request-SUP for 1st floor Apts

3 messages

Andy MacDougall <serious_61@yahoo.com> Wed, May 13, 2020 at 3:00 PM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Mr. Ronald Nolland, Chairman
City of Plattsburgh Zoning Board of Appeals

May 13, 2020

Dear Zoning Board members and Chairperson:

I have been a city resident since 1965. Across the decades I've lived in various locations around Plattsburgh, including the west end and downtown. I've long observed how developers have worked with residents and the city planning and zoning boards to downscale projects, meet city zoning requirements, and improve the neighborhoods they come into.
That said, I see no improvement potential whatsoever in plans to overtake the Durkee St. parking lot with a new apartment complex, and am therefore emphatically opposed to the proposition.
My perspective is not one that I have come by hastily. In fact it has marinated, so to speak, for quite some time in light of the initiation of my personal pro-activity on this issue months ago, when I circulated a petition on behalf of the proverbial loyal opposition. Since collecting over 100 signatures from fellow city residents, I've continued weighing all the variables in the equation at hand, which has only steeled my oppositional resolve.
My primary concern is that fulfillment of the planned development would strangle the current state of parking convenience, such as it is. The whole downtown-parking scenario has long festered in a state of insufficiency. Thus, the demolition of the Glens Falls National Bank on Margaret St. has been a step in the right direction toward remedying the problem. However, to follow this with the Durkee St. development would be like having taken one step forward, two steps back. And that is the understatement of the year.
In closing, may I say that city residents dependant on parking convenience in the downtown area hardly need this proposed insult to their personal and professional needs added to the injury of an extended lockdown.
Thank you for your time and attention to my input on the Durkee St. parking lot development proposal.

Sincerely,

Andy MacDougall
77 Brinkerhoff St.
Plattsburgh, NY 12901

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Wed, May 13, 2020 at 3:05 PM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

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City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Wed, May 13, 2020 at 3:05 PM
To: Andy MacDougall <serious_61@yahoo.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
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518-563-7701 ph
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www.cityofplattsburgh.com
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Zoning Board Comment for May 18, 2020 Meeting: Durkee St.

4 messages

Barrys <barryb721@verizon.net> Wed, May 13, 2020 at 9:42 AM
Reply-To: Barrys <barryb721@verizon.net>
To: "cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com" <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com>

May 13, 2020

Dear Mr. Nolland and Members of the Zoning Board,

Thank you for serving as volunteers on the City of Plattsburgh Zoning Board. I'm pretty sure it is a thankless job but one that is very important to Plattsburgh residents and our quality of life.

I am concerned that the Prime Development project for Durkee St. parking lot is too big and too dense for the location. It appears to me that the building rises up abruptly from the sidewalk, dwarfing pedestrians and nearby historic buildings on Bridge and Durkee as well as blocking sunlight and a view toward the Saranac River for people using our downtown.

On the South side, there appears to be a narrow sidewalk between Bridge Street roadway and where the building starts. That is uninviting to pedestrians. The underground parking garage exit at that location hosts a "pedestrian safety mirror" which indicates to me the line of site for walkers is quite limited if such a mirror is necessary.

In addition, the scale of the building limits access to the riverfront which I thought was the intention of the whole project, to create a user friendly nature-rich riverfront for the community. Instead, the structure turns it's back on Durkee St. in a horseshoe-shape, enclosing its own paved parking area that fronts the river. This has the affect of blocking the public from strolling through open green space toward the river from Durkee St.. Could the walkway provided be two or three times as wide, to be more park-like and less like an alley-way? More green space is definitely called for here.

Thank you for listening to my concerns. I don't have a dog in this fight or an economic interest in the outcome. I'm just a home-owner and long-time citizen of Plattsburgh who enjoys its quaint historic character and wishes to preserve that quality for the future. I think we can do better than the Prime Development Project and I trust your good will to represent us fairly.

Sincerely,
Barbara Barry
18 West Court St.
Plattsburgh NY 12901

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Wed, May 13, 2020 at 10:09 AM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

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City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Wed, May 13, 2020 at 10:11 AM
To: Barrys <barryb721@verizon.net>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com
[Quoted text hidden]

Barrys <barryb721@verizon.net> Wed, May 13, 2020 at 10:41 AM
Reply-To: Barrys <barryb721@verizon.net>
To: "cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com" <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com>

Thanks very much, Beth.

Take care,
Barb
[Quoted text hidden]

Mr. Ronald Nolland, Chairman
City of Plattsburgh Zoning Board of Appeals
cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Re: ZBA comments for May 18, 2020: Appeal 2232-City's request to amend boundaries of existing PUD at 22 Durkee Street & Prime's request for SUP to put apts. on 1st floor of 5-story mixed use development

May 15th, 2020

Dear Zoning Board members and Chairperson:

I ask board members to refer to my previous attached letters submitted in April and May of 2020 to remind everyone the reasons why ZBA members should deny the city's request to change boundary lines of the Durkee Street lot and PUD and to also deny Prime's request for a special use permit to build apartments on the first floor of their 5-story, over 160,000 sq. ft of rentable space + over 46,000 of underground parking. As I stated in my previous letters, first floor apartments will set a negative precedent and will forever transform our downtown, because all property owners will soon follow suite due to the rapid decline in retail store front. First floor apartments downtown are never safe and will only exasperate the parking shortage downtown.

Residents like myself who live near downtown have struggled for years to prevent overcrowding, erosion of green space, preservation of sidewalks and attract people to make this neighborhood their homes. Holding all developers and property owners to the same standards is critical to achieving this goal. All developers need to provide sufficient parking on site and meet city zoning code requirements for open space and parking, as a means to ensure that all buildings and parcels are not overcrowded. Fortunately for city residents ZBA members have always made sure that every land owner and developer meets city zoning code requirements and the criteria established by ZBA and PB, as ZBA chairperson, Ron Nolland stated during May 4, 2020's ZBA meeting. The only way to attract people to raise their families' downtown is to not make it profitable for landlords to convert these historic homes into multi-family dwellings.

Prime's recent changes to its site plan merely seems to be a way to placate the members of the ZBA in hopes that they will grant Prime's request to build a gargantuan PUD that fails to provide even the minimum on-site parking required by city code, less than 15% open space for its tenants and children to recreate, lacks safe access for emergency trucks, snow removal and obstructs visibility for drivers and pedestrians entering the site. Merely changing the roof line from sloped to flat does NOT lower the actual height of this structure, which still blocks sunlight to properties on Durkee Street. As one property owner said, who had worked for years as a prison guard, "a 5-story building of such magnitude is going to make me feel as though I am back in prison."

Pushing back this massive structure a few more feet from the south property boundary may seem like a compromise, but will ultimately result in Prime providing even fewer parking spaces on site and less open space. The only way to have sufficient open space for parking and green space on site is to reduce the foot print of this building, which Prime will never do. Since Prime is converting the formers farmer's market 5,800 sq. ft into commercial space, it can easily reduce the size of its mixed use complex. However, it is clear that Prime has no intention of reducing the

foot print of their massive 5 story, 160,000 sq. ft. of rentable space to meet zoning requirements or ensure that Prime is able to supply enough parking and green space on site for their tenants.

Prime's current mixed use development can NOT "fit" into the Durkee Street Lot, because it is too large and will most definitely create hardships for our local businesses and property owners, who have been promised that all 289 free off street parking spaces currently available to the public in the Durkee Street parking lot would be replaced in the center of downtown. The city's replacement parking plan remains 165 spaces short, because only 124 parking spaces are in the center of downtown, off street. Though Prime purports 50 parking spaces will be available for public use, Prime sheepishly admits that they can NOT guarantee these spots will be free and exclusively used by the public. It is quite obvious that Prime's tenants will need to use all 50 supposedly free public parking spaces in the Durkee Lot, because Prime lacks the open space to provide the 441 parking spaces it needs on site due to the massive size of its building and remains 58% short of the minimum parking required by city zoning code. It is unfair, unreasonable and unrealistic to ask people living and working downtown to park their cars and carry their groceries ½ mile home from Harbors ide's lot, especially during a snow storm.

Prime's project not only causes safety concerns for their tenants, because emergency vehicles, such as fire trucks, ambulances and plow trucks can't access the courtyard apartments, but Prime's plan to have fire trucks park on Bridge Street will obstruct traffic flow and creates a hazard for pedestrians and people trying to get to their parked cars. The fact that Prime has yet to make any changes to their site plans to address the safety concerns identified by Mr. Koziol from the LaBerge Group, such as; moving Prime's cross walk and entrance to their parking garage further away from Bridge Street and reducing the height of the structure to increase visibility for drivers and pedestrians, widening paved area in courtyard to enable access for emergency vehicles and downsizing the structure to provide sufficient open space to provide snow removal and safe access for the public to get to the Saranac River Trail is appalling.

This is further testament to the fact that Prime's plan is not well thought out and Prime Plattsburgh LLC does not care about the safety of its tenants or city residents. The fact that Board members have received numerous documents from expert engineers such as, Mr. Koziol, with LaBerge Group, criticisms from other sister boards pointing out some of the many problems Prime's current site plan poses to the public, along with Ken Bibbins, Regional Traffic Engineer (DOT) analysis of the city's proposed changes to Durkee Street which also poses great safety concerns and risks for the public, bears credence that Prime's PUD is poorly planned. As experts have said many times, Prime's current project fails to meet city code requirements for parking, open green space, set-backs, and accessibility for emergency services and is NOT in character with our historic downtown and does NOT fit into the site for which it is planned.

I like many residents enjoy walking downtown and look forward to a redevelopment plan that will enhance walkability rather than restrict our mobility. After reviewing Prime's site plan, it is clear that Prime's project will impede pedestrian traffic and make it extremely difficult for my handicap neighbors to traverse safely from Margaret Street to Bridge Street. Yesterday, I took a walk along the existing 9 foot sidewalk on Margaret Street over to Bridge Street. I was reminded how difficult it would be to walk on only a 4 ft. sidewalk

with street lamps and plantings, especially, if other pedestrians were walking their dogs or hand-in hand with their children. Planted trees, installed street lamps and a bench on 4 feet of the original 9 ft. wide sidewalk, along Bridge Street, reduced its walkability.

During May 4, 2020's meeting Prime repeatedly stated that its project is going to increase walkability in the center of downtown Plattsburgh, to which I would vehemently disagree. I walk downtown several times during the week and have noticed the difference that wider sidewalks like those along Margaret Street, Bridge Street and City Hall Place makes during peak business hours and wintertime. Several of my neighbors who live on Couch and Court Street are visually or physically impaired and find it impossible to travel along city sidewalks that are too narrow. I encourage Prime and board members to think about the 10-12 foot wide sidewalks in downtown Saratoga when working on plans to redevelop the Durkee Street lot. Reducing the foot print of Prime's mixed use development would enable them to provide at least a 10 foot buffer of green space with landscaping and lighting along Durkee and Bridge Street on site, so that the city residents and visitors can walk safely on an 8 foot wide sidewalk without reducing the width of Bridge Street. Residents would welcome any opportunity to work with Prime to come up with alternative site plans that would benefit everyone and increase the walkability of our downtown.

Prime's engineer and legal counsel seem to continually make contradictory or misleading statements regarding several aspects of their design. The 2-ft. paved bump out along the west side of Durkee Street was constructed to prevent car bumpers from protruding into Durkee Street, which would have made it a hazard for drivers and pedestrians. It is troubling to listen to Prime's developers when speaking about their parking plan and structure being separate from surrounding streets and sidewalks along Durkee and Bridge Street. Prime makes it seem as though the 6 parallel parking spaces that will be created along the south side of Bridge Street and the width of the sidewalk is out of their control, yet they intend to use it for their tenants, because Prime has failed to provide sufficient on-site parking and open green space for this project. Prime has implied that this project should be viewed apart from surrounding streets and sidewalks, which is an impossibility and one of the problems with this PUD. Every aspect of any PUD must be reviewed in relationship to surrounding streets, homes, businesses, residents and visitors to ensure that it is carefully planned and fits the neighborhood that it enters. Development of any land whether vacant or repurposed has a direct impact on the community while being constructed & especially once it's inhabited. This should be even more apparent given the fact that careful redevelopment of the Durkee Street lot is critical to the survival of our downtown & city.

It is disheartening to know that Prime Plattsburgh LLC has failed to be forthcoming with accurate site plans or their calculations for open green space or parking. I have sat in on many a ZBA and PB meeting during which board members listen to public concerns and work with residents and developers to ensure that they have satisfied all city zoning codes and Special Use Permit criteria. Thereby building projects that become assets to the neighborhood that they join. I ask the Board to look at the attached photos of properties throughout the center city and historic districts of downtown and waterfront, and invite Prime to redesign a project that fits the Durkee Street site and complements the historic district it will be entering. Prime's current design and use of aluminum siding and clap board is strikingly out of character for Plattsburgh's historic

business district. Plattsburgh residents, like myself, who live adjacent to downtown have worked with developers for years to build projects that complement our historic neighborhoods.

As I walk from Brinkerhoff through downtown and to the water, I am reminded about many planned unit developments that have repurposed older buildings and revitalized the neighborhoods they have joined. Catherine Gardens across from the former Regina Maria Retreat house that was built over 100 years ago is a perfect example of the importance of careful planning and thoughtful design. This multi-phase project provided sufficient time to develop an infrastructure that could support the entire project and did not disrupt the lives of area residents during construction. This PUD has become an integral part of our neighborhood and an asset to both the community and its tenants. In viewing the attached photos you will notice the architect's inclusion of the mansard roof and other similar features found on the Maria Regina home across the street. The use of synthetic stone enabled the architect to include cost effective building materials that complimented surrounding buildings that are in its view shed (see attached pictures). Incorporating original features and mementos of days gone by is both comforting to long-time residents who remember the days when the original brick structure was a school. Such attention to detail also creates connectivity between the past and present. It is evident that the builder genuinely cared about preserving the history of our city and district and worked hard to create a development that has helped our community grow. Catherine Gardens site design incorporated lots of green space, a playground for their tenants' children and sufficient on-site parking with sidewalks adjacent to tenants' doors and directly in front of their parked cars to promote connectivity to all buildings and city streets. It is obvious that this was carefully planned with special attention made to their tenants' convenience & safety while living at Catherine Gardens and their exit into the community.

As I continued my walk downtown, I made a point to take pictures of both residential and commercial properties that comprise our downtown and center city. I invite the Board and Prime to carefully look at the architectural details and use of brick and sandstone during the planning stages of Prime's PUD. Prime's use of aluminum siding and clapboard and massive size is strikingly out of character from the historic buildings that comprise our downtown.

Many architects have designed PUD's in Plattsburgh's historic districts adjacent to downtown to create projects that meet SHPO's guidelines and compliment surrounding buildings. Prime's statement that SHPO congratulated them on their use of building materials and design is grossly misleading. Having spoken with SHPO about other projects, I believe that SHPO would encourage Prime to use building materials and create a structure that would complement our historic downtown. Prime's use of aluminum and clapboard siding and massive design is in NOT in character with our historic downtown. I ask Prime to look at the attached photos of downtown buildings and a rendition of an example of incorporating brick and glass into a mixed use structure that was formerly proposed for the Durkee Street Lot.

The next group of pictures our examples of how local developers who also designed PUD's that were built in phases and worked with SHPO and area residents to build a project that would complement the historic district within walking distance to downtown. "Freedom Heights" built by Mr. Latinville compliments the buildings on Hamilton and Club Road. Mr. Latinville's use of

brick and architectural details along its roof line are similar, yet stand apart from the historic duplex across the street and barracks up the street. (see attached photos)

Mr. Zukowski did an excellent job transforming the former barracks into condominiums on Club Road. Gregory Heights also built by Mr. Zukowski across the street also used brick to compliment his historic townhomes next door. (see attached pictures)

Finally, Ed Zukowski worked with area residents and planning board members to build a multi-phase PUD, known as Harbor View condominiums at the corner of Club Road and Hamilton Street, which is a great example of how to safely incorporate underground parking and city access. This structure sits far away from city streets and has preserved all of the green space that was originally planned for development. Mr. Poissant who finally built this project made sure to install a hedge row that is several feet away from the city sidewalk on Hamilton Street and at least 20 feet away from the driveway entrance to tenants' underground parking (see attached pic)

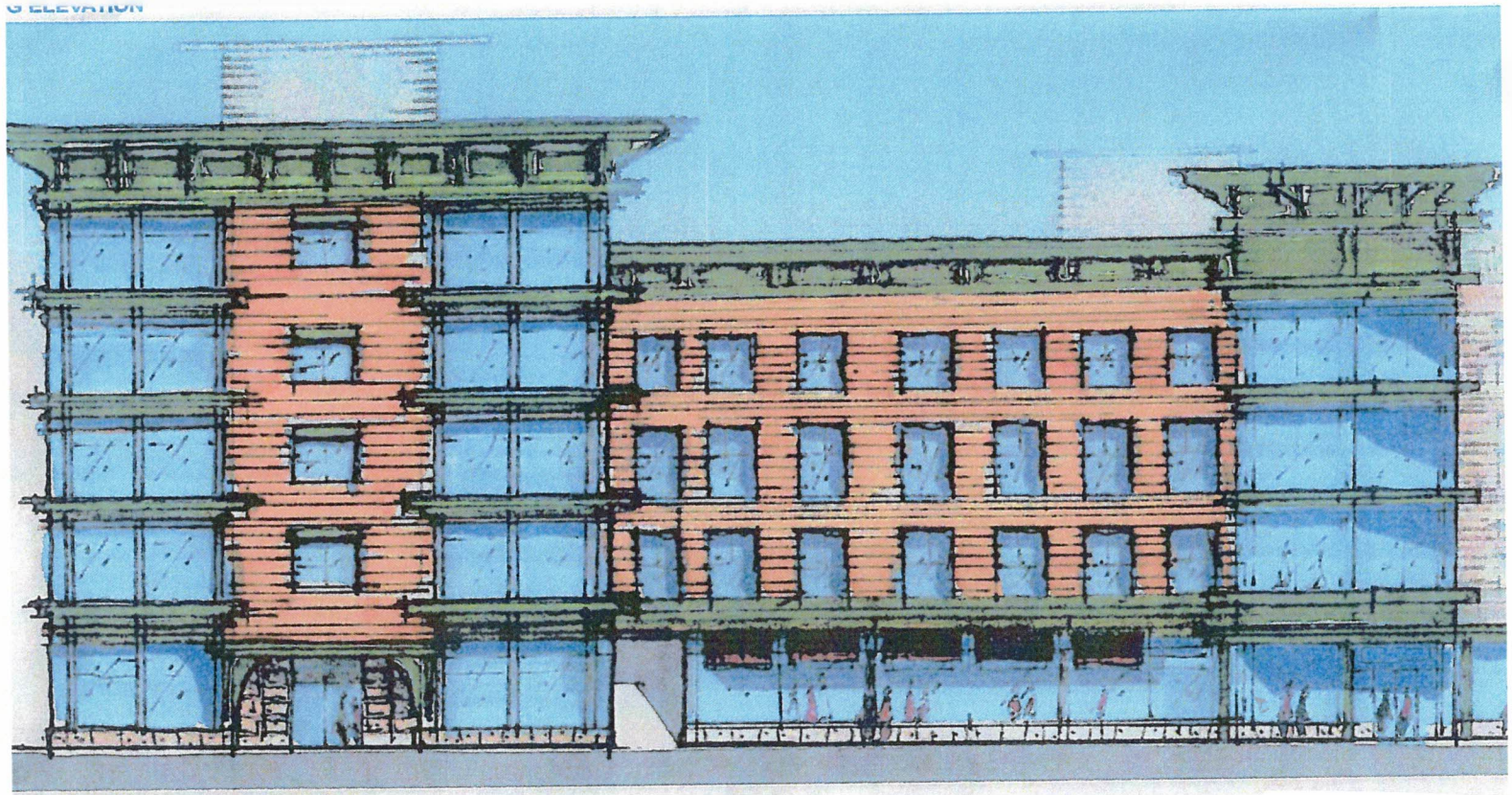
Though all developers would like to build as many units as physically possible, it is the responsibility of all Zoning and Planning Board members to ensure that every project is a good fit for the site and will become an asset to the community. Eli Swartzberg's plans to rehabilitate the Vilas home is a perfect example of how historic sites can be revitalized.

City residents, property owners and downtown business owners and tenants plead with members of both boards not to consider any request from the city to change property boundary lines of the Durkee Street lot or review Prime Plattsburgh LLC's current proposal to build a 5-story 115 unit 160,000 square feet of mixed use development in the Durkee Street parking lot, until this project is re-evaluated based on today's economic for caste and Prime meets all SUP criteria and city zoning code requirements. Concerned citizens like myself look to the members of both boards to make sure that Prime's project is not only safe for their tenants, residents and visitors, but that all aspects of this development meet all city codes and special use permit criteria established by ZBA and Planning Board, which it does not!

Optimistically yours,

Carol J. Klepper

Homeowner and landlord at 17 Couch Street, Plattsburgh, NY 12901



DRI COMMITEE'S MULTI PHASE MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT
PROPOSED RENDITION

Maurica Gilbert, Chairperson
City of Plattsburgh Planning Board of Appeals
cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Re: Planning Board comments for 5/27/2020 meeting: City + Prime 2019-24, 2019-11, 2019-10

May 5, 2020

Dear Planning Board members and Chairperson:

Plattsburgh's current & former Community Development coordinators have attested to the fact that Plattsburgh will NOT lose DRI funding, if Prime chooses not to build its current massive mixed use development. There is NO need to feel pressured to rush through the review of such a massive project that will have lasting and far reaching effects on our downtown, community and country for years to come! On the contrary, the Planning Board needs to take the time to carefully review all aspects of Prime's project which it can Not do at this time, because **Prime has failed to submit any up to date, detailed site plans for all required parking, tenant storage, interior floor plans of apts., designated areas for loading and unloading zones, list of materials interior and exterior of both residential and commercial spaces and accurate renditions of all buildings** in relationship to surrounding properties. **Prime's April 10, 2020 site plan also fails to include any redesign of their site plan or provide parking for the conversion of 5,800 sq. ft. of formers farmer's market to commercial space,** which includes the entire structure, because Prime will most likely rent out the civic space for special events or enclose it at a later date for commercial use or add terrace dining.

NO VOTE should be made on any special use permit that Prime is requesting until the SEQR and GEIS are redone, because the economic statistics and data that Prime used for these studies are no longer valid. And, **NO special use permit should be granted to Prime until it meets all special use permit criteria** set forth by both Zoning and Planning Boards and provides up to date and accurate site plans that meet all city zoning codes and provides zoning parking requirements for all 297 residential tenants plus 15, 800 sq. ft. of commercial space, which includes Prime's recent decision to convert the former farmers market into commercial space. **Prime's request to only provide 276 parking spaces on site rather than the 471 now required, is 195 below the minimum required and 58% deficient of Plattsburgh's zoning code**. In addition, the **City remains 123 parking spaces short of the required 289 free off street parking spaces it is required to provide the public in the center of downtown**. The actual parking demand for Prime's tenants & customers is 564 spaces. Even I, who love to walk & believe in decreasing our carbon foot print are faced with the realty that we must rely on our cars to get life's necessities, because Plattsburgh lacks public transportation. Though my building met city parking requirements, I had to almost double my on-site parking capacity to meet my tenants' current needs.

Prime should also comply with all 12-pages of recommendations made by Mr. Koziol, engineer for LaBerge Group on March 20, 2020 and provide diagrams identifying all revisions made to its storm water pollution prevention & waste water management plan and site submission plan. Turner Bradford's written response on April 16, 2020 is NOT sufficient. Prime has failed to provide evidence that it has modified any of its original plans to resolve concerns that LaBerge's engineer cited; such as; city easements for public use of all sidewalks, green space & access through the center of Prime's Durkee Street project to the Saranac River; relocation of the exit from Prime's parking garage due to high probability of traffic accidents and congestion as Prime's tenants merge into traffic; moving Prime's building away from Bridge Street sidewalk, noting that constructing a building of this magnitude only 3.5 feet away from public use is too close; and Prime's failure to provide fire trucks, etc. safe access to its courtyard apartments in the evident of a fire or during snow removal, because its driveway is too narrow.

Even **Charlie Gottleib from Prime stated at April 27, 2020 meeting that he has never been involved in a project with so much opposition and is willing to work on a compromise**. Please see the attached petitions of **over 41 downtown business owners & 6,151 people who are opposed to Prime's current proposal**. 1,000 of these petitioners actually signed in just a few days in March 2020 prior to the city Covid-19 shut down. **Residents ask that the PB deny Prime's current plan, because it has NOT provided up to date site plans, uses outdated information in SEQR and GEIS studies, fails to meet all SUP criteria, zoning codes & LaBerge engineer's recommendations.** Given today's recession, it would be much more feasible to construct a smaller multi-phase project rather than one large contiguous structure. Bradford, Prime's engineer expects that it will take 3 yrs. to complete, which bears further credence to the importance of developing this site in stages, to reduce the disruption to our downtown & safeguarding against such a gargantuan project from failing.

I ask the Planning Board to invite Prime to work with downtown property owners & residents to build a mixed use development that will survive today's economic downturn and revitalize our downtown rather than destroy it. A smaller multi-phase project that meets city zoning code requirements for parking, provides open green space for its tenants to recreate on site, and a 25 foot green buffer zone between Prime's building and city sidewalks, streets and river walk is much more viable and sustainable. More green space and parking for Prime's tenants and public will lead to a viable project that will attract rather than deter people from living, working and recreating in our downtown.

Prime admitted at May 5, 2020 ZBA meeting that the 22% green space they claim to provide includes the city's Saranac River Walk and Gateway's grass area, which is not only misleading, but inflates their calculation of open green space. It is disheartening to know that Prime's interest in making money out ways its concern for its tenants. Prime's original design included a pool and play area for its tenants, children and visitors at the former Highway oil site. Providing at least 25 feet grass area along its building on the North, West and East side of its property would enable tenants, their children and guests to recreate safely away from traffic. **It is a disservice to Prime's tenants, city residents and visitors to rely on only 10-14 feet of green space set aside for bicyclists and pedestrians to walk along the banks of the Saranac River without requiring Prime to provide any green space as a buffer between its massive mixed use development and city sidewalks and streets**.

Prime's conversion of downtown's Durkee street parking lot into 115 apartments and now 15,800 sq. ft. of commercial space **fails to meet any of the SUP criteria established by both zoning and Planning Boards and will most definitely have a negative impact on our downtown, community and county**, which will ultimately lead to its demise. I reach out to all members of the Planning Board to consider the fact that Prime's mixed use development will be erected in the heart of our quaint historic downtown. The majority of buildings downtown are made of brick or sandstone and are two-three stories lower than Prime's proposed structure. **Prime's current design, mammoth size, and use of aluminum and clapboard siding looks like a huge warehouse and is not in keeping with the "general character or height" of neighboring buildings**. Prime's colossal complex will consume the entire North and East corners of the Durkee Street Lot, which will block off sunlight and discourage pedestrian circulation. Even members of the ZBA & Clinton County Planning Board expressed their concern of building such a massive structure on top of the Saranac River walk and only 3.5 feet away from a 4 ft. rather than 9 ft. sidewalk, (like those along Brinkerhoff Street, Margaret Street, and City Hall Place) and parallel parking on Bridge Street. Even if Prime changes the sloping roof line of its building, it will still overshadow all adjacent sidewalks, streets & buildings. Prime's 5-story, over 160,800 sq. ft. of rental space will tower 65 feet above ground on the North side of Bridge Street and will be 125 feet high at the North East end,

spanning more than 200 feet and only a few feet away from pedestrians & cyclists traveling on the Saranac River Trail.

Area residents, like myself, have been involved with many projects in historic districts throughout Plattsburgh and worked with developers to create buildings that compliment rather than detract from the character of the neighborhood it enters. **I invite the Board & Prime architects to look at the attached renditions of the revitalization committee's proposed brick and glass Italianate style roof line and cornices as an example of what would attract people to live, work and shop downtown.** I also encourage Prime's architects to look at examples of other apartment complexes that have recently been built in historic districts neighboring downtown, such as Zukowski's Gregory Heights" building on Club Road. And recently approved projects such as the addition to the Vilas Home on 61 Beekman Street, in which the owner plans on incorporating some of the Queen Anne Style features of the original building into its new addition. Even Mr. Barnett's addition on 5057 South Catherine, which is not located in a historic district compliments the original structure. Owners of these sites have worked with SHPO to create projects that enhance the existing structure and surrounding buildings, while standing apart.

Rental markets have drastically changed since Prime first submitted its application in January of 2020 & site plan in February 2020, which referenced out dated information from SEQR + GEIS studies that were created prior to the Covid 19 pandemic. Recent statistics report over 30.3 million jobs have been lost in the past month. Plattsburgh had to lay off 62 city employees. Plattsburgh's 3 largest employers are faced with closures, economic uncertainty and permanent reduction in staff in attempts to stay solvent as reported by University of Vermont Health Network. SUNY Plattsburgh's closure since March 2020 is anticipated to continue through spring 2021. Schools throughout NYS expect significant gaps in funding due to loss in tax revenue to state, county and municipalities. Clinton County just announced that it has to furlough 150 employees immediately to help off-set some of the $15 million dollar budget deficit it expects to undergo. Most downtown businesses are faced with the harsh reality that they are unlikely to survive this economic downturn that is expected to continue to spiral down for several years.

Landlords throughout Plattsburgh and NYS are finding it difficult to fill their residential units due to people losing their jobs, layoffs, cut backs and business closures. Most retailers, restaurants, gyms, day care, schools, medical offices, etc. must remain closed indefinitely and will never be able to operate as they did prior to Covid-19. **Turner's statement that there is a shortage of housing stock is NOT true.** Several high end apartment complexes have been built in less than a few miles of the center of our downtown just in the past year, such as Enclave Estates and Twin Pines. Many homeowners have decided to stay in their homes rather than rent due to unprecedented low interest rates & refinancing opportunities. Renters who have lost their jobs have been forced to move in with family members, because they can no longer afford to pay rent.

Landlords who own property downtown are losing the majority of their tenants due to loss of income and loss of almost 58% of guaranteed free off street, year round parking spots, as John Seiden stated at PB last meeting. The mayor of Lake Placid stated that free year round parking in the center of downtown is a city's most valuable asset and that Lake Placid has struggled with parking shortages for years. Parking shortages and inadequate loading zones adjacent to restaurants and downtown businesses creates a hardship for everyone and impedes downtown's ability to grow.

Projects such as Prime have failed in our region due to poor economy even before the pandemic. A hole remains in the center of downtown Burlington as a result of the developer pulling out, and the mixed use development in the center of scenic Winooski along the water front remains empty.

Prime's project called the "Hamlet" located in Saratoga Springs can NOT be compared to Prime's Plattsburgh project for parking. Prime's Saratoga Springs development is NOT in the center of its business district and was built on vacant land in the suburbs. Prime's proposed 205,800 total sq. ft. of 115 apts. + 15,800 sq. ft. of commercial space will displace 289 downtown business owners, employees, patrons & tenants who now park for free off street in the center of our downtown year round in the Durkee Street Parking lot. Though my rental property met current parking requirements, I had to almost double my on-site parking spaces to meet my tenants' current needs.

It would be irresponsible to give 3.3 acres of city land to Prime without holding them responsible to provide all its tenants and commercial customers with on-site parking, especially when the city has failed to provide 1-to-1 compensatory parking in the center of downtown. As a result, Prime should be required to provide at least 80 public parking spots in the Durkee Street parking lot to off-set the loss of 123 public off street long term parking spaces. **Though Prime is required to provide at least 50 parking spaces to the public for free on site as a condition of developing the Durkee Street Lot, Prime admitted that it can NOT guarantee that these spots would be free and did not know how many parking spaces would be available for public use. The fact is that once Prime takes over ownership of Durkee street parking lot, there is nothing to prevent Prime's tenants, visitors and customers from using all parking spots on site, because Prime has failed to provide sufficient parking to meet its own needs.**

The City's plan to make Durkee Street one-way along with angled parking on the east side of the street will prevent contiguous flow of traffic and impede delivery trucks from servicing downtown businesses and restaurants. Angled parking that requires drivers to back up into traffic is extremely dangerous and almost impossible during winter months and in-climate weather due to poor visibility and limited turning ability. According to Ken Bibbins, Regional Traffic Engineer (DOT) analysis of the city's proposed changes to Durkee Street, Mr. Bibbins states the following: it *"does not appear to me that the right of way that Durkee Street falls within has sufficient width to allow angled parking without severely impacting its lane widths." And "multiple studies"...have shown that "angled parking causes an increase in accidents." Backing-up maneuverability is "particularly dangerous if the roadway in question has a significant volume of bicycle traffic, such as this one. There is also an increase in accidents due to the stop-go nature of drivers searching for an open space, which is more difficult with angled parking because the empty spaces are harder to see." ..."based on the concept and its traffic safety implications, I would use the strongest language possible to discourage the institution of this change.*

According to Laberge Group's engineer, Prime needs to make the following changes:

1. Prime needs to demonstrate that it has granted easements to the city for public parking, use of sidewalks and green space in the Durkee Street Lot. This is especially important in the center of the Durkee Street project, which is to enable public utilization of the sidewalks and green space and to access the Saranac River Trail from the Durkee Street's Art Parc.
2. Mr. Koziol recommends that the "cross walk across the entrance/exit to the parking garage on Bridge Street be located as far away from the building as possible to provide better visibility to drivers & pedestrians." I ask the Planning Board to look at the design, location and landscaping of parking garage of Harbor view condominiums on the corner of Club Rd. and Hamilton Street. The developer worked with both our city engineer and neighboring residents to make sure that the location and design of the access to the underground parking would not reduce drivers' visibility upon exit/entrance, thereby reducing the likelihood of traffic accidents. The developer even added a wide sidewalk to increase pedestrian walkability in the neighborhood. It is even more critical that Prime meet city parking requirements and redesign its underground parking garage to increase visibility and reduce stacking of its tenants cars as they exit and enter the congested

corner of Durkee Street and Bridge Street. Unlike Harbor View Condominiums, Prime's Durkee Street project is located in the center of our downtown business district, at the corner of a busy intersection. Bridge Street is a continuation of US route 9, which is a major connector road from the North end to south end of town. Unloading service trucks on Durkee Street is already challenging, but it would be impossible, if Durkee Street is reduced to only one lane with angled parking. These proposed changes will definitely increase the likelihood of traffic accidents.

3. LaBerge's engineer is also concerned with the fact that **Prime's building is only 3.5 feet away from its property line. The proximity of Prime's 5-story structure with 297 tenants to public sidewalks, river walk and Bridge Street poses a safety risk to the public** and will most definitely impede both pedestrian and vehicle traffic on Durkee and Bridge Street during the two-three years of construction that Prime estimates it will take to build.
4. **Mr. Koziol, engineer for LaBerge Group also expresses his concern over access to courtyard tenants due to its location and narrow driveway**. He recommends that "Prime move the access control gates further into the lot to increase vehicle queuing and prevent blocking pedestrian and vehicle traffic." Though Prime's engineer objects stating that such a change would result in reduce parking spaces, it is indeed in the best interest of the public and will prevent accidents.
5. Mr. Koziol outlines his concerns regarding the failure of Prime to provide safe and convenient access to service tenants living in the courtyard apartments, because its driveway is too narrow. **Prime's plan to have emergency vehicles, such as large aerial, pumper and fire trucks park on the Bridge Street to put out a fire is impractical and a safety hazard to Prime's tenants, pedestrians** and would be an impossibility, if vehicles were parked on Bridge Street or on site.

In closing, **I ask you to POSTPONE the May 27, 2020 meeting until the Zoning and Planning Board have received additional information requested by the ZBA on May 5, 2020 meeting and the PB receives additional and updated information in response to the recent changes of Prime's use of the Durkee Street lot and recession.** I further ask that the Planning Board carefully review all aspects of Prime's Durkee Street development and makes sure that this project meets all SUP and city zoning requirements and recommendations put forth by the LaBerge Group and all interested parties. And finally to allow the public to further comment on any additional information pertaining to the development of the Durkee Street Lot via written or oral comments as described in April 14, 2020 "temporary board meeting procedures due to Covid 19, which is agreed to be made part of the public record, as ZBA agreed to do at its May 4, 2020 meeting. After all, Prime is getting 4.3 million dollars plus 3.3 acres of prime real estate for only $1. It's your job to make sure that Prime's project enhances the DRI, complements our historic downtown and is in the best interest of our downtown, community and city. Your board has a responsibility to Plattsburgh residents and downtown businesses to ensure that Prime's project enriches the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. Thereby promoting revitalization of our downtown rather than having an adverse effect, as is the case with Prime's current design. Now is the time to make certain that Prime will build a mixed use development that will benefit everyone, not only Prime's bottom-line. Your decision will affect our downtown and city forever!

Finally, Zoom Meetings fail to enable full active participation by all concerned citizens in real time. This is especially true for downtown business owners, who are struggling to survive! April 27, 2020 PB meeting is evidence of this fact. I like many residents do NOT have the technology to participate remotely I risked my own safety to go over to a friend's house to participate at 11:30 PM, when I, like most people, are usually asleep! Two residents who commented at last week's meeting, lost signal during the meeting.

Sincerely, Carol J. Klepper

Homeowner & landlord at 17 Couch Street, Plattsburgh, NY

Mr. Ronald Nolland, Chairman
City of Plattsburgh Zoning Board of Appeals
cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Re: April 20, 2020 ZBA: Appeal 2232-Durkee Street-SUP comments

April 20, 2020

Dear Zoning Board members and Chairperson:

Once again, I ask that members of ZBA postpone all decisions regarding the Durkee Street parking lot and Prime development until everyone can attend all meetings in person. It is both irresponsible and unethical to hold any ZBA or PB meetings without all city residents and stakeholders being able to comment on Prime's project, especially those who own property adjacent to the Durkee Street Parking lot.

I, along with 42 downtown business owners and over 6,151 petitioners (see attached signatures) ask that you deny all current appeals, special use permits and variances requested by the city of Plattsburgh and Prime Development LLC on grounds that all such requests regarding the development of the Durkee Street Lot have NOT been reviewed as part of the entire DRI project but rather in isolation. And, Prime's current proposal fails to meet both zoning code & all criteria found in zoning ordinance section 360-31 B for standards of such special use permits, in which all 5 criteria for ZBA SUP must be satisfied.

I ask that the Board deny the proposed boundary changes for the Durkee Street parking Lot into one 3.3 acre lot, but rather suggest that the City subdivide it into at least two lots, whereby the city will retain ownership of at least .5 acres for public use to provide at least 150 off-street parking spots that remain deficient in the city's replacement parking plan, which fails to provide the required 1 to 1 ratio of compensatory parking off street in the center of our downtown business district. Once ownership of the Durkee Street Parking lot is transferred to a private developer, the public will not only permanently lose all 289 free long-term, year round parking spaces in the center of downtown, but everyone working, living & visiting downtown will lose at least 275 of these 289 parking spots, while the proposed 102 spaces in the Pavone lot + 22 spaces in the Broad Street lot are constructed. Given the state of the economy throughout the nation and especially in NYS, it is suicide to the future of our downtown to give all 3.3 acres to Prime without the city retaining any ownership. It is detrimental to Plattsburgh's economy to gift such a valuable asset to Prime development.

I also implore the members of the ZBA to deny Prime's request to put any apartments on the first floor of any building. If the ZBA approves such a request it will set an undue and negative precedent throughout the city, because it will open the door for other property owners to convert commercial space into first floor apts. Granting such a variance will result in increased density and exacerbate the shortage of long-term year round parking for all tenants living downtown. Street level apartments are problematic due to safety concerns and their un-attractiveness to long term tenants. I can attest to this fact first hand, as someone who has both owned and lived in first floor rentals. This is especially true in the center of downtown. Merely look at street level or first floor apartments in any downtown and you will notice security systems such as steel bars or small windows to prevent access from intruders, which is hardly inviting to prospective tenants. It is extremely difficult to retain tenants in street level or first floor apartments due to safety and marketability, contrary to Prime's comments.

Landlords and business owners in Plattsburgh and especially downtown are faced with the realty that they may never be able to reopen. Economists forecast that high unemployment and business closures

may continue for years. Most builders have put projects on hold and the majority of lenders have retracted their financial commitments to developers. Given the fact that Plattsburgh and NYS are faced with billions of dollars in deficits and that many people will remain unemployed, while others have lost their life savings, it is unlikely that Prime will be able to complete construction and fill all 115 units & 10,000 square feet of commercial space by September 1, 2021. Prime's current project will most definitely have an adverse effect on adjacent properties and surrounding neighbor-hoods for years to come. The future of our downtown and economic survival rests in your hands.

I beseech all ZBA members to include all comments made by everyone into any decision you make, even if their comments exceed the 3-minute recording threshold you have set as a board. As members of Plattsburgh City Zoning Board you have a duty to ensure that any variance you grant Prime Development does NOT have any adverse effect to our downtown, city and county and that it meets all 5 SUP criteria and zoning code requirements. The following points outlined within explains why Prime's project should be denied.

1. **General Character, height and use of the structure**. Prime's current design is not in keeping with our historic downtown due to its mammoth size, building design and use of metal and clapboard. The majority of the buildings downtown are made of brick or sandstone and are less than 4 stories in height. I ask that the board deny Prime's request to build a 5-story 115-apartment complex with 10,000 square feet of commercial space in the center of downtown, which is in actuality 6 stories above ground along the river and is 2-3 stories above any other building adjacent to the Durkee Street Lot. Prime's building will tower 65 feet above ground on the North side and will be 180 feet high along Bridge Street spanning more than 200 feet along the riverside. Prime's colossal complex will consume the entire North and East corners of the Durkee Street Lot, which will block off sunlight and discourage pedestrian circulation. Even members of the Clinton County Planning Board expressed their concern with having such a massive structure on top of the Saranac River Walk and right against the sidewalk on Bridge Street. The intent of the DRI is to revitalize our downtown by inviting people to recreate, shop and eat in our downtown business district. Granting such a height variance would detract rather than invite people from visiting our downtown.

2. **Provision of surrounding open space and the treatment of grounds**. Prime's current plan fails to provide any green space for its tenants and therefore does NOT meet criteria 2 of SUP. And in fact, if Prime is given all 3.3 acres of 22 Durkee Street there will be NO guaranteed open green space for public use on site. Access is not ownership and therefore public use will be controlled at the whim of the developer. It is a slap in our face to have Prime merely offer public access to the Saranac River with a walk way through the center of its project. Prime needs to downscale its project and the city needs to retain at least 25 feet along Bridge Street and 50 feet rather than 14 feet along the East side of Durkee Street parking lot in order to provide a green buffer zone between Prime's tenants and city residents and visitors. Prime's current Durkee Street project fails to provide any dedicated green space for its tenants, unlike Prime's Saratoga project and lacks sufficient green space for guaranteed public use. 3. Prime's current project also fails to meet **"general fitness of the structure or use to its proposed location."** Prime's current proposal to build one contiguous structure for up to 293 residential tenants and 10,000 square feet of commercial space not to mention the future transformation of the former farmers market into additional commercial space is NOT a good fit for this site or viable at this time. I suggest rather that Prime rework its design to build a smaller size project in multi-phases that has a better chance of surviving our current economy.

Prime's current plan adds up to 293 tenants living at the northeast corner of Durkee Street Parking lot, which is right on the Saranac River Trail. Cramming such a large population next to the Saranac River trail hardly promotes visitors and city residents from enjoying the river. Members of Clinton County Planning Board have also expressed their concern of the proximity of Primes 5 story 115

unit apartment complex being built right against the Saranac River Trail and only 14 feet away from the river bank. Prime's current plan fails to provide even it tenants any green space adjacent to the river or any green buffer zone next to any city sidewalk. Even Prime's Saratoga project provides open green space on site. 4.

Provision for automobile and parking or storage. I ask the board to deny Prime's request to only provide 226 parking spaces rather than the 317 required by Plattsburgh's zoning code, because Prime cannot compare its Saratoga Springs project, known as "the Hamlet," to its proposed Plattsburgh development, because "the Hamlet" is several miles from the center of downtown Saratoga Springs and is therefore not equivalent to Prime's Plattsburgh project, which will be built in the center of our business district. Permitting Prime to build a 115 apartment complex with more than 10,000 square feet of commercial space will most definitely create a hardship to our downtown, because Prime's tenants and city residents and patrons will be competing for the 100 parking spots that Prime is failing to provide for its tenants and the 150 deficient parking spaces off street that the city has failed to provide the public. Prime should be required to provide at least 317 parking spaces on site, given the fact that Plattsburgh's zoning parking requirements are antiquated, and Plattsburgh does not have public transportation and everyone owns a car. The reality is that Prime should provide 441 parking spaces on site to accommodate full occupancy of both Prime's residential and commercial usage, which doesn't even account for the additional parking needed for Prime's future conversion of the former's farmers market to commercial space. As someone who owns an apartment building near downtown, I am well aware of how important onsite year round parking is to my tenants. What is even more problematic is that Prime has yet to present detailed parking plans that are current and up to date.

Prime has also failed to provide any concealed storage for its tenants' bicycles, outdoor equipment, etc. Plattsburgh zoning and Planning boards have insisted that developers provide such storage on site and adjacent to their units for security, convenience and esthetic purposes. As an apartment owner, I know how important adequate on-site storage is in attracting long-term tenants. Most importantly, ZBA members need to insure that Prime's project is reviewed as part of the entire DRI. Equally important is that all 289 parking spaces currently provided for free to the public off street in the Durkee Street parking lot is replaced with compensatory parking, which the city has failed to do. One of the most critical points to be considered by ZBA regarding parking is that the Durkee Street parking lot provides free and convenient parking for everyone working, living and visiting downtown. Businesses such as; Social Services, JCEO, doctors, counselors, chiropractors, etc. all need convenient and handicap accessible parking close by. Unfortunately, the city's replacement parking plan only provides 125 public parking spaces off street in the center of downtown, which results in 165 deficient off street compensatory parking spots. Even the city notes that they are unable to replace all 289 off street public parking spaces. Furthermore, the city's plan to convert all free downtown street parking to paid parking will create an additional hardship to downtown businesses and property owners struggling to survive. I remind the board that you can NOT count the off street parking that was created by the county at the Government center, because these parking spaces are primarily used by government employees and is not adjacent to the center of downtown businesses. The 15 angled parking spaces that the city anticipates providing on Durkee Street is not off-street and therefore is not considered compensatory replacement parking. DEIS states that parking lots should have less than 85% of the spaces filled and that the Durkee street lot often has 87% usage, thereby showing its importance to downtown. Over 200 employees who work at Social services, JCEO & other offices currently park in the Durkee Street Lot, which would quickly fill the Pavone Parking lot once built, because street parking would be metered. According to Carl Walker Plattsburgh needs to replace "equal" amount of year round off street parking to its community.

5. **Street capacity and use.** Prime's proposed mixed use development will bring close to over 300 additional vehicles to the Northwest corner of Bridge and Durkee Street. This increased vehicular

traffic along with the poor redesign of Durkee Street will result in increased pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular traffic accidents, congestion and bottlenecks, especially during peak delivery times. The city has failed to provide any designated pull offs or tested the viability of such a drastic change to one of downtown's major arteries and unloading zones for local businesses. The City's plan to make Durkee Street one-way along with angled parking on the east side of the street will prevent contiguous flow of traffic and impede delivery trucks from servicing downtown businesses and restaurants. Angled parking that requires drivers to back up into traffic is extremely dangerous and almost impossible during winter months and in climate weather due to poor visibility and limited turning ability.

I remind the Board that Bridge Street is a continuation of US route 9, which is to provide safe travel for all delivery trucks, automobiles, motorcycles and bicycles. According to Ken Bibbins, Regional Traffic Engineer (DOT) analysis of the city's proposed changes to Durkee Street, Mr. Bibbins states the following: it *"does not appear to me that the right of way that Bridge Street falls within has sufficient width to allow angled parking without severely impacting its lane widths." And "multiple studies"...have shown that "angled parking causes an increase in accidents." Backing-up maneuverability is "particularly dangerous if the roadway in question has a significant volume of bicycle traffic, such as this one. There is also an increase in accidents due to the stop-go nature of drivers searching for an open space, which is more difficult with angled parking because the empty spaces are harder to see." ..."based on the concept and its traffic safety implications, I would use the strongest language possible to discourage the institution of this change.*

Furthermore, Prime has failed to include any parking plans for its 10,000 square feet of commercial space, future conversion of former farmers market for commercial use, designated loading and unloading areas and a detailed diagram with site elevations and dimensions of all surface and underground parking for its 115 apartment complex.

In conclusion**,** Primes current proposal fails to meet city zoning code parking, height and building requirements, along with its failure to satisfy all 5 Special Use Permit (SUP) criteria and the objectives of the DRI plan set forth by NYS. Primes project is deficient in providing onsite parking for its tenants, visitors and patrons, lacks designated green space for its tenants, fails to provide guaranteed sufficient onsite public parking, and will result in increased vehicular and pedestrian traffic accidents, traffic congestion and additional hardships to our downtown businesses who are struggling to survive the economic crisis that is anticipated to continue for years. Governor Cuomo's DRI grants were intended to revitalize downtowns throughout upstate New York by providing recreation, services and joint business opportunities in the center of downtown. Converting our entire 3.3 acres of 289 public parking spaces into privately owned apartments and over 10,000 square feet of commercial space is not in the best interest of Plattsburgh and will most definitely have a negative impact on our community and Plattsburgh's downtown business district.

Sincerely,

Carol J. Klepper, 17 Couch Street, Plattsburgh, NY

CATHERINE
GARDENS

CATHERINE
GARDENS

CATHERINE
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3
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1

74
3
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YAMA SUSHI
JAPANESE CUISINE

DRESSCODE
DRESSCODE
AHEAD
AHEAD

Maui North
RAYMOND JA

RAYMOND JAMES

SPEED LIMIT
30

Gregory Heights

NO
MOTOR
VEHICLES

Mr. Ronald Nolland, Chairman
City of Plattsburgh Zoning Board of Appeals
cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Re: ZBA comments for May 18, 2020: Appeal 2232-City's request to amend boundaries of existing PUD at 22 Durkee Street & Prime's request for SUP to put apts. on 1st floor of 5-story mixed use development

May 15th, 2020

Dear Zoning Board members and Chairperson:

I ask board members to refer to my previous attached letters submitted in April and May of 2020 to remind everyone the reasons why ZBA members should deny the city's request to change boundary lines of the Durkee Street lot and PUD and to also deny Prime's request for a special use permit to build apartments on the first floor of their 5-story, over 160,000 sq. ft of rentable space + over 46,000 of underground parking. As I stated in my previous letters, first floor apartments will set a negative precedent and will forever transform our downtown, because all property owners will soon follow suite due to the rapid decline in retail store front. First floor apartments downtown are never safe and will only exasperate the parking shortage downtown.

Residents like myself who live near downtown have struggled for years to prevent overcrowding, erosion of green space, preservation of sidewalks and attract people to make this neighborhood their homes. Holding all developers and property owners to the same standards is critical to achieving this goal. All developers need to provide sufficient parking on site and meet city zoning code requirements for open space and parking, as a means to ensure that all buildings and parcels are not overcrowded. Fortunately for city residents ZBA members have always made sure that every land owner and developer meets city zoning code requirements and the criteria established by ZBA and PB, as ZBA chairperson, Ron Nolland stated during May 4, 2020's ZBA meeting. The only way to attract people to raise their families' downtown is to not make it profitable for landlords to convert these historic homes into multi-family dwellings.

Prime's recent changes to its site plan merely seems to be a way to placate the members of the ZBA in hopes that they will grant Prime's request to build a gargantuan PUD that fails to provide even the minimum on-site parking required by city code, less than 15% open space for its tenants and children to recreate, lacks safe access for emergency trucks, snow removal and obstructs visibility for drivers and pedestrians entering the site. Merely changing the roof line from sloped to flat does NOT lower the actual height of this structure, which still blocks sunlight to properties on Durkee Street. As one property owner said, who had worked for years as a prison guard, "a 5-story building of such magnitude is going to make me feel as though I am back in prison."

Pushing back this massive structure a few more feet from the south property boundary may seem like a compromise, but will ultimately result in Prime providing even fewer parking spaces on site and less open space. The only way to have sufficient open space for parking and green space on site is to reduce the foot print of this building, which Prime will never do. Since Prime is converting the formers farmer's market 5,800 sq. ft into commercial space, it can easily reduce the size of its mixed use complex. However, it is clear that Prime has no intention of reducing the

foot print of their massive 5 story, 160,000 sq. ft. of rentable space to meet zoning requirements or ensure that Prime is able to supply enough parking and green space on site for their tenants.

Prime's current mixed use development can NOT "fit" into the Durkee Street Lot, because it is too large and will most definitely create hardships for our local businesses and property owners, who have been promised that all 289 free off street parking spaces currently available to the public in the Durkee Street parking lot would be replaced in the center of downtown. The city's replacement parking plan remains 165 spaces short, because only 124 parking spaces are in the center of downtown, off street. Though Prime purports 50 parking spaces will be available for public use, Prime sheepishly admits that they can NOT guarantee these spots will be free and exclusively used by the public. It is quite obvious that Prime's tenants will need to use all 50 supposedly free public parking spaces in the Durkee Lot, because Prime lacks the open space to provide the 441 parking spaces it needs on site due to the massive size of its building and remains 58% short of the minimum parking required by city zoning code. It is unfair, unreasonable and unrealistic to ask people living and working downtown to park their cars and carry their groceries ½ mile home from Harbors ide's lot, especially during a snow storm.

Prime's project not only causes safety concerns for their tenants, because emergency vehicles, such as fire trucks, ambulances and plow trucks can't access the courtyard apartments, but Prime's plan to have fire trucks park on Bridge Street will obstruct traffic flow and creates a hazard for pedestrians and people trying to get to their parked cars. The fact that Prime has yet to make any changes to their site plans to address the safety concerns identified by Mr. Koziol from the LaBerge Group, such as; moving Prime's cross walk and entrance to their parking garage further away from Bridge Street and reducing the height of the structure to increase visibility for drivers and pedestrians, widening paved area in courtyard to enable access for emergency vehicles and downsizing the structure to provide sufficient open space to provide snow removal and safe access for the public to get to the Saranac River Trail is appalling.

This is further testament to the fact that Prime's plan is not well thought out and Prime Plattsburgh LLC does not care about the safety of its tenants or city residents. The fact that Board members have received numerous documents from expert engineers such as, Mr. Koziol, with LaBerge Group, criticisms from other sister boards pointing out some of the many problems Prime's current site plan poses to the public, along with Ken Bibbins, Regional Traffic Engineer (DOT) analysis of the city's proposed changes to Durkee Street which also poses great safety concerns and risks for the public, bears credence that Prime's PUD is poorly planned. As experts have said many times, Prime's current project fails to meet city code requirements for parking, open green space, set-backs, and accessibility for emergency services and is NOT in character with our historic downtown and does NOT fit into the site for which it is planned.

I like many residents enjoy walking downtown and look forward to a redevelopment plan that will enhance walkability rather than restrict our mobility. After reviewing Prime's site plan, it is clear that Prime's project will impede pedestrian traffic and make it extremely difficult for my handicap neighbors to traverse safely from Margaret Street to Bridge Street. Yesterday, I took a walk along the existing 9 foot sidewalk on Margaret Street over to Bridge Street. I was reminded how difficult it would be to walk on only a 4 ft. sidewalk

with street lamps and plantings, especially, if other pedestrians were walking their dogs or hand-in hand with their children. Planted trees, installed street lamps and a bench on 4 feet of the original 9 ft. wide sidewalk, along Bridge Street, reduced its walkability.

During May 4, 2020's meeting Prime repeatedly stated that its project is going to increase walkability in the center of downtown Plattsburgh, to which I would vehemently disagree. I walk downtown several times during the week and have noticed the difference that wider sidewalks like those along Margaret Street, Bridge Street and City Hall Place makes during peak business hours and wintertime. Several of my neighbors who live on Couch and Court Street are visually or physically impaired and find it impossible to travel along city sidewalks that are too narrow. I encourage Prime and board members to think about the 10-12 foot wide sidewalks in downtown Saratoga when working on plans to redevelop the Durkee Street lot. Reducing the foot print of Prime's mixed use development would enable them to provide at least a 10 foot buffer of green space with landscaping and lighting along Durkee and Bridge Street on site, so that the city residents and visitors can walk safely on an 8 foot wide sidewalk without reducing the width of Bridge Street. Residents would welcome any opportunity to work with Prime to come up with alternative site plans that would benefit everyone and increase the walkability of our downtown.

Prime's engineer and legal counsel seem to continually make contradictory or misleading statements regarding several aspects of their design. The 2-ft. paved bump out along the west side of Durkee Street was constructed to prevent car bumpers from protruding into Durkee Street, which would have made it a hazard for drivers and pedestrians. It is troubling to listen to Prime's developers when speaking about their parking plan and structure being separate from surrounding streets and sidewalks along Durkee and Bridge Street. Prime makes it seem as though the 6 parallel parking spaces that will be created along the south side of Bridge Street and the width of the sidewalk is out of their control, yet they intend to use it for their tenants, because Prime has failed to provide sufficient on-site parking and open green space for this project. Prime has implied that this project should be viewed apart from surrounding streets and sidewalks, which is an impossibility and one of the problems with this PUD. Every aspect of any PUD must be reviewed in relationship to surrounding streets, homes, businesses, residents and visitors to ensure that it is carefully planned and fits the neighborhood that it enters. Development of any land whether vacant or repurposed has a direct impact on the community while being constructed & especially once it's inhabited. This should be even more apparent given the fact that careful redevelopment of the Durkee Street lot is critical to the survival of our downtown & city.

It is disheartening to know that Prime Plattsburgh LLC has failed to be forthcoming with accurate site plans or their calculations for open green space or parking. I have sat in on many a ZBA and PB meeting during which board members listen to public concerns and work with residents and developers to ensure that they have satisfied all city zoning codes and Special Use Permit criteria. Thereby building projects that become assets to the neighborhood that they join. I ask the Board to look at the attached photos of properties throughout the center city and historic districts of downtown and waterfront, and invite Prime to redesign a project that fits the Durkee Street site and complements the historic district it will be entering. Prime's current design and use of aluminum siding and clap board is strikingly out of character for Plattsburgh's historic

business district. Plattsburgh residents, like myself, who live adjacent to downtown have worked with developers for years to build projects that complement our historic neighborhoods.

As I walk from Brinkerhoff through downtown and to the water, I am reminded about many planned unit developments that have repurposed older buildings and revitalized the neighborhoods they have joined. Catherine Gardens across from the former Regina Maria Retreat house that was built over 100 years ago is a perfect example of the importance of careful planning and thoughtful design. This multi-phase project provided sufficient time to develop an infrastructure that could support the entire project and did not disrupt the lives of area residents during construction. This PUD has become an integral part of our neighborhood and an asset to both the community and its tenants. In viewing the attached photos you will notice the architect's inclusion of the mansard roof and other similar features found on the Maria Regina home across the street. The use of synthetic stone enabled the architect to include cost effective building materials that complimented surrounding buildings that are in its view shed (see attached pictures). Incorporating original features and mementos of days gone by is both comforting to long-time residents who remember the days when the original brick structure was a school. Such attention to detail also creates connectivity between the past and present. It is evident that the builder genuinely cared about preserving the history of our city and district and worked hard to create a development that has helped our community grow. Catherine Gardens site design incorporated lots of green space, a playground for their tenants' children and sufficient on-site parking with sidewalks adjacent to tenants' doors and directly in front of their parked cars to promote connectivity to all buildings and city streets. It is obvious that this was carefully planned with special attention made to their tenants' convenience & safety while living at Catherine Gardens and their exit into the community.

As I continued my walk downtown, I made a point to take pictures of both residential and commercial properties that comprise our downtown and center city. I invite the Board and Prime to carefully look at the architectural details and use of brick and sandstone during the planning stages of Prime's PUD. Prime's use of aluminum siding and clapboard and massive size is strikingly out of character from the historic buildings that comprise our downtown.

Many architects have designed PUD's in Plattsburgh's historic districts adjacent to downtown to create projects that meet SHPO's guidelines and compliment surrounding buildings. Prime's statement that SHPO congratulated them on their use of building materials and design is grossly misleading. Having spoken with SHPO about other projects, I believe that SHPO would encourage Prime to use building materials and create a structure that would complement our historic downtown. Prime's use of aluminum and clapboard siding and massive design is in NOT in character with our historic downtown. I ask Prime to look at the attached photos of downtown buildings and a rendition of an example of incorporating brick and glass into a mixed use structure that was formerly proposed for the Durkee Street Lot.

The next group of pictures our examples of how local developers who also designed PUD's that were built in phases and worked with SHPO and area residents to build a project that would complement the historic district within walking distance to downtown. "Freedom Heights" built by Mr. Latinville compliments the buildings on Hamilton and Club Road. Mr. Latinville's use of

brick and architectural details along its roof line are similar, yet stand apart from the historic duplex across the street and barracks up the street. (see attached photos)

Mr. Zukowski did an excellent job transforming the former barracks into condominiums on Club Road. Gregory Heights also built by Mr. Zukowski across the street also used brick to compliment his historic townhomes next door. (see attached pictures)

Finally, Ed Zukowski worked with area residents and planning board members to build a multi-phase PUD, known as Harbor View condominiums at the corner of Club Road and Hamilton Street, which is a great example of how to safely incorporate underground parking and city access. This structure sits far away from city streets and has preserved all of the green space that was originally planned for development. Mr. Poissant who finally built this project made sure to install a hedge row that is several feet away from the city sidewalk on Hamilton Street and at least 20 feet away from the driveway entrance to tenants' underground parking (see attached pic)

Though all developers would like to build as many units as physically possible, it is the responsibility of all Zoning and Planning Board members to ensure that every project is a good fit for the site and will become an asset to the community. Eli Swartzberg's plans to rehabilitate the Vilas home is a perfect example of how historic sites can be revitalized.

City residents, property owners and downtown business owners and tenants plead with members of both boards not to consider any request from the city to change property boundary lines of the Durkee Street lot or review Prime Plattsburgh LLC's current proposal to build a 5-story 115 unit 160,000 square feet of mixed use development in the Durkee Street parking lot, until this project is re-evaluated based on today's economic for caste and Prime meets all SUP criteria and city zoning code requirements. Concerned citizens like myself look to the members of both boards to make sure that Prime's project is not only safe for their tenants, residents and visitors, but that all aspects of this development meet all city codes and special use permit criteria established by ZBA and Planning Board, which it does not!

Optimistically yours,

Carol J. Klepper

Homeowner and landlord at 17 Couch Street, Plattsburgh, NY 12901

Maurica Gilbert, Chairperson
City of Plattsburgh Planning Board of Appeals
cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Re: Planning Board comments for 5/27/2020 meeting: City + Prime 2019-24, 2019-11, 2019-10

May 5, 2020

Dear Planning Board members and Chairperson:

Plattsburgh's current & former Community Development coordinators have attested to the fact that Plattsburgh will NOT lose DRI funding, if Prime chooses not to build its current massive mixed use development. There is NO need to feel pressured to rush through the review of such a massive project that will have lasting and far reaching effects on our downtown, community and country for years to come! On the contrary, the Planning Board needs to take the time to carefully review all aspects of Prime's project which it can Not do at this time, because **Prime has failed to submit any up to date, detailed site plans for all required parking, tenant storage, interior floor plans of apts., designated areas for loading and unloading zones, list of materials interior and exterior of both residential and commercial spaces and accurate renditions of all buildings** in relationship to surrounding properties. **Prime's April 10, 2020 site plan also fails to include any redesign of their site plan or provide parking for the conversion of 5,800 sq. ft. of formers farmer's market to commercial space,** which includes the entire structure, because Prime will most likely rent out the civic space for special events or enclose it at a later date for commercial use or add terrace dining.

NO VOTE should be made on any special use permit that Prime is requesting until the SEQR and GEIS are redone, because the economic statistics and data that Prime used for these studies are no longer valid. And, **NO special use permit should be granted to Prime until it meets all special use permit criteria** set forth by both Zoning and Planning Boards and provides up to date and accurate site plans that meet all city zoning codes and provides zoning parking requirements for all 297 residential tenants plus 15, 800 sq. ft. of commercial space, which includes Prime's recent decision to convert the former farmers market into commercial space. **Prime's request to only provide 276 parking spaces on site rather than the 471 now required, is 195 below the minimum required and 58% deficient of Plattsburgh's zoning code**. In addition, the **City remains 123 parking spaces short of the required 289 free off street parking spaces it is required to provide the public in the center of downtown**. The actual parking demand for Prime's tenants & customers is 564 spaces. Even I, who love to walk & believe in decreasing our carbon foot print are faced with the realty that we must rely on our cars to get life's necessities, because Plattsburgh lacks public transportation. Though my building met city parking requirements, I had to almost double my on-site parking capacity to meet my tenants' current needs.

Prime should also comply with all 12-pages of recommendations made by Mr. Koziol, engineer for LaBerge Group on March 20, 2020 and provide diagrams identifying all revisions made to its storm water pollution prevention & waste water management plan and site submission plan. Turner Bradford's written response on April 16, 2020 is NOT sufficient. Prime has failed to provide evidence that it has modified any of its original plans to resolve concerns that LaBerge's engineer cited; such as; city easements for public use of all sidewalks, green space & access through the center of Prime's Durkee Street project to the Saranac River; relocation of the exit from Prime's parking garage due to high probability of traffic accidents and congestion as Prime's tenants merge into traffic; moving Prime's building away from Bridge Street sidewalk, noting that constructing a building of this magnitude only 3.5 feet away from public use is too close; and Prime's failure to provide fire trucks, etc. safe access to its courtyard apartments in the evident of a fire or during snow removal, because its driveway is too narrow.

Even **Charlie Gottleib from Prime stated at April 27, 2020 meeting that he has never been involved in a project with so much opposition and is willing to work on a compromise**. Please see the attached petitions of **over 41 downtown business owners & 6,151 people who are opposed to Prime's current proposal**. 1,000 of these petitioners actually signed in just a few days in March 2020 prior to the city Covid-19 shut down. **Residents ask that the PB deny Prime's current plan, because it has NOT provided up to date site plans, uses outdated information in SEQR and GEIS studies, fails to meet all SUP criteria, zoning codes & LaBerge engineer's recommendations.** Given today's recession, it would be much more feasible to construct a smaller multi-phase project rather than one large contiguous structure. Bradford, Prime's engineer expects that it will take 3 yrs. to complete, which bears further credence to the importance of developing this site in stages, to reduce the disruption to our downtown & safeguarding against such a gargantuan project from failing.

I ask the Planning Board to invite Prime to work with downtown property owners & residents to build a mixed use development that will survive today's economic downturn and revitalize our downtown rather than destroy it. A smaller multi-phase project that meets city zoning code requirements for parking, provides open green space for its tenants to recreate on site, and a 25 foot green buffer zone between Prime's building and city sidewalks, streets and river walk is much more viable and sustainable. More green space and parking for Prime's tenants and public will lead to a viable project that will attract rather than deter people from living, working and recreating in our downtown.

Prime admitted at May 5, 2020 ZBA meeting that the 22% green space they claim to provide includes the city's Saranac River Walk and Gateway's grass area, which is not only misleading, but inflates their calculation of open green space. It is disheartening to know that Prime's interest in making money out ways its concern for its tenants. Prime's original design included a pool and play area for its tenants, children and visitors at the former Highway oil site. Providing at least 25 feet grass area along its building on the North, West and East side of its property would enable tenants, their children and guests to recreate safely away from traffic. **It is a disservice to Prime's tenants, city residents and visitors to rely on only 10-14 feet of green space set aside for bicyclists and pedestrians to walk along the banks of the Saranac River without requiring Prime to provide any green space as a buffer between its massive mixed use development and city sidewalks and streets**.

Prime's conversion of downtown's Durkee street parking lot into 115 apartments and now 15,800 sq. ft. of commercial space **fails to meet any of the SUP criteria established by both zoning and Planning Boards and will most definitely have a negative impact on our downtown, community and county**, which will ultimately lead to its demise. I reach out to all members of the Planning Board to consider the fact that Prime's mixed use development will be erected in the heart of our quaint historic downtown. The majority of buildings downtown are made of brick or sandstone and are two-three stories lower than Prime's proposed structure. **Prime's current design, mammoth size, and use of aluminum and clapboard siding looks like a huge warehouse and is not in keeping with the "general character or height" of neighboring buildings**. Prime's colossal complex will consume the entire North and East corners of the Durkee Street Lot, which will block off sunlight and discourage pedestrian circulation. Even members of the ZBA & Clinton County Planning Board expressed their concern of building such a massive structure on top of the Saranac River walk and only 3.5 feet away from a 4 ft. rather than 9 ft. sidewalk, (like those along Brinkerhoff Street, Margaret Street, and City Hall Place) and parallel parking on Bridge Street. Even if Prime changes the sloping roof line of its building, it will still overshadow all adjacent sidewalks, streets & buildings. Prime's 5-story, over 160,800 sq. ft. of rental space will tower 65 feet above ground on the North side of Bridge Street and will be 125 feet high at the North East end,

spanning more than 200 feet and only a few feet away from pedestrians & cyclists traveling on the Saranac River Trail.

Area residents, like myself, have been involved with many projects in historic districts throughout Plattsburgh and worked with developers to create buildings that compliment rather than detract from the character of the neighborhood it enters. **I invite the Board & Prime architects to look at the attached renditions of the revitalization committee's proposed brick and glass Italianate style roof line and cornices as an example of what would attract people to live, work and shop downtown.** I also encourage Prime's architects to look at examples of other apartment complexes that have recently been built in historic districts neighboring downtown, such as Zukowski's Gregory Heights" building on Club Road. And recently approved projects such as the addition to the Vilas Home on 61 Beekman Street, in which the owner plans on incorporating some of the Queen Anne Style features of the original building into its new addition. Even Mr. Barnett's addition on 5057 South Catherine, which is not located in a historic district compliments the original structure. Owners of these sites have worked with SHPO to create projects that enhance the existing structure and surrounding buildings, while standing apart.

Rental markets have drastically changed since Prime first submitted its application in January of 2020 & site plan in February 2020, which referenced out dated information from SEQR + GEIS studies that were created prior to the Covid 19 pandemic. Recent statistics report over 30.3 million jobs have been lost in the past month. Plattsburgh had to lay off 62 city employees. Plattsburgh's 3 largest employers are faced with closures, economic uncertainty and permanent reduction in staff in attempts to stay solvent as reported by University of Vermont Health Network. SUNY Plattsburgh's closure since March 2020 is anticipated to continue through spring 2021. Schools throughout NYS expect significant gaps in funding due to loss in tax revenue to state, county and municipalities. Clinton County just announced that it has to furlough 150 employees immediately to help off-set some of the $15 million dollar budget deficit it expects to undergo. Most downtown businesses are faced with the harsh reality that they are unlikely to survive this economic downturn that is expected to continue to spiral down for several years.

Landlords throughout Plattsburgh and NYS are finding it difficult to fill their residential units due to people losing their jobs, layoffs, cut backs and business closures. Most retailers, restaurants, gyms, day care, schools, medical offices, etc. must remain closed indefinitely and will never be able to operate as they did prior to Covid-19. **Turner's statement that there is a shortage of housing stock is NOT true.** Several high end apartment complexes have been built in less than a few miles of the center of our downtown just in the past year, such as Enclave Estates and Twin Pines. Many homeowners have decided to stay in their homes rather than rent due to unprecedented low interest rates & refinancing opportunities. Renters who have lost their jobs have been forced to move in with family members, because they can no longer afford to pay rent.

Landlords who own property downtown are losing the majority of their tenants due to loss of income and loss of almost 58% of guaranteed free off street, year round parking spots, as John Seiden stated at PB last meeting. The mayor of Lake Placid stated that free year round parking in the center of downtown is a city's most valuable asset and that Lake Placid has struggled with parking shortages for years. Parking shortages and inadequate loading zones adjacent to restaurants and downtown businesses creates a hardship for everyone and impedes downtown's ability to grow.

Projects such as Prime have failed in our region due to poor economy even before the pandemic. A hole remains in the center of downtown Burlington as a result of the developer pulling out, and the mixed use development in the center of scenic Winooski along the water front remains empty.

Prime's project called the "Hamlet" located in Saratoga Springs can NOT be compared to Prime's Plattsburgh project for parking. Prime's Saratoga Springs development is NOT in the center of its business district and was built on vacant land in the suburbs. Prime's proposed 205,800 total sq. ft. of 115 apts. + 15,800 sq. ft. of commercial space will displace 289 downtown business owners, employees, patrons & tenants who now park for free off street in the center of our downtown year round in the Durkee Street Parking lot. Though my rental property met current parking requirements, I had to almost double my on-site parking spaces to meet my tenants' current needs.

It would be irresponsible to give 3.3 acres of city land to Prime without holding them responsible to provide all its tenants and commercial customers with on-site parking, especially when the city has failed to provide 1-to-1 compensatory parking in the center of downtown. As a result, Prime should be required to provide at least 80 public parking spots in the Durkee Street parking lot to off-set the loss of 123 public off street long term parking spaces. **Though Prime is required to provide at least 50 parking spaces to the public for free on site as a condition of developing the Durkee Street Lot, Prime admitted that it can NOT guarantee that these spots would be free and did not know how many parking spaces would be available for public use. The fact is that once Prime takes over ownership of Durkee street parking lot, there is nothing to prevent Prime's tenants, visitors and customers from using all parking spots on site, because Prime has failed to provide sufficient parking to meet its own needs.**

The City's plan to make Durkee Street one-way along with angled parking on the east side of the street will prevent contiguous flow of traffic and impede delivery trucks from servicing downtown businesses and restaurants. Angled parking that requires drivers to back up into traffic is extremely dangerous and almost impossible during winter months and in-climate weather due to poor visibility and limited turning ability. According to Ken Bibbins, Regional Traffic Engineer (DOT) analysis of the city's proposed changes to Durkee Street, Mr. Bibbins states the following: it *"does not appear to me that the right of way that Durkee Street falls within has sufficient width to allow angled parking without severely impacting its lane widths." And "multiple studies"...have shown that "angled parking causes an increase in accidents." Backing-up maneuverability is "particularly dangerous if the roadway in question has a significant volume of bicycle traffic, such as this one. There is also an increase in accidents due to the stop-go nature of drivers searching for an open space, which is more difficult with angled parking because the empty spaces are harder to see." ..."based on the concept and its traffic safety implications, I would use the strongest language possible to discourage the institution of this change.*

According to Laberge Group's engineer, Prime needs to make the following changes:

1. Prime needs to demonstrate that it has granted easements to the city for public parking, use of sidewalks and green space in the Durkee Street Lot. This is especially important in the center of the Durkee Street project, which is to enable public utilization of the sidewalks and green space and to access the Saranac River Trail from the Durkee Street's Art Parc.
2. Mr. Koziol recommends that the "cross walk across the entrance/exit to the parking garage on Bridge Street be located as far away from the building as possible to provide better visibility to drivers & pedestrians." I ask the Planning Board to look at the design, location and landscaping of parking garage of Harbor view condominiums on the corner of Club Rd. and Hamilton Street. The developer worked with both our city engineer and neighboring residents to make sure that the location and design of the access to the underground parking would not reduce drivers' visibility upon exit/entrance, thereby reducing the likelihood of traffic accidents. The developer even added a wide sidewalk to increase pedestrian walkability in the neighborhood. It is even more critical that Prime meet city parking requirements and redesign its underground parking garage to increase visibility and reduce stacking of its tenants cars as they exit and enter the congested

corner of Durkee Street and Bridge Street. Unlike Harbor View Condominiums, Prime's Durkee Street project is located in the center of our downtown business district, at the corner of a busy intersection. Bridge Street is a continuation of US route 9, which is a major connector road from the North end to south end of town. Unloading service trucks on Durkee Street is already challenging, but it would be impossible, if Durkee Street is reduced to only one lane with angled parking. These proposed changes will definitely increase the likelihood of traffic accidents.

3. LaBerge's engineer is also concerned with the fact that **Prime's building is only 3.5 feet away from its property line. The proximity of Prime's 5-story structure with 297 tenants to public sidewalks, river walk and Bridge Street poses a safety risk to the public** and will most definitely impede both pedestrian and vehicle traffic on Durkee and Bridge Street during the two-three years of construction that Prime estimates it will take to build.
4. **Mr. Koziol, engineer for LaBerge Group also expresses his concern over access to courtyard tenants due to its location and narrow driveway**. He recommends that "Prime move the access control gates further into the lot to increase vehicle queuing and prevent blocking pedestrian and vehicle traffic." Though Prime's engineer objects stating that such a change would result in reduce parking spaces, it is indeed in the best interest of the public and will prevent accidents.
5. Mr. Koziol outlines his concerns regarding the failure of Prime to provide safe and convenient access to service tenants living in the courtyard apartments, because its driveway is too narrow. **Prime's plan to have emergency vehicles, such as large aerial, pumper and fire trucks park on the Bridge Street to put out a fire is impractical and a safety hazard to Prime's tenants, pedestrians** and would be an impossibility, if vehicles were parked on Bridge Street or on site.

In closing, **I ask you to POSTPONE the May 27, 2020 meeting until the Zoning and Planning Board have received additional information requested by the ZBA on May 5, 2020 meeting and the PB receives additional and updated information in response to the recent changes of Prime's use of the Durkee Street lot and recession.** I further ask that the Planning Board carefully review all aspects of Prime's Durkee Street development and makes sure that this project meets all SUP and city zoning requirements and recommendations put forth by the LaBerge Group and all interested parties. And finally to allow the public to further comment on any additional information pertaining to the development of the Durkee Street Lot via written or oral comments as described in April 14, 2020 "temporary board meeting procedures due to Covid 19, which is agreed to be made part of the public record, as ZBA agreed to do at its May 4, 2020 meeting. After all, Prime is getting 4.3 million dollars plus 3.3 acres of prime real estate for only $1. It's your job to make sure that Prime's project enhances the DRI, complements our historic downtown and is in the best interest of our downtown, community and city. Your board has a responsibility to Plattsburgh residents and downtown businesses to ensure that Prime's project enriches the Downtown Revitalization Initiative. Thereby promoting revitalization of our downtown rather than having an adverse effect, as is the case with Prime's current design. Now is the time to make certain that Prime will build a mixed use development that will benefit everyone, not only Prime's bottom-line. Your decision will affect our downtown and city forever!

Finally, Zoom Meetings fail to enable full active participation by all concerned citizens in real time. This is especially true for downtown business owners, who are struggling to survive! April 27, 2020 PB meeting is evidence of this fact. I like many residents do NOT have the technology to participate remotely I risked my own safety to go over to a friend's house to participate at 11:30 PM, when I, like most people, are usually asleep! Two residents who commented at last week's meeting, lost signal during the meeting.

Sincerely, Carol J. Klepper

Homeowner & landlord at 17 Couch Street, Plattsburgh, NY

Mr. Ronald Nolland, Chairman
City of Plattsburgh Zoning Board of Appeals
cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Re: April 20, 2020 ZBA: Appeal 2232-Durkee Street-SUP comments

April 20, 2020

Dear Zoning Board members and Chairperson:

Once again, I ask that members of ZBA postpone all decisions regarding the Durkee Street parking lot and Prime development until everyone can attend all meetings in person. It is both irresponsible and unethical to hold any ZBA or PB meetings without all city residents and stakeholders being able to comment on Prime's project, especially those who own property adjacent to the Durkee Street Parking lot.

I, along with 42 downtown business owners and over 6,151 petitioners (see attached signatures) ask that you deny all current appeals, special use permits and variances requested by the city of Plattsburgh and Prime Development LLC on grounds that all such requests regarding the development of the Durkee Street Lot have NOT been reviewed as part of the entire DRI project but rather in isolation. And, Prime's current proposal fails to meet both zoning code & all criteria found in zoning ordinance section 360-31 B for standards of such special use permits, in which all 5 criteria for ZBA SUP must be satisfied.

I ask that the Board deny the proposed boundary changes for the Durkee Street parking Lot into one 3.3 acre lot, but rather suggest that the City subdivide it into at least two lots, whereby the city will retain ownership of at least .5 acres for public use to provide at least 150 off-street parking spots that remain deficient in the city's replacement parking plan, which fails to provide the required 1 to 1 ratio of compensatory parking off street in the center of our downtown business district. Once ownership of the Durkee Street Parking lot is transferred to a private developer, the public will not only permanently lose all 289 free long-term, year round parking spaces in the center of downtown, but everyone working, living & visiting downtown will lose at least 275 of these 289 parking spots, while the proposed 102 spaces in the Pavone lot + 22 spaces in the Broad Street lot are constructed. Given the state of the economy throughout the nation and especially in NYS, it is suicide to the future of our downtown to give all 3.3 acres to Prime without the city retaining any ownership. It is detrimental to Plattsburgh's economy to gift such a valuable asset to Prime development.

I also implore the members of the ZBA to deny Prime's request to put any apartments on the first floor of any building. If the ZBA approves such a request it will set an undue and negative precedent throughout the city, because it will open the door for other property owners to convert commercial space into first floor apts. Granting such a variance will result in increased density and exacerbate the shortage of long-term year round parking for all tenants living downtown. Street level apartments are problematic due to safety concerns and their un-attractiveness to long term tenants. I can attest to this fact first hand, as someone who has both owned and lived in first floor rentals. This is especially true in the center of downtown. Merely look at street level or first floor apartments in any downtown and you will notice security systems such as steel bars or small windows to prevent access from intruders, which is hardly inviting to prospective tenants. It is extremely difficult to retain tenants in street level or first floor apartments due to safety and marketability, contrary to Prime's comments.

Landlords and business owners in Plattsburgh and especially downtown are faced with the realty that they may never be able to reopen. Economists forecast that high unemployment and business closures

may continue for years. Most builders have put projects on hold and the majority of lenders have retracted their financial commitments to developers. Given the fact that Plattsburgh and NYS are faced with billions of dollars in deficits and that many people will remain unemployed, while others have lost their life savings, it is unlikely that Prime will be able to complete construction and fill all 115 units & 10,000 square feet of commercial space by September 1, 2021. Prime's current project will most definitely have an adverse effect on adjacent properties and surrounding neighbor-hoods for years to come. The future of our downtown and economic survival rests in your hands.

I beseech all ZBA members to include all comments made by everyone into any decision you make, even if their comments exceed the 3-minute recording threshold you have set as a board. As members of Plattsburgh City Zoning Board you have a duty to ensure that any variance you grant Prime Development does NOT have any adverse effect to our downtown, city and county and that it meets all 5 SUP criteria and zoning code requirements. The following points outlined within explains why Prime's project should be denied.

1. **General Character, height and use of the structure**. Prime's current design is not in keeping with our historic downtown due to its mammoth size, building design and use of metal and clapboard. The majority of the buildings downtown are made of brick or sandstone and are less than 4 stories in height. I ask that the board deny Prime's request to build a 5-story 115-apartment complex with 10,000 square feet of commercial space in the center of downtown, which is in actuality 6 stories above ground along the river and is 2-3 stories above any other building adjacent to the Durkee Street Lot. Prime's building will tower 65 feet above ground on the North side and will be 180 feet high along Bridge Street spanning more than 200 feet along the riverside. Prime's colossal complex will consume the entire North and East corners of the Durkee Street Lot, which will block off sunlight and discourage pedestrian circulation. Even members of the Clinton County Planning Board expressed their concern with having such a massive structure on top of the Saranac River Walk and right against the sidewalk on Bridge Street. The intent of the DRI is to revitalize our downtown by inviting people to recreate, shop and eat in our downtown business district. Granting such a height variance would detract rather than invite people from visiting our downtown.

2. **Provision of surrounding open space and the treatment of grounds**. Prime's current plan fails to provide any green space for its tenants and therefore does NOT meet criteria 2 of SUP. And in fact, if Prime is given all 3.3 acres of 22 Durkee Street there will be NO guaranteed open green space for public use on site. Access is not ownership and therefore public use will be controlled at the whim of the developer. It is a slap in our face to have Prime merely offer public access to the Saranac River with a walk way through the center of its project. Prime needs to downscale its project and the city needs to retain at least 25 feet along Bridge Street and 50 feet rather than 14 feet along the East side of Durkee Street parking lot in order to provide a green buffer zone between Prime's tenants and city residents and visitors. Prime's current Durkee Street project fails to provide any dedicated green space for its tenants, unlike Prime's Saratoga project and lacks sufficient green space for guaranteed public use. 3. Prime's current project also fails to meet **"general fitness of the structure or use to its proposed location."** Prime's current proposal to build one contiguous structure for up to 293 residential tenants and 10,000 square feet of commercial space not to mention the future transformation of the former farmers market into additional commercial space is NOT a good fit for this site or viable at this time. I suggest rather that Prime rework its design to build a smaller size project in multi-phases that has a better chance of surviving our current economy.

Prime's current plan adds up to 293 tenants living at the northeast corner of Durkee Street Parking lot, which is right on the Saranac River Trail. Cramming such a large population next to the Saranac River trail hardly promotes visitors and city residents from enjoying the river. Members of Clinton County Planning Board have also expressed their concern of the proximity of Primes 5 story 115

unit apartment complex being built right against the Saranac River Trail and only 14 feet away from the river bank. Prime's current plan fails to provide even it tenants any green space adjacent to the river or any green buffer zone next to any city sidewalk. Even Prime's Saratoga project provides open green space on site. 4.

Provision for automobile and parking or storage. I ask the board to deny Prime's request to only provide 226 parking spaces rather than the 317 required by Plattsburgh's zoning code, because Prime cannot compare its Saratoga Springs project, known as "the Hamlet," to its proposed Plattsburgh development, because "the Hamlet" is several miles from the center of downtown Saratoga Springs and is therefore not equivalent to Prime's Plattsburgh project, which will be built in the center of our business district. Permitting Prime to build a 115 apartment complex with more than 10,000 square feet of commercial space will most definitely create a hardship to our downtown, because Prime's tenants and city residents and patrons will be competing for the 100 parking spots that Prime is failing to provide for its tenants and the 150 deficient parking spaces off street that the city has failed to provide the public. Prime should be required to provide at least 317 parking spaces on site, given the fact that Plattsburgh's zoning parking requirements are antiquated, and Plattsburgh does not have public transportation and everyone owns a car. The reality is that Prime should provide 441 parking spaces on site to accommodate full occupancy of both Prime's residential and commercial usage, which doesn't even account for the additional parking needed for Prime's future conversion of the former's farmers market to commercial space. As someone who owns an apartment building near downtown, I am well aware of how important onsite year round parking is to my tenants. What is even more problematic is that Prime has yet to present detailed parking plans that are current and up to date.

Prime has also failed to provide any concealed storage for its tenants' bicycles, outdoor equipment, etc. Plattsburgh zoning and Planning boards have insisted that developers provide such storage on site and adjacent to their units for security, convenience and esthetic purposes. As an apartment owner, I know how important adequate on-site storage is in attracting long-term tenants. Most importantly, ZBA members need to insure that Prime's project is reviewed as part of the entire DRI. Equally important is that all 289 parking spaces currently provided for free to the public off street in the Durkee Street parking lot is replaced with compensatory parking, which the city has failed to do. One of the most critical points to be considered by ZBA regarding parking is that the Durkee Street parking lot provides free and convenient parking for everyone working, living and visiting downtown. Businesses such as; Social Services, JCEO, doctors, counselors, chiropractors, etc. all need convenient and handicap accessible parking close by. Unfortunately, the city's replacement parking plan only provides 125 public parking spaces off street in the center of downtown, which results in 165 deficient off street compensatory parking spots. Even the city notes that they are unable to replace all 289 off street public parking spaces. Furthermore, the city's plan to convert all free downtown street parking to paid parking will create an additional hardship to downtown businesses and property owners struggling to survive. I remind the board that you can NOT count the off street parking that was created by the county at the Government center, because these parking spaces are primarily used by government employees and is not adjacent to the center of downtown businesses. The 15 angled parking spaces that the city anticipates providing on Durkee Street is not off-street and therefore is not considered compensatory replacement parking. DEIS states that parking lots should have less than 85% of the spaces filled and that the Durkee street lot often has 87% usage, thereby showing its importance to downtown. Over 200 employees who work at Social services, JCEO & other offices currently park in the Durkee Street Lot, which would quickly fill the Pavone Parking lot once built, because street parking would be metered. According to Carl Walker Plattsburgh needs to replace "equal" amount of year round off street parking to its community.

5. **Street capacity and use.** Prime's proposed mixed use development will bring close to over 300 additional vehicles to the Northwest corner of Bridge and Durkee Street. This increased vehicular

traffic along with the poor redesign of Durkee Street will result in increased pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular traffic accidents, congestion and bottlenecks, especially during peak delivery times. The city has failed to provide any designated pull offs or tested the viability of such a drastic change to one of downtown's major arteries and unloading zones for local businesses. The City's plan to make Durkee Street one-way along with angled parking on the east side of the street will prevent contiguous flow of traffic and impede delivery trucks from servicing downtown businesses and restaurants. Angled parking that requires drivers to back up into traffic is extremely dangerous and almost impossible during winter months and in climate weather due to poor visibility and limited turning ability.

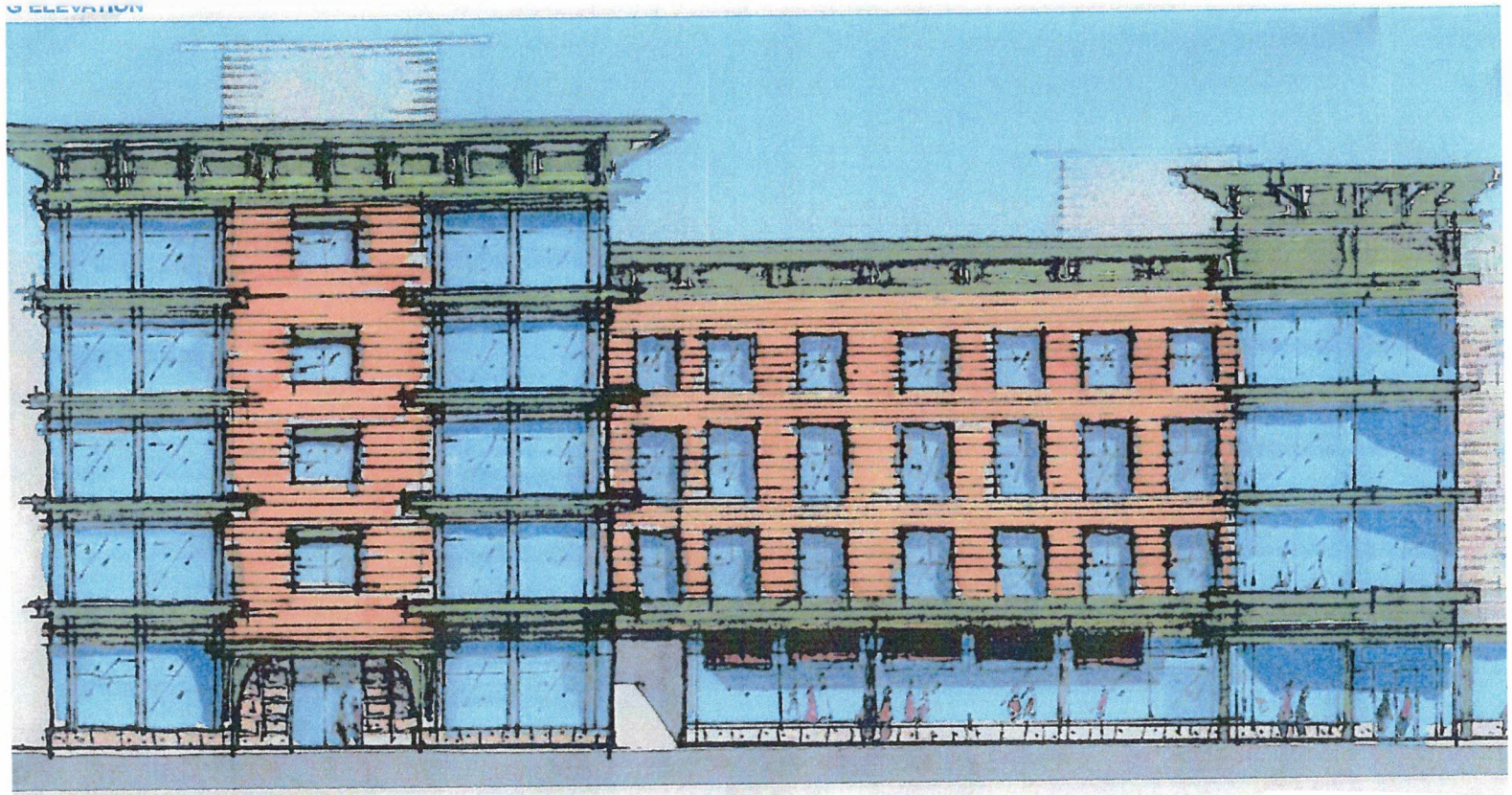
I remind the Board that Bridge Street is a continuation of US route 9, which is to provide safe travel for all delivery trucks, automobiles, motorcycles and bicycles. According to Ken Bibbins, Regional Traffic Engineer (DOT) analysis of the city's proposed changes to Durkee Street, Mr. Bibbins states the following: it *"does not appear to me that the right of way that Bridge Street falls within has sufficient width to allow angled parking without severely impacting its lane widths." And "multiple studies"...have shown that "angled parking causes an increase in accidents." Backing-up maneuverability is "particularly dangerous if the roadway in question has a significant volume of bicycle traffic, such as this one. There is also an increase in accidents due to the stop-go nature of drivers searching for an open space, which is more difficult with angled parking because the empty spaces are harder to see." ..."based on the concept and its traffic safety implications, I would use the strongest language possible to discourage the institution of this change.*

Furthermore, Prime has failed to include any parking plans for its 10,000 square feet of commercial space, future conversion of former farmers market for commercial use, designated loading and unloading areas and a detailed diagram with site elevations and dimensions of all surface and underground parking for its 115 apartment complex.

In conclusion**,** Primes current proposal fails to meet city zoning code parking, height and building requirements, along with its failure to satisfy all 5 Special Use Permit (SUP) criteria and the objectives of the DRI plan set forth by NYS. Primes project is deficient in providing onsite parking for its tenants, visitors and patrons, lacks designated green space for its tenants, fails to provide guaranteed sufficient onsite public parking, and will result in increased vehicular and pedestrian traffic accidents, traffic congestion and additional hardships to our downtown businesses who are struggling to survive the economic crisis that is anticipated to continue for years. Governor Cuomo's DRI grants were intended to revitalize downtowns throughout upstate New York by providing recreation, services and joint business opportunities in the center of downtown. Converting our entire 3.3 acres of 289 public parking spaces into privately owned apartments and over 10,000 square feet of commercial space is not in the best interest of Plattsburgh and will most definitely have a negative impact on our community and Plattsburgh's downtown business district.

Sincerely,

Carol J. Klepper, 17 Couch Street, Plattsburgh, NY



DRI COMMITEE'S MULTI PHASE MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT
PROPOSED RENDITION

Zoning Board of Appeals - May 18 Meeting

3 messages

Courtney Meisenheimer <meisenheimer.courtney@gmail.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 1:31 PM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

To the members of the Zoning Board of Appeals,

My name is Courtney Meisenheimer and I am a resident of the City of Plattsburgh. I am writing to you today to urge you to vote no on the Prime LLC Durkee Street Development zoning deviances.

I'd like to say thank you to the ZBA members for trying their best during the COVID-19 pandemic to follow process and include the public's comment and participation in this process. You have been spending many long and late nights reviewing the Durkee Street application - as volunteers - and your service to the city is greatly appreciated.

I would ask that you please stand up for our city and prevent Prime LLC from developing on the Durkee Street lot. I believe that the Durkee street lot should be developed but this is not the type of development that will serve the residents of the city well. I am deeply concerned with the following aspects of this project:

- The size of the sidewalk along Bridge Street (even after revision) seems too small for pedestrians to safely walk. Ron also brought up this sidewalk would pose as an accessibility issue for wheel chair users.
- The distance from the sidewalk to the first floor apartments on Bridge street seems too small. I worry about how this will affect the community if people are out on their balconies right on Bridge Street across from local businesses.
- The character of the building does not seem to keep in character of downtown Plattsburgh.

I urge you to please pause and listen to your fellow community members who feel that this project is just not right. Will our city be able to support this kind of development during a global pandemic? Will the limiting of downtown parking affect our small and fragile small business community?

I truly believe that the Durkee Street lot is destined to be something far greater than a mega apartment complex. It could be the center of our city, a place to gather as a community, and accessible to everyone instead of just the economically privileged.

I know you have a lot of information to sift through, and a large decision to make. I appreciate you taking the time to read my letter and consider a fellow community member's concerns.

Sincerely,
Courtney Meisenheimer

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 2:01 PM
To: Courtney Meisenheimer <meisenheimer.courtney@gmail.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901

518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com
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City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 2:01 PM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, Joe McMahon <mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>

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Zoning Board Comment

3 messages

Kevin, Daniela and Misha Gitlin <kdmnexus@gmail.com> Wed, May 13, 2020 at 1:51 PM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com
Cc: "JANSON J.M." <jmjcaper@gmail.com>

To the Zoning Board:

We are opposed to the Prime project for the following reasons:

- the proposed building is far too large for the proposed area; the design does not blend with the existing architecture; downtown charm will be destroyed; tourist and community traffic decrease
- the project will eliminate much needed community parking, tourist traffic will decrease, small businesses and restaurants downtown will be gutted
- the project will consume too much downtown green space
- the design of the sidewalk setbacks and parking garage is unsafe
- there is zero need for high end retail and residential apartment space, given all the empty lower end properties available. If the building remains empty and unrented, this will turn downtown into a slum.
- the tax breaks given the project will negatively impact our public schools, as well as city revenues

Vote no, please.

Daniela and Kevin Gitlin

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Wed, May 13, 2020 at 3:03 PM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

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City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Wed, May 13, 2020 at 3:04 PM
To: "Kevin, Daniela and Misha Gitlin" <kdmnexus@gmail.com>
Cc: "JANSON J.M." <jmjcaper@gmail.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

www.cityofplattsburgh.com

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Gmail by Google

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com>

Zoning Board of Appeals Comment regarding Prime, LLC

3 messages

Deborah Yokum <debyokum@gmail.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 7:14 PM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

To the Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals:

We are writing to follow up and expand on the concerns we outlined in an earlier letter regarding the proposed Prime Plattsburgh, LLC Durkee Street project. We were pleased to hear your thoughtful questions regarding Prime's plans at the May 4th meeting. After reviewing their recent plan revisions, we trust that you will agree that the changes made were unsatisfactory and information is still incomplete. To name just a few points:

- The scale of the building is still overpowering to the neighborhood.
- The sidewalk widening comes at the expense of the street and parking, rather than the Prime building. It also assumes that the city will agree to those changes.
- Prime has yet to provide floor plans for the proposed building
- The lack of information and assurance about a commercial tenant is troubling.

We can all agree that the economic landscape has changed dramatically since this project was first proposed. It seems unwise and irresponsible to allow a project with this much potential risk to move forward when so much of that risk is to be borne by our local community. We trust that you will make the right determination for our community and not be swayed by a corporation whose representatives are, frankly, acting as if they know what's best for us. They do not!

Deborah Yokum

Hal Moore

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:19 AM
To: Deborah Yokum <debyokum@gmail.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place

Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com
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City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:19 AM
To: Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

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May 14, 2020

To: City of Plattsburgh Zoning Board of Appeals

I'm Ed Zukowski and have been before your board at different times of doing business in the City of Plattsburgh. I have always respected your position and responsibilities that you have volunteered to carry out for the betterment of the City of Plattsburgh and the citizens of Plattsburgh. You are appointed by the political leadership of the City and not elected by public vote. This to me has created a conflict with the current Prime Development project on the City owned Durkee St. property.

I know all of you are aware of the political connections exists between the players involved in this proposed project and do not feel I need express any of them at this time. You all have been given the responsibility to approve projects that fit the City's *"Comprehensive Plan for the purpose of promoting the public health, safety, morals, convenience, order, prosperity, and general welfare of the community. They have designed to lessen congestion in the streets; to secure safety from fire; and other dangers; to provide adequate light and air; to prevent the overcrowding of land; to avoid undue concentration of population; and to facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools parks and other public requirements. They have been made with reasonable consideration, among other things, as to the character of each district and its suitability for particular uses and with a view of conserving the value of buildings, and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout the City of Plattsburgh and to achieve the following purposes:*

To encourage the most appropriate use of land in the community in order to conserve and enhance the value of property.

To create an attractive and cohesive central business district.

To improve the financial structure of the city by increasing the rate of growth of municipal income through enhanced value of property.

To enhance the aesthetic aspects throughout the entire community.

To ensure that tax revenues will remain sufficient to meet the increasing expenses of government."

This is City property and City awarded money you are now considering not politically owned property or politically owned money. Both the property and the money are for the DRI program not for the benefit of Prime Plattsburgh, LLC. The Zoning Board of Appeals holds the power to make the correct decision for the citizens of Plattsburgh not for the political power of Plattsburgh. Not one of the local developers that I know about has ever been offered the deal offered to Prime Plattsburgh, LLC.

I only ask that you make your decision based on the *'purpose guidelines of the City's Comprehensive Plan'* and on the expressed responses from the citizens you represent and the land they collectively own and not on a political agenda.

Sincerely,

Ed Zukowski

Ed Zukowski
12 Marcy Ln
City of Plattsburgh

Zoning Board Comment

3 messages

Libby Yokum <adklotus@gmail.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 11:48 AM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Dear Ron Nolland, the Zoning Board members, Joe McMahon and any one else who receives these emails and has input into decision making about Prime development,

I am writing as a city of Plattsburgh resident and urge you to please vote NO on the Prime/Durkee St. lot development. I'll tell you why.

The Prime redevelopment of the Durkee St. lot is not in alignment with the overall downtown revitalization initiative and Prime needs to meet all the city zoning code requirements for special use permits.

I regularly shop at the North County Co-op, it is our primary grocery store. When on street parking is not available in front of the store the next closest parking will be on the other side of Prime's excessively large buildings. This would entail leaving the Co-op with heavy bags walking up to the corner of City Hall Place and crossing to Durkee St. because crossing across from the Co-op so close to an exit ramp from the underground parking would definitely feel unsafe. Then walking down Durkee St. on the narrow sidewalk with light posts/electrical boxes, people with baby carriages, wheelchairs and those from the angled parking would easily be crowded and not the conducive for the walkable city we have been striving for. The sidewalks need to be wider on Durkee St. (And to Prime: No, it won't be easier to take the riverside walk to get to Durkee St parking even if you think we should all prefer the "scenic walk".)

Imagining this already congested downtown area with snowbanks is unfathomable. Snowbanks are always a Plattsburgh issue and I have yet to hear about the snow parking plan and how that will affect the walkability of the city. I am still seeing a shortage of parking for downtown residents and businesses in the current figures.

Another concern I have is about allowing first floor apartments in the Prime building which could set a precedent for the city to have empty store fronts turn into residential space. Other cities cite the disadvantages of this happening and it also isn't in alignment with the idea of Plattsburgh becoming an attractive walkable city.

I have read the city school district's concerns about costs (possible need for more tax dollars) for more students who may move into Prime apartments. I listen to city building owners losing tenants due to parking. I see empty store fronts. I know more businesses will leave downtown if the parking situation gets even worse. There isn't anything I've heard in the numerous meetings I have attended or read about that convinces me that adding more apartments and more commercial space instead of green space will be of benefit to downtown Plattsburgh.

Now with the Covid-19 pandemic and the financial situation even more dire in Plattsburgh and in every city in the country it seems extremely unwise for the Zoning Board and the City of Plattsburgh to support the enormity of this Prime project in the Durkee St. lot.

Please vote no on the Prime Plattsburgh LLC plan.

A caring and concerned resident who regularly frequents downtown

Elizabeth (Libby) Yokum
7 Point View Terrace
Plattsburgh

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 11:50 AM
To: Libby Yokum <adklotus@gmail.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com
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City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 11:50 AM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, Joe McMahon <mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>

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ZBA -Prime

3 messages

Zukowski Properties <zukowskiproperties@gmail.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 5:57 AM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Let it be known we at EZ Properties oppose the lack of parking and overall character of the size of Prime Durkee Street!!

Please consider our voice in your decision.

Thank you
EZ Properties
5185636021
Zukowskiproperties@gmail.com

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 12:40 PM
To: Zukowski Properties <zukowskiproperties@gmail.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com

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City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 12:41 PM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

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Public comment Zoning Board Meeting 18 May 20

3 messages

Jeff Moore <jmoore1748@gmail.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 2:09 PM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Zoning Board of Appeals 15 May 20

I would like to state I am submitting this letter on my personal behalf as a city resident who lives within a few hundred yards of the proposed development and not in my role as city councilor. I am very pleased with the responses from Prime Company to the questions raised by the ZBA. The height of the proposed building compares favorably with the height of the surrounding structures allowing it to blend in with the surrounding streetscape. The wider sidewalk (8-12 ft) on Bridge Street will provide adequate pedestrian access for this area. As a frequent visitor to Montreal I find the egress from the onsite parking garage to be typical for this type of parking garage access. As for the sidewalk on the Durkee Street side it will be twice as wide (5 ft) as it is now which would provide for the anticipated pedestrian traffic flow. Normally I would not be in favor of first floor apartments in this area of the city but the fact that there is no street side egress into or out of the apartments on the Bridge Street side and the removal of the lowest balcony over the sidewalk there, are in my opinion a satisfactory solution. I believe this development proposed by Prime will be a valued asset to our downtown and should be approved based on the merits of this latest proposal. The central original purpose of the DRI grant was to develop the Durkee Street lot and return it to the tax rolls. This latest proposal in my opinion “checked all the boxes” and is ready for approval.

Sincerely,
Jeff Moore

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 2:40 PM
To: Jeff Moore <jmoore1748@gmail.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Shelise Marbut
Senior Account Clerk

41 City Hall Place

Plattsburgh, NY 12901
www.cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
(ph) 518.461.2668** - Temporary remote number due to Covid-19
(ph) 518.536.7520 – Office line. Voicemail only. Returning calls sent to voicemail.

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City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 2:40 PM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, Joe McMahon <mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>

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Zoning Board Meeting of 5/18/2020

3 messages

J.M. JANSON <jmjcaper@gmail.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 1:56 AM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Dear Members of the Board,

Thank you for serving. You voluntarily became "experts" to help your community. Those of us sending comments want to see our community thrive and flourish, but there is a great divide on how to make that happen. As one person alluded to at your last meeting, I think those people who support this plan by Prime are living in la-la-land, and not reality. It would be nice to think a "for-profit" corporation would make choices that benefit the area where they are located, but, we are living in a time of scorched-earth capitalism. Prime is no exception, they are no benevolent developer. The residents, through being represented by the Zoning Board and the Planning Board, need to hold Prime to the highest standards (not the lowest) and they need to hold both Prime and the City accountable. This project is huge, and deserves time and highly detailed consideration as it will impact downtown Plattsburgh for likely more than a century. There are millions of dollars that will potentially change hand, we need to make sure we're getting the best for Plattsburgh.

I used to hear Red Barber talking to Bob Edwards on NPR's *Morning Edition*. Red coined the expression, "sitting in the catbird seat." It's a nice place to be. It means sitting in a superior place, being in power, having a recognized advantage. Hey ZBA & PB -- you guys are sitting in the catbird seat! Ask questions, demand accurate answers and tell their annoying lawyer to hit the mute button. Especially if he tells you to vote... and he's likely to suggest when and how to vote too!

Because this project is huge, and because millions of dollars and millions of details are associated with it, and because the level of impact is so high, I cannot keep my remarks to one page. For that, I apologize. There is much to object to in this project, including the way Prime has dealt with concerns and objections.

1. The look of the building is not in keeping with downtown. The buildings on Durkee Street and Bridge Street are small, and their facades are varied. They are each different but they coordinate for a pleasant and harmonious whole. The Prime building is massive. It towers above its neighbors. The materials used in the building are not typically found in our downtown. Prime has taken a plan that looks much like their Saratoga buildings and tweaked it slightly, proclaiming that

they've now made substantive changes so the building will be more suitable for Plattsburgh. It is still an enormous building that lacks the historical details to smooth its transition into that neighborhood. (Again, my compliments on the Vilas Home addition and Maplefields on the Oval. We know neither one of those were build in 1900, but they are each a good fit with buildings of that era. It can be done, Prime just isn't willing to expend the time, effort, or money.)

As someone with an interest in architecture, one of my rules for critiquing a building is the question: does it look like it belongs here, and nowhere else? The Gateway Building on Durkee is not a "bad" looking building, but it could be placed anywhere. From Salem, Massachusetts to Salem, Oregon, or McAllen, Texas, to McCall, Idaho, the Gateway building does not pass the test for distinction. The best buildings in any town are distinctive, in that they reflect a sense of place. The materials and style expressed in each building should speak the the cultural and geological history of each spot. I think it's important that any new building in Plattsburgh, nestled among the older buildings downtown, recognize the influences of the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries. The most prevalent building material for existing buildings is brick, and it should be the most prevalent material used for a new building. That will contribute to making it fit with its neighbors and ensuring the building belongs here, and nowhere else. In addition, the proportions and scale must fit with the older existing buildings to be appropriate for this particular spot. What Prime has proposed does not,

2) Because the building is so huge, Prime has sacrificed set-backs and sidewalk space. Both the blueprint and the artist's rendering showed trees along the sidewalk on Bridge Street. There simply isn't room for those things. More's the pity, because they help soften and hide the building. There is no room for street signs, or for two people in wheelchairs to pass each other. I was aghast at the last meeting when Charlie Gottleib said that if the Bridge Street sidewalk wasn't wide enough, pedestrians could just cross over and walk down the other side of the street. What a ridiculous idea! THIS IS NEW CONSTRUCTION, it should offer the best! The plan should exceed ADA guidelines, not simply comply with them. A building that offers pedestrians little space for movement is a building that is a bully. You must accommodate it, because it ain't movin' for you...

3) Safety Issues.
A. The first of these is for pedestrians. A mirror to make sure a car isn't coming out of either the underground parking or the courtyard? Really? Prime considers this and acceptable solution to a very real hazard? Yeah, it's enough to make me want to cross over to the other side of the street so I don't have to worry about being run over. Their building is simply too close to the street, especially Bridge Street, to provide an adequate margin of safety.

B. And again, because they want to maximize parking, they have minimized fire safety. Unable to get a fire truck into the south side parking lot or into the courtyard? Please, apply some common sense! This level of risk is not acceptable! I cannot believe that Counselor Gibbs, as coordinator for safety for the City, didn't speak up about this. If she thinks it's too risky to build apartments in the Harborside area where there is already plenty of parking -- because a train going by could possibly delay emergency vehicles, she said -- I don't see how she could possibly justify fire trucks having access to only two exterior sides of this building. I don't see how the City's Fire Chief could justify this either, except he'd like to continue to be employed, so he "wrote a letter" for Prime. I am going to speak out against this, for potential tenants, and even more importantly, for the City firefighters who will risk their lives when a call comes in from this building. Again, this is new construction... we can do better than this!

C. Prime insists that the area outside their property is totally out of their control. Yet, they plan for diagonal parking on the street so they can maximize parking spaces. The City knows diagonal parking is dangerous and does not work. We have removed diagonal parking throughout the City for this very reason. To utilize diagonal parking on what will be a very busy street is a hazard. This plan is supposed to revitalize our downtown, not ruin it. Changes should be positive, and make it easier to move about, not make it more hazardous.

D. The northwest corner of their parking lot is particularly problematic. I wouldn't want to have to back into the delivery zone they have set up, and I most assuredly wouldn't want to park my vehicle with hand-controls in the handicapped parking area where a delivery vehicle could so readily damage my vehicle. I have a good friend who is permanently in a wheelchair, and drives a van with hand controls. If anything happens to his vehicle, he is stranded. There is no loaner available to him while his vehicle is being repaired. Having a delivery area that will not accommodate semi's is not a good plan, and having a space that requires a high level of backing skill and placing it adjacent to the handicapped parking area is not just an invitation to problems, it is blatantly poor planning.

4) Greenspace.

A. Again, the building is too big, and Prime "is comfortable" with 115 apartments, so we cannot expect them to willingly downsize As I looked at the plans, I found it distressing that Prime plans to use the pedestrian access corridor between Durkee Street and Riverwalk as a place to dump snow from their parking lot. This is completely unacceptable. There are times in the winter when people would like to access the river, and it the space is covered with discarded snow, we can't. And often in the spring when the weather turns warm, warm enough to be out in a tee shirt, you can look at a parking lot in a shopping mall and there is still a mountain of dirty snow melting away -- but the mountain is still there. Those are the kind of

days when a spring stroll along the Riverwalk could be pleasant, but the way will be blocked by snow that has been pushed into the walkway. I don't doubt that Prime will state their intention to keep the walkway cleared. Planning is one thing, doing is another. And, are they "planning" for that occasional winter when Plattsburgh gets lots of snow due to frequent snowstorms? I doubt it. Where will the snow from their parking lot go? Into the narrow corridor they label greenspace. It may be green for six months out of the year, but for the other six it's their dumping grounds.

B. And speaking of Greenspace... Prime cannot claim Riverwalk nor the tiny strip of green near the Gateway building as "providing greenspace." If Prime was not so desperate for parking, their courtyard could be a green and provide a park-like space for tenants. It could slope down towards the river, somewhat mitigating the problem of huge retaining walls that will hem in the Riverwalk and create an undesirable alley. But Prime is already so short on parking, they must create a lot inside the U shaped building. I'll bet the tenants will just love it when a car alarm goes off within that space.

3) The Riverwalk is pinched by vertical retaining walls with a 5-storey building on top. This does not create a welcoming and inviting space. Last week I was on Rugar Street, and I walked on the sidewalk by the east side of the Hartman Theater on SUNY's campus. I looked at the slender strip of landscaping, and the overpowering flat brick wall, and I thought, this is what it will be like when Prime builds next to Riverwalk. Jeez, it's intimidating and ugly. Again, we could have a development that flowed nicely into the Riverwalk to create a delightful space for residents and visitors alike, but Prime's need for profit requires them to construct something that is not in keeping with the kind of community most of us want to create.

4) Parking.
A. Other concerned citizens have addressed this issue in the past and will undoubtedly do so again. Prime and the City are short-changing everyone on parking, over 100 spaces. Frankly, I would be hopping mad if I lived downtown. I would say: you expect me to park my car at Harborside and walk home with four bags of groceries in a snowstorm? Many existing tenants have threatened that they will vote with their feet. Expect moving trucks and friends' pickups blocking our downtown streets for awhile.

B. Prime's calculation of 1.3 cars per apartment is ludicrous. That won't happen as long as downtown Plattsburgh has no grocery store/supermarket, no hardware store, and not apparel shops. People who live downtown need a vehicle. So Prime will actually need more parking spaces for their tenants than they are planning. No problemo! There is already a gated lot on the south side of the

building. They "had planned" to make spaces available to the public to use, but it turns out that their tenants need more parking. So, what's the City going to do about it? They no longer own the property. They sold it for $1.

Members of the general community have signed petitions, have stayed up late to attend meetings, and have attempted to make their wishes known to you. I place myself in this group. We are not misguided and disgruntled citizens who do not live in the City. We are people who are not being paid to write letters, attend meetings, or advocate for our views. It is not our "job" to argue against this project. It is the "job" of all the people on the Prime and City teams to advocate for it. They are paid to do so. As far as I'm concerned, the "No to Prime" team is not only larger (thousands of signatures on a petition), but more importantly, has the moral high ground.

So, Dear Board Members, Plattsburgh has the opportunity to create something wonderful on this site and we should jump at the opportunity. Prime's profit-oriented, bloated behemoth is not it. It is not wonderful. It is even less so now that Covid-19 has deeply shaken our economy. The Prime team acknowledges that it will be a struggle to fill commercial space. This is probably an understatement. Experts see an increasing need for low-income housing due to decreased employment. They are predicting many people sliding into the abyss created by an economic recession/depression. If Prime cannot find tenants for luxury apartments or for commercial space, will they walk away? My sense is yes. Then Plattsburgh will have additional low-income housing available, but at what cost to taxpayers? The likelihood of this project failing is high, the cost of failure is exorbitant, and the repercussions from failure will last for a century or longer.

In my application to sit on the Mayor's Livability Committee, I stated that I could not understand how THE most valuable piece of land in Plattsburgh has a sewage treatment plant sitting on it. (One time when I asked this question in a conversation, I received a straightforward, and undoubtedly honest answer: because shit flows downhill, and the people of Plattsburgh didn't want to pay to pump it uphill.) Ok, but NOW, we recognize what a terrible decision that was. Please, dear board members, we have an opportunity to **NOT** screw up again. The Durkee Street lot could become a real asset to the City, but it won't be if Prime's oversized building is built on it.

Thank you for hearing me out,

Joan M. Janson, resident, taxpayer, concerned and engaged citizen
29 Cogan Ave.

Plattsburgh, NY 12901

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:27 AM
To: "J.M. JANSON" <jmjcaper@gmail.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com
[Quoted text hidden]

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:27 AM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

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May 10,2020

The City of Plattsburgh Zoning Board of Appeals

Reference: The PRIME LLC

Dear Mr. Ron Nolland

Chairman - The City of Plattsburgh Zoning Board of Appeals

It is the duties of the City of Plattsburgh Zoning Board of Appeals to be responsible to the citizens of Plattsburgh they serve and to New York State Law regarding the enforcement of the ordinances of our City.

Considering the current economic conditions, which are increasingly present for the Federal, State, County, and City government, not to mention the hardworking taxpayer of our City. It is totally irresponsible to continue down the path and the relationship with Prime.

Prime has failed to provide changes asked in the previous meeting, ignoring the Zoning Board request and showing disrespect to the constituents of our taxpayers. This reason alone shows their lack of commitment to following the guidelines of the zoning board and their long-term responsibility to our community.

You do not need to have an MBA to know the scope of their plan is too large to be a good fit within the Durkee Street parking lot and the loss of 289 parking spaces will cripple the downtown business, which is already suffering from the current economic conditions, makes no sense.

The statement that they will attract family, which will bring 30 additional students to the Plattsburgh school District, which will only bear another burden on our taxpayers.

I ask that you look at the declining enrollment across the nation in schools and colleges. Where are these families going to coming from tax-paying landlords? My final questions related to 30 families with children occupying these proposed apartments where their recreation within this plan for these is children. This will create another problem for our city police. I ask you where the sense in this project is, there is none!

My final question, where is the survey that states there is a need for an additional one hundred and fifteen apartments. As a landlord, I cannot justify this need!!

I employ you to do the right thing for our City and the economics, Ladies, and Gentlemen the writing is on the wall. This will become the next giant white elephant.

This is not a sound decision to move forward on this project, please do the right thing and do not approve!!!

Sincerely

Joann M Rushford

Joann M Rushford

Landlord and Property Owner

9 Macomb Street

Plattsburgh

518 593 0959

Plattsburgh the land of Squandered opportunities

John S. Seiden

May 14, 2020 4:30 PM

My heart is breaking to what our community is witnessing the “Durkee Street Scam”. Hijacking of what could be an opportunity of a lifetime for our city and its residents.

Prime project as being presented is in no way in the spirit of what the DRI program was meant in the reimagining and renaissance of our downtown. It’s nothing more than a glorified “gated community” for high-end renters and provides zero amenities and creativity for its residence and our community. The over-utilization of this land no way fits into the character of downtown. The visual aspect of this five-story Behemoth shadows the holistic spirit and soul of our historic buildings. Lack of sensitivity from Prime Development to these ideals show their interest is solely economic to maximize their

For weeks now Prime lawyers have been telling Plattsburgh we have it all wrong they have all the answers. Let's not fall for that old song it's never worked before.

Parking the most important issue: Downtown needs a place to park where they live and work and enjoy restaurants. Next Mayor's Cup and the Battle of Plattsburgh celebrations, do we all park at the million-dollar parking lot down where the hotel never came? Manipulation of parking calculations continues, with no honest answers.

This Administration is bending backward to accommodate this miss guided scheme with the notion that this development is going to be the economic catalyst. The harm to all the existing businesses when the parking is being stolen will be devastating. Prime lawyers maintain it's a minimal adverse effect, that's self-serving at best.

Zoning, Planning, and IDA boards must hold Prime accountable!! Don't put our existing businesses out of business just for Prime's own financial gain this is not economic development this is an economic disaster! This is a blank piece of property and can be redrawn and reimagined to truly benefit our community.

Prime claims it's about the economics to maximize the use of this property. That's incorrect it's about greed. They're not paying their fair share of taxes to the city coffers or city school district that is desperately needed. We need to preserve the integrity of our community this five-story "gated community" has no place in our downtown. It overshadows every historic building it should not be allowed it's failed the DRI mission. Prime needs to go back to the original DRI and build only half of the residential units that would alleviate the parking nightmare and would visually be more in keeping what we have.

We're in the middle of a pandemic we don't have the luxury of our old reality. City finances were in dire straits before this pandemic. Departments have been closed and now laying

The pandemic crisis is being described as the worst calamity to hit the global economy since the Great Depression. But hey, “it sure is a great time to build the largest, riskiest boondoggle this city has ever seen”.

I’m tired of hearing Prime lawyers disrespect, discount and belittle the citizenry of Plattsburgh with our concerns and their contempt of being questioned and their greed agenda. We have a greater vested interest in the outcome of what happens here because we live here, they don’t.

I don’t want to hear outdated analysis, manufactured and manipulated facts and comparing us to Saratoga Springs or Burlington or anywhere else in New York this is Plattsburgh we’re not buying your hijacking of what was supposed to be a meaningful rebirth of our city’s downtown.

for Redevelopment. I’ve proven that over a lifetime of commitment, be responsible, and must be a benefit for the citizens.

Planning and Zoning Board members stop this madness, what’s the rush. Don’t we all deserve to get this one right?

Re: Durkee Street project comments for zoning meeting

3 messages

John Seiden <johnseiden7@icloud.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 7:47 PM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Please make this part permanent record of the zoning board of appeals in my opposition for the Durkee Street project.

https://suncommunitynews.com/news/80766/plattsburgh-the-land-of-squandered-opportunities/

Sent from my iPhone

> On Apr 6, 2020, at 10:55 AM, John Seiden <johnseiden7@icloud.com> wrote:
>
> As you might know I used to be on the zoning board for almost 20years I was also on several downtown commissions for the redevelopment of downtown. I was appointed by Governor Cuomo to be on the DRI committee Was also on the city of Plattsburgh revolving loan committee fund I have developed over 17 properties in Plattsburgh most of them in downtown Plattsburgh. There's a right way to develop and a wrong way to develop! What's going on currently in the city of Plattsburgh is bordering on criminal with Colin Read and his shenanigans of trying to jam this Durkee Street project down the citizenry throat. There's a pandemic happening everything has been shut down he puts in place of curfew. What's the matter with this guy, his ego is out of control. The importance of the citizens being able to participate in the planning board meetings and zoning board meetings are crucial. this meeting needs to be held off until an appropriate time that the pandemic is under control and the citizens of Plattsburgh can participate in an open meeting. Hey Mayor Read "Open"meeting law means open! Not sneaking around while everyone is on lockdown , there may be a legal foundation to try to sneak this crap through but it's wrong. Hey Mayor Read put your ego away there's no time for it and it's UNAMERICAN! And we the citizens call BS!!
>
> John S.Seiden

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:20 AM
To: John Seiden <johnseiden7@icloud.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

www.cityofplattsburgh.com

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City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:20 AM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

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Zoning Board Comment

5 messages

Jonathan Mulholland <jonathanmulholland@mac.com> Wed, May 13, 2020 at 9:43 AM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Dear Zoning Board,

My name is Jon Mulholland, and I am a lifelong resident of the City of Plattsburgh. I am writing you to express my extreme concern and displeasure with the proposed Durkee St. building project.

As both a TENANT in a building on Durkee St. (43 Durkee St) and as a property OWNER of a building on Durkee St (33 Durkee St.), I feel that I can offer a unique perspective on this proposal.

Although I have a number of serious concerns (i.e., the tax breaks for Prime, size of the structure, etc.…), my biggest issue is with the loss of parking in the current Durkee St. lot.

Over the past few years, I have expressed my concern with the loss of the Durkee St. parking lot to a number of city councilors. I park in that lot for work every day for the past 2 years. On a "normal" work week (before the Covid-19 shutdowns), the Durkee St. Parking lot is almost completely full. When I arrive for work in the late morning (9-9:30am), I typically have to drive around the lot searching for a free spot. I can't imagine what will happen if the majority of those spots disappear from the building project.

It is not only the loss of parking for the businesses/restaurants in the immediate vicinity, it is also the loss of parking for the many residents that live in the downtown corridor. Ironically, the Durkee St. lot became noticeably more full last year when the City of Plattsburgh started to strictly enforce the 'on-street' parking time limits for the entire downtown district! Suddenly, a ton of the downtown residents could no longer park on the streets (in front of their apartment buildings). So where were they forced to start parking? The Durkee St. parking lot.

The other argument FOR the project I've heard from several city councilors is that there will be an INCREASE in parking spots in other areas of downtown (i.e., new lot across from Arnies Restaurant, the lot on Court St, down by the Naked Turtle! (Ha!) etc..). However, those parking spots are useless for people that are trying to access the business close to the Durkee Lot.

In my specific case, I run a chiropractic/physical therapy office at 43 Durkee St. The ONLY access to my office is from the Durkee St. entrance, which will be immediately across the street from the new building. I see 25-35 patients per day…the vast majority of them are in significant pain and/or have disabilities. Would you suggest that it would be reasonable for them to park in "one of the other downtown lots" and then walk/wheelchair several block and around the corner to get to my entrance on Durkee Street? And please don't tell me that the proposed parking spots that Prime has suggested will be enough! Again, all you have to do is remember that the CURRENT Durkee lot is completely full on an average work day, and that a handful of parallel parking and diagonal spots that Prime is proposing will not be anywhere sufficient for the number of business that are downtown.

In addition, I mentioned that I also own the building at 33 Durkee St. That building is comprised of a commercial unit on the first floor (currently a Hair Salon) and a residential apartment on the second floor. Pleas realize that BOTH my commercial tenant AND my residential tenant have notified me that if this project goes through "in ANY form", they will both be leaving downtown to find a new location for their business and apartment.

Lastly, I (as a business tenant on Durkee St) have also informed my landlord that if this Prime Project passes in ANY form, I will also be forced to relocate my business OUT of downtown Plattsburgh. I love my current office and office location and would hate to move. But if I lose the Durkee parking lot, I will have no other choice.

I've been following the meetings over the past few months very closely. I know that I am not the only downtown owner/tenant voicing the same concerns. I am hoping you will take the time to consider what I've mentioned and

please vote AGAINST the current project.

If you'd like to reach out to me personally for a more detailed conversation, I would be happy to speak with someone. Please just email me back and I can give you my personal phone #.

Thanks for the time and consideration,

Dr. Jon Mulholland

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Wed, May 13, 2020 at 10:10 AM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

[Quoted text hidden]

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Wed, May 13, 2020 at 10:11 AM
To: Jonathan Mulholland <jonathanmulholland@mac.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com
[Quoted text hidden]

Jonathan Mulholland <jonathanmulholland@mac.com> Wed, May 13, 2020 at 10:13 AM
To: City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com>

Thank you Beth. I appreciate it. I just wanted to verify that my message will also be sent directly to the Zoning Board of Appeals before their final vote on this project?
[Quoted text hidden]

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Wed, May 13, 2020 at 10:20 AM
To: Jonathan Mulholland <jonathanmulholland@mac.com>

Hi Jonathan,

Yes, they are being forwarded on to the Board before the May 18th meeting.

Thank you,
Beth
[Quoted text hidden]

Zoning Board of Appeals Comment 05/18/2020

3 messages

Jonathan Schneiderman <Jonathan.Schneiderman@raymondjames.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 9:55 AM
To: "cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com" <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com>

To the ZBA Members,

You have no doubt read a recent letter to the editor of the Press Republican by John Seiden; a local real estate developer for decades. He clearly made his case for opposing the Prime Plattsburgh development and I echo his sentiments. He is rightfully concerned about the adverse effects the development will have on our city and on his properties. The historic building at 43 Durkee St that he redeveloped is surely a focus of his concern, as its main entrance is on Durkee Street, and, as you know, directly across from the proposed Prime building. I am writing to you today, not as a property owner, but as a tenant and business owner in John's building. I have operated my business out of this location for more than 10 years after relocating from a 5 year tenancy in the Westelcom Suites building.

As a downtown business owner I have had the privilege and pleasure of the many amenities that our city has to offer; none more, than the ample free parking in the Durkee Street lot. Should the Prime development go through, I will have no choice but to move my financial planning practice out of downtown. Ample free parking with generous handicapped spots is paramount for the safety and convenience of my clients, many of whom are elderly; my staff, one of who uses a handicapped permit; and myself. I have expressed my concerns and intentions at planning board meetings on several occasions, and while I am not suggesting that downtown redevelopment be halted out of convenience to me, I do want you to know that this project, in its current version, will displace my business and the economic impact it provides to other downtown businesses.

Kindly let the record show that I am fully in favor of taking advantage of the DRI; a meaningful and rare opportunity for our historic and beautiful city. However the charge and responsibility is to fund a project for the betterment of our city, its inhabitants and visitors. The Prime project does not revitalize our downtown, and in my opinion, causes more problems than it solves. It is an overreaching colossus of a building that is designed not with the historic nature of our city in mind, but with the motive of a private enterprise to squeeze out every last dollar of profit. The parking plan is woefully inadequate and the angled parking on Durkee Street is nothing short of dangerous. With the building's current elevation, it literally goes above and beyond the bounds of our regulations, requiring exceptions to our existing laws which will set precedent having negative consequences in the future.

Specifically, I am asking the ZBA to vote against the city's request to change the boundary lines of the Durkee St. parking lot to 3.3 acres. Further, I ask that you deny Prime's request of a special use permit to build apartments on the first floor.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan L Schneiderman

Jonathan L. Schneiderman, CFP®

CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™

Branch Manager

Raymond James Financial Services, Inc.

Member FINRA/SIPC

43 Durkee Street, Suite 100

Plattsburgh, NY 12901

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Branch 7LB

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City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 10:41 AM
To: Jonathan Schneiderman <Jonathan.Schneiderman@raymondjames.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com
[Quoted text hidden]

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 10:41 AM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, Joe McMahon <mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>

[Quoted text hidden]

Durkee St development

3 messages

joseph rotella <jfrotella@hotmail.com> Mon, May 11, 2020 at 7:47 PM
To: "cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com" <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com>

Again, placing apartment on the ground floor would set the president for other property owners within the business district. I believe this is not good development for the center city. There are many questions unanswered such as what study was done to determine that 115 apartments are need in the center city? Is 1.5 parking spaces per unit? A 13000 sq ft commercial space how many parking spaces are need?
This project was selected by a committee? Who were they and how much time was given for public input if any? If there were questions and or modification need to be done from prior meetings and the are not done then it should be tabled until they are on the drawing or they don't mean a think if verbal response.
Finally, design of the building should be in harmony with the surrounding structure. That authority I believe rest with the Planning Board.

Joseph Rotells

Sent from my iPad

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Tue, May 12, 2020 at 11:06 AM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

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City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Tue, May 12, 2020 at 11:45 AM
To: joseph rotella <jfrotella@hotmail.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com

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Zoning Board of Appeals Comment 5/15/2020

3 messages

Judy Oehler <oehlerjudy@gmail.com> Wed, May 13, 2020 at 9:21 PM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

I am writing you today concerning the parking plans for the new Durkee St development project. As a new resident in the down area of Plattsburgh I am pleasantly surprised to find the area reviving with more restaurant choices, sidewalk cafes and unique shops. My daughter has lived here for years and we've enjoyed walking downtown to shop and dine in a "small town" setting.

For 6 years I lived in Lake Placid which has many of these same features coupled with an impossible parking problem. With the new development on Durkee Street completed I see a lack of parking and adequate sidewalk space developing which will
threaten the the continuing revival of downtown.

Why create the problem Lake Placid has been trying to eradicate for the last 20 years?

Since Covid-19 has become a touchstone in urban planners thinking of late, please consider ensuring that this project be a part of a walkable open plan with plentiful parking ,greenery and public space so downtown revitalization continues.

Thus I sincerely request that members of the Zoning Board vote no on the special use permits. Appeal #2232. Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,
Judith B. Oehler
43 Hamilton St.
Plattsburgh, N.Y. 12901

Sent from my iPad

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 12:43 PM
To: Judy Oehler <oehlerjudy@gmail.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

www.cityofplattsburgh.com

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City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 12:43 PM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

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Zoning Board of Appeals Comment 5/18/2020

4 messages

Dr. Kate Mahoney-Myers <DrKateMahoney@hotmail.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 7:01 PM
To: "cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com" <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com>

Regarding Prime development of Durkee Street Lot

I have been a downtown business owner (Living Well Chiropractic at 10 Brinkerhoff Street) for over ten years and I am a member of the Plattsburgh Parking Advisory Committee (PPAC). I am writing to voice my grave concerns over this development. Parking concerns have in no way been adequately addressed and proceeding with this development will massively impede downtown parking for businesses, business patrons and downtown residents alike. A formal petition of over 1,000 signatures of local patrons, residents, business owners, employees and visitors has been presented to the PPAC and also to to the Mayor's office regarding the parking issues. All current iterations of the parking plans result in a significant net loss of parking to downtown. I urge all zoning board members to vote against this project.

Sincerely,
Kate Mahoney-Myers, D.C.
Owner, Living Well Chiropractic

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:16 AM
To: "Dr. Kate Mahoney-Myers" <DrKateMahoney@hotmail.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com
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City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:17 AM
To: mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

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Dr. Kate Mahoney-Myers <drkatemahoney@hotmail.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:21 AM
To: City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com>

Thank you very much!

From: City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com>
Sent: Friday, May 15, 2020 8:16:51 AM
To: Dr. Kate Mahoney-Myers <DrKateMahoney@hotmail.com>
Subject: Re: Zoning Board of Appeals Comment 5/18/2020

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Zoning Board of Appeals Comment 5/18/2020

3 messages

Kathy L. Baumgarten <foofusdotcom@aol.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 9:03 AM
Reply-To: "Kathy L. Baumgarten" <foofusdotcom@aol.com>
To: "cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com" <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com>

15 March 2020

Dear ZBA Members,

Monday is an incredibly important meeting to the future of Plattsburgh. I urge you to vote NO on the property line division and vote NO on first floor apartments.

I do want to draw your attention to the fact that the DRI project REQUIRES BY STATE GUIDELINES (https://www.ny.gov/sites/ny.gov/files/atoms/files/DRI_Four_Guidebook.pdf) a **CONSENSUS** by local population. *This project has never, does not now, nor will it ever have any support in the community.* Indeed, City Hall ignored petitions and public calls for stoppage. **City Hall effectively lied to Prime and the State of New York when it completed the DRI package by stating there was a public consensus.**

Over seventy local businesses are also against this development. They have attended your meetings and said repeatedly told you that they will FAIL without this parking lot! And with this pandemic, Prime has NO place in our local economic recovery. Allowing the City to subdivide this property will sent off a domino effect that will indefinitely negatively affect our city and its taxpayers!

VOTE NO: On Prime's special use permit request to build apartments on first floor

1. First floor apartments are not attractive to long-term tenants and Plattsburgh needs permanent tenants, people who are responsible citizens.
2. By requesting apartments, but without Prime making provision for providing them the standard two spaces per apartment, it means those spaces will be taken from currently existing parking.
3. Allowing first floor apartments will set a **dangerous precedence** in downtown. Other property owners who currently have commercial space on first floor will also want to convert them to first floor apartments. More tenants downtown means the city will need even MORE parking!

MOST IMPORTANTLY, VOTE NO: On the City's request to change the boundary lines on Durkee Street parking lot:

1. If **you** approve changing the boundary lines, **you** will be setting off a **domino effect**: **You** will be responsible for removing an important infrastructure for Plattsburgh's major public events- Mayor's Cup, Battle of Plattsburgh, Fourth of July, Strand Events, etc. **You** will be responsible for removing our beloved City Market from the heart of downtown. **You** will be responsible for causing a profound NEGATIVE effect on shopping and tourism in the downtown. **You** will be responsible for businesses closing and leaving people unemployed. **You** will be responsible for sending shoppers to the Town of Plattsburgh. **You** will be responsible for leaving our city with a smaller tax base. **You** will be responsible for leaving downtown apartment dwellers without safe, off-street parking for snow emergencies.
2. If **you** approve their request, then **YOU** are effectively approving a higher tax rate for every Plattsburgh business and homeowner! Because City Hall has promised PRIME a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) Agreement, (which are for manufacturing, industrial, and not-for-profit companies, **which PRIME is NOT**). By doing this, the City has made PRIME exempt from property taxes! Who will pay the difference? Taxpayers! And this development has been proven by the Superintendent of Plattsburgh Schools to **raise school taxes**.
3. Plattsburgh's walkability will be destroyed by approving to change the boundary lines on the Durkee St Parking lot property. **NO ONE WANTS TO DRIVE AROUND TOWN LOOKING FOR PARKING. THEY WILL JUST TAKE THEIR MONEY AND GO UPTOWN.**
4. People love to park in that lot (pull in rather than parallel) and then walk around town shopping and eating and seeing the sights. If they have to parallel park, **THEY WILL JUST TAKE THEIR MONEY AND GO UPTOWN.**
5. It is an OUTRAGE that this project requires the traffic on Durkee Street to be made one-way with diagonal parking. This will have to be done at great expense and inconvenience to the citizens of Plattsburgh. It has been tried before, and always failed, and it cost us taxpayers a lot of money to re-stripe the road and change all the signs. This project should be totally self-sufficent and not require the City's taxpayers to fund any changes at all.

6. The development of this property, if you vote yes, will increase Bridge and Durkee Street traffic to a level that will cause accidents, decrease pedestrian and handicapped safety, and which will cause people to just take their money and go elsewhere.
7. The city has **failed** to provide 165 compensatory replacement parking spaces to replace the 289 off street, free, year round parking spaces that Downtown business owners were promised as part of the DRI agreement.
8. Prime remains 58% deficient of number of parking spaces they are required to provide in accordance with city zoning code. City code requires Prime to provide 411 rather than the 226 on their current plans.
9. The Prime plan with ground floor businesses will require more street parking for customers, taking away from what is already a disastrous deficit in parking.
10. Prime's design has failed to provide any open green space for their tenants to even walk their own dogs!
11. Prime's statement that they are providing 22% of open green space, actually includes the green space **owned by the city** for the Saranac River Trail, and the green space owned by Gateway or ICU or Federal Building.

For all these reasons, I urge ZBA members to put their foot down on this subdivision of Durkee Street and vote NO. The chain reaction voting yes will cause will be catastrophic at this time of epidemic. Local businesses need to make it as easy as possible for customers to come to them. *If you vote yes and allow Prime and the City to take away their parking, then your Board and its members will be personally responsible for the failure of our downtown.*

Most sincerely,
Kathy L. Baumgarten
18 Elm Street
Plattsburgh NY

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 9:33 AM
To: "Kathy L. Baumgarten" <foofusdotcom@aol.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com
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City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 9:34 AM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

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Zoning board comment

3 messages

Katy Grant <katylgrant@gmail.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 9:22 PM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

I am not in support of the prime company taking over the durkee street parking lot. It is shameful with the amount of opposition this plan is still trying to push through. The money should be used to polish the charm of our city or help small businesses financially during covid not dismantle it with one swoop. The prime deal is a bad one and know in my heart it will take away the very essence of this place. Please do not build in that parking lot.

Thank you for your time,
Katy grant
Katylgrant@gmail.com

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:22 AM
To: Katy Grant <katylgrant@gmail.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com
[Quoted text hidden]

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:23 AM
To: Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

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May 15, 2020

Zoning Board Members

SUBJECT: PRIME DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FAILS THE WALKABILITY TEST

Dear Zoning Board Member:

As most of you know I have spoken out in opposition of the Prime Development Plan. I have done so primarily from the point of view of my position as a downtown business owner and property/building owner on City Hall Place downtown. Now I would like to switch hats for a moment and write to from the perspective of the former City Engineer where, amongst other duties, I also served as the City Title VI - Nondiscrimination practices coordinator. I was director of the City's ADA Self Evaluation Program, author of the Title VI Policy Statement and author of the City Sidewalk Café Policy.

I commend the Zoning Board of Appeals for being extremely astute in contesting this Plan. The purpose of this letter is simply to share my experience and some of the supporting Federal, State and Local Laws that support your concerns.

Background on Federal, State and Plattsburgh City Law.

First, some brief background on Title VI. All municipalities are required by Title VI of the Federal Civil Rights Act to develop and adopt a Title VI Policy for nondiscrimination of Americans with Disabilities. The following is the purpose as stated in the City's Policy:

> *The City of Plattsburgh's Civil Rights Policy Statement directs that the requirements of Articles 15-A of New York State Executive Law, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as well as the Americans with Disabilities act, and all other relevant laws and executive orders are full integrated into all of City of Plattsburgh's and sub-recipient' activities. State and Federal nondiscrimination laws are the cornerstones of City of Plattsburgh's strategy to ensure equal opportunity and fair and equitable programs and services to the public.*

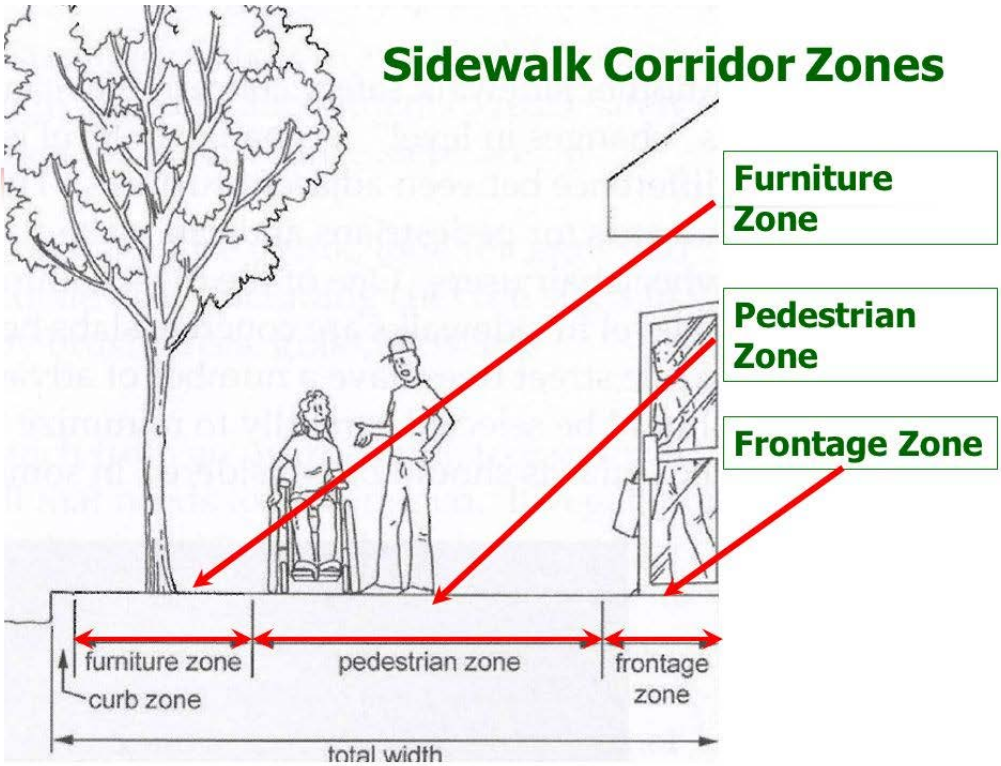
The reason that I bring this up is to show that the City has a policy and a local law which guarantees nondiscrimination against people with disabilities and the proposed Prime Development is in violation of the City Policy as well as Federal Civil Rights Act which has been overlooked throughout this process. Specific examples to follow below.

In addition to the Title VI Policy, I was also the primary author of the sidewalk café policy which became Local Law P-5 of 2016. As is well known, sidewalk café's have become very popular in downtown

Plattsburgh. They also present many challenges in terms of the pedestrian environment. As such this local law was developed.

> *§ 233-38 Purpose*
> *Sidewalk cafes and merchandise displays on the public streets and sidewalks may promote the public interest by contributing to an active and attractive pedestrian environment. The purpose of accommodating sidewalk dining and sales is to add activity, attract pedestrians, extend their visits and enhance overall community quality of life. Reasonable regulation of street and sidewalk cafes and merchandise displays is necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare, including the maintenance of pedestrian access.*

As mentioned, the City of Plattsburgh has adopted a sidewalk café policy. That policy uses standard practice guidelines to break down a sidewalk into four distinct zones. As you can see from the illustration below, the Sidewalk corridor is broken down into zones.



This diagram is taken from the United States Access Board Guidelines and illustrates an example of the minimum design guidelines with each of the zones that make up a proper sidewalk in an urban environment. Note that this minimum design does not include wider sidewalks that enhance the pedestrian experience, promote business and economic opportunity and create a truly walkable community. They simply provide minimum guidelines for accessibility. Concepts for a walkable downtown district is something significantly more than these minimum guidelines. The City local law and associated sidewalk

policy is based on this minimum sidewalk Zone guideline. A cursory inquiry might ask only about sidewalk width, as if that were the entirety of both accessibility and walkability. Such a view would be myopic.

City of Plattsburgh Local Law P-5 of 2016 demands consideration of sidewalk zones. Local Law P-5 of 2016 is based on ADAAG Guidelines, Federal and State Nondiscrimination Guidelines.

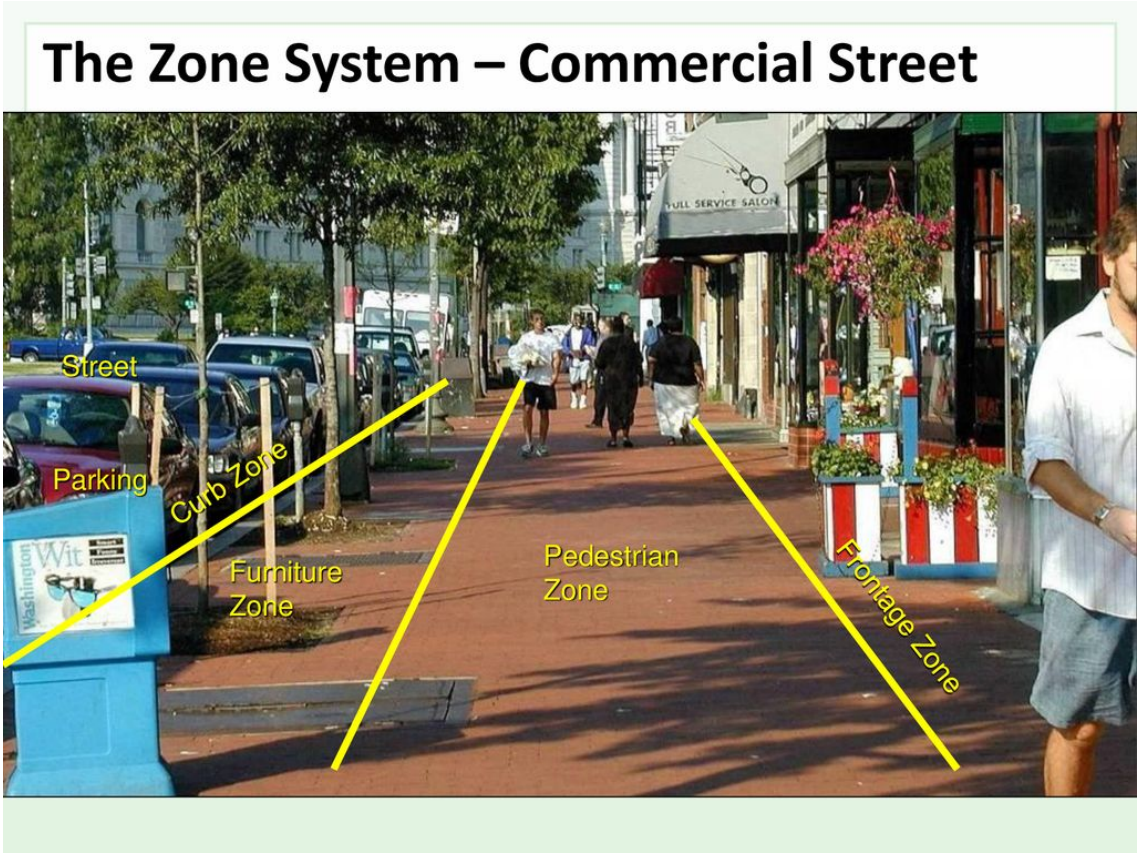
The Local Law includes the following definitions for public:

> *Sidewalk Café: Any portion of public sidewalks or streets in the downtown area in which tables, chairs, and associated exterior property are placed for the sole purpose of patrons consuming food and/or beverages (alcoholic or non-alcoholic) beverages served by a food establishment adjacent to the public sidewalk property.*
>
> *Clear Path of Travel: Measured from the outside edge of the sidewalk café fencing, fence post base or other sidewalk café related obstruction (that limits pedestrian passage) to the planter/ furniture zone where one exists or else to the curb zone. Clear path of travel must fall entirely within the pedestrian zone as defined below. Measurements must be clearly identified on the café permit application site plan.*
>
> *Curb Zone: The first 6-inches of the sidewalk corridor immediately adjacent to the roadway. Frontage Zone: The area between the pedestrian zone and the private property line. A standard frontage zone shall be at least 12-inches wide.*
>
> *Pedestrian Zone: The area of the sidewalk corridor that is specifically reserved for pedestrian travel. It should be completely free of obstacles, protruding objects, and vertical obstructions which can be hazardous to pedestrians, particularly for individuals with vision impairments who may not be able to detect or avoid the hazard. A standard pedestrian zone should be at least 60-inches wide*
>
> *Planter / Furniture Zone: Lies between the curb zone and pedestrian zones and is intended to house utilities, such as traffic poles and fire hydrants, trees, plants and pedestrian amenities, such as benches and bus shelters.*

Clear Path of Travel - Individuals with Disabilities.

Too often we tend to think of people with disabilities as only those in wheelchairs. However, when designing for walkability, it's imperative to also consider other disabilities such as individuals with sight or hearing impairments. Which is why the zone system is so critical. Consider the building zone (aka frontage zone); this zone is important in an urban environment as none of us feel comfortable walking immediately adjacent to a building with our shoulder brushing up along the bricks. For one thing it can be dangerous if a door should suddenly open, and even more dangerous for a blind person. Therefore, a certain width of sidewalk (usually 1' to 3') adjacent to the building (i.e the Building / Frontage Zone) is not considered usable for pedestrians, so we omit this width from the pedestrian zone.

Here is an photographic illustration of each of the Sidewalk Corridor Zones standard within a walkable downtown sidewalk corridor.



The Zone System. As you can see in this picture the pedestrian zone is a considerable distance from the building/frontage zone (typlically 1' to 3' minimum). The pedestrian zone is also separate from the Furniture Zone in which ample space is provided things like street trees, parking meters, street signs, street lights, newspaper box, crosswalk sidewalk ramps, etc. In this photo The pedestrian zone includes a clear path of travel that is straight and is free of any obstructions; the pedestrian does not need to negotiate around any obstruction. Also, in this photo pedestrian zone is sufficiently wide such that pedestrians are able to walk at least three or four abreast significantly enhancing the walking experience.

The City of Plattsburgh Sidewalk policy also includes the same measurement and illustration of sidewalk zones on a street by street basis as well as a documented table of sidewalk zone dimensions on a street by street basis. Here is one of the sidewalk illustrations that makeup the City policy:

Margaret Street. This photographic illustration is taken from the City Local Law P-5 Policy and shows the various sidewalk zones on Margaret Street in front of the Koffee Kat. Notice that the clear path of travel is significantly reduced by the position of the street tree and surrounding landscaping paver stones.

In addition to the Street Sidewalk Zone Illustrations, the City of Plattsburgh Sidewalk Policy also includes the following Table of Sidewalk Dimensions depicting the actual dimension of each zone within the sidewalk corridor.

City of Plattsburgh
Table of Sidewalk Zone Dimensions

Sidewalk Policy
Table of Sidewalk Dimensions

Table of Sidewalk Dimensions

Street	Block		Sidewalk Width (ft)	Curb Zone (ft)	Planter / Furniture Zone	Frontage Zone (ft)	Pedestrian Zone (ft)	Clear Path of Travel (ft)
City Hall Place-East side	Court St.	Bridge St.	8.8	0.5	3	1.0	4.3	4.0
City Hall Place-West side	Court St.	Bridge St.	10.2	0.5	3	1.0	5.7	5.0
Durkee Street-West Side	Broad St.	Bridge St.	8.0	0.5	2	1.0	4.5	4.0
Bridge Street-North Side	Veterans Bridge	City Hall Place	7.2	0.5	3.5	1.0	2.2	4.0
Margaret Street-East side	Cornelia St.	Court St.	10.6	0.5	3	1.0	6.1	5.0
Maragret Street-East side	Court St.	Bridge St.	16.7	0.5	7	1.0	8.2	5.0
Margaret Street-East Side	Bridge St.	Brinkerhoff St.	18.9	0.5	6	1.0	11.4	5.0
Margaret Street-East side	Brinkerhoff St.	# 20 Margaret St.	8.9	0.5	3	1.0	4.4	4.0
Margaret Street-East Side	# 20 Margaret St.	Broad St.	10.8	0.5	3	1.0	6.3	5.0
Margaret Street-West Side	Court St.	Clinton St.	9.9	0.5	2.5	1.0	5.9	5.0
Margaret Street-West Side	Clinton St.	Protection Ave.	18.8	0.5	6.4	1.0	10.9	5.0
Margaret Street-West Side	Protection Ave.	Brinkerhoff St.	11.2	0.5	4.2	1.0	5.5	5.0
Margaret Street-West Side	Brinkerhoff St.	Division St.	10.3	0.5	3	1.0	5.8	5.0
Margaret Street-West Side	Division St.	#18 Broad St.	13.6	0.5	3	1.0	9.1	5.0
Court Street-South Side	City Hall Pl.	Margaret St.	5.8	0.5	0	1.0	4.3	4.0
Court Street-South Side	Margaret St.	Marion St.	8.7	0.5	2	1.0	5.2	5.0
Clinton Street-North Side	Margaret St.	Marion St.	9.0	0.5	3	1.0	4.5	4.0
Clinton Street-North Side	Marion St.	Oak St.	9.0	0.5	3	1.0	4.5	4.0
Clinton Street-South Side	Margaret St.	Marion St.	9.0	0.5	3	1.0	4.5	4.0
Clinton Street-South Side	Marion St.	Oak St.	9.3	0.5	3	1.0	4.8	4.0
Brinkerhoff Street-North Side	Margaret St.	Marion St.	8.0	0.5	2.7	0.8	4.0	4.0
Pike Street		Bridge St.	13.4	0.8	2.8	1.0	8.9	5.0

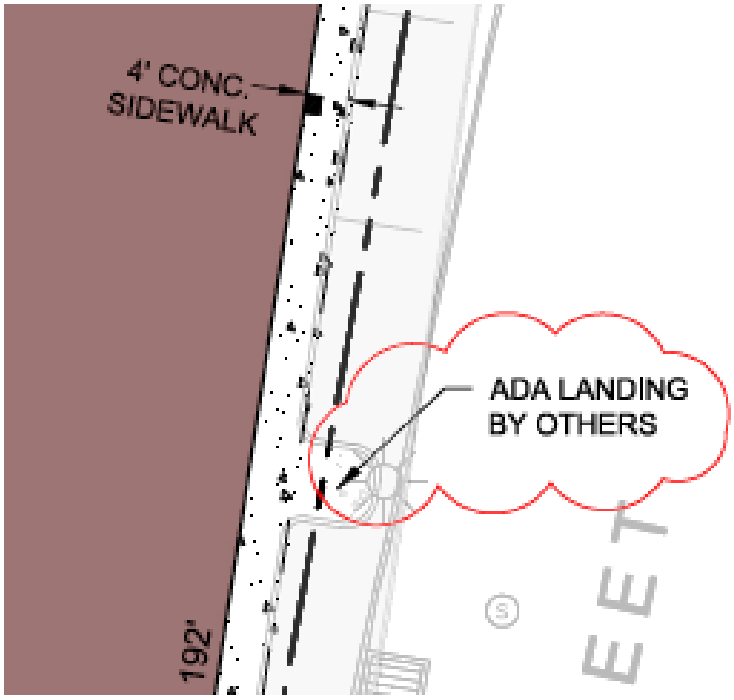
NOTE : SHADED STREET BLOCKS HAVE LESS THAN A 5 FOOT WIDE PEDESTRIAN ZONE

Table of Sidewalk Dimensions. This Table is taken from the City Local Law P-5 Policy and shows the various sidewalk zones on downtown streets. Note that the sidewalk width varies from as small as 5.8 feet to as wide as 18.9 feet.

This table is in no way meant to establish a minimum standard or to be a guide for future development as most of these sidewalks predate Federal, State and local minimum guidelines for accessibility as well as walkability. Rather, these reflect the existing conditions within the City's downtown commercial district. In fact, many of the existing sidewalk dimensions in downtown Plattsburgh leave businesses with little or no space for sidewalk café's that so many desire. Having spoken to and worked with so many of the restaurant and other business owners personally, I can confirm what most already know, which is that outdoor café space is highly desirable for both the businesses and the public. Many have frequently wished that they had a chance to do it all over again. Well, with a major redevelopment of the Durkee Street Parking lot, we do have an opportunity of a lifetime. Let's not squander it with an inferior design.

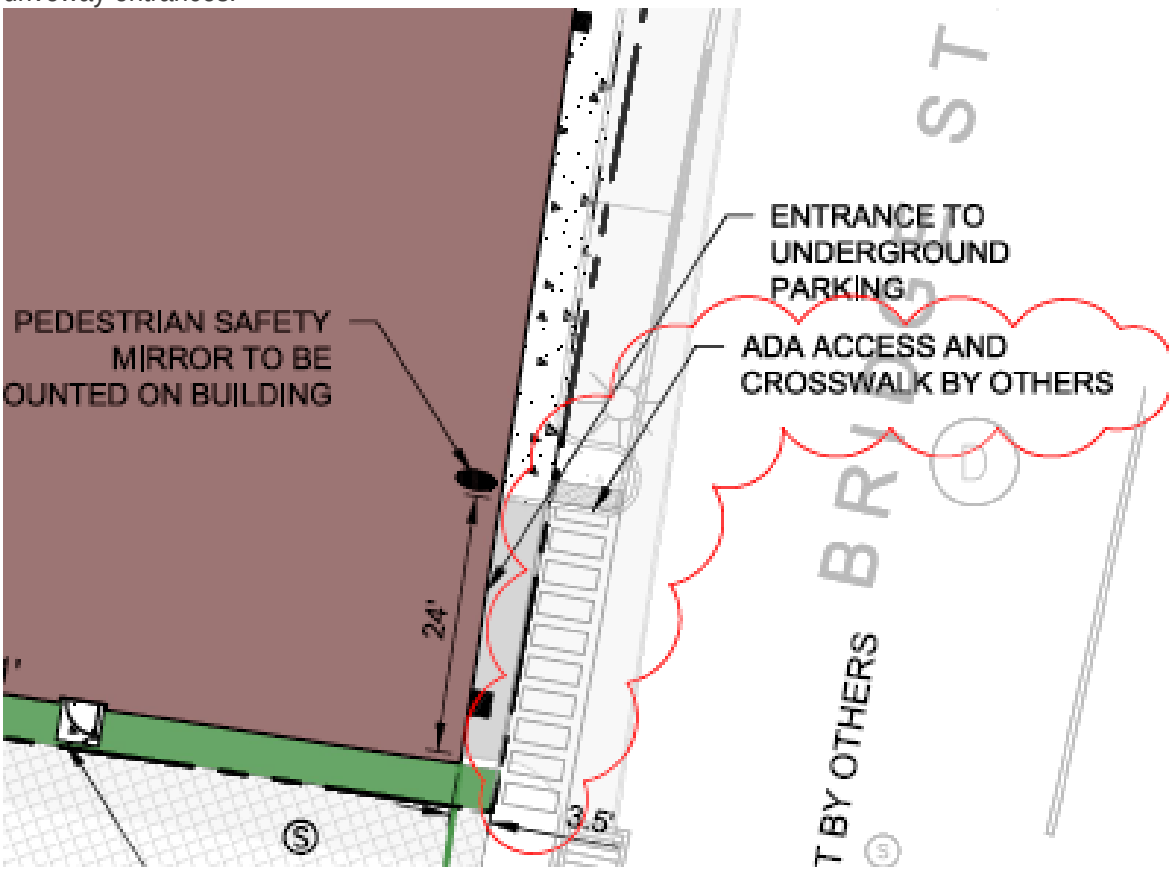
The Prime Corporation Plan.

So that's an overview of what makes an accessible and walkable sidewalk in a commercial district. Now let's take a look at the Prime Corporation Site Plan and Special Use Permit application. After nearly a year of submitting sketch plans, the very best that Prime Corporation and the City Community Development Office could come up with as of the May 2020 Zoning Board Meeting is a narrow 4-ft sidewalk with a blind garage driveway entrance adjacent to the sidewalk and at the bottom of the hill on Bridge Street and a 4- to 5-ft sidewalk on Durkee Street. This is an incompetent and reckless design that should be considered a slap in the face to Plattsburgh. The more recent revision provides a slight actual revision, but still having sidewalks as narrow as 4-ft in some places.



Prime Site Plan – Proposed sidewalk along Bridge Street. Notice the extremely narrow sidewalk lacking of all of the required sidewalk corridor zones (i.e. building / frontage zone, curb zone, planter/furniture zones. Notice that the sidewalk is so narrow that a special landing is required to even allow passing of two wheelchairs.

You'll notice that the Prime Plan incuded a mere 4-ft wide sidewalk on Bridge Street, more recently modified to 8-ft and still a mere 4- to 5-ft sidewalk on Durkee Street. The plan does not account for a building / frontage zone. The plan does not account for the curb zone. And the plan does not account for a Planter / Furniture Zone. In fact, the plan even indicates the removal of streetlights on Bridge Street, but does not indicate where replacement lights would be placed. The location of these items is critical to understanding the clear path of travel. The sidewalk is also subjected to dangerous 90 degree turns at driveway entrances.



Prime Site Plan – Proposed sidewalk along Bridge Street. Notice the extremely narrow sidewalk lacking of required width for building frontage zone, curb zone, planter/furniture zones. Also, notice the plan does not include street lighting, parking meters or signage. Also notice the abrupt 90-degree turns at the very dangerous garage driveway crossing. Notice the lack of adequate landing space on the approach to the sidewalk ramp.

The sidewalk is also obstructed by crosswalk sidewalk ramps. Prime repeatedly reported that the sidewalk and the street is not part of their design. That's unacceptable as it is simply not possible to design a walkable sidewalk space separate from the street and utility design (streetlights, fire hydrants, etc). The co-applicants have repeatedly tried to "segment" this project to ease their review process from day one and, as you can see, they continue to try to segment. It's important to hold these two co-applicants (City and Prime) accountable for a comprehensive design. Clearly these co-applicants have proven that their interest in public benefit is secondary (or non-existent). Secondly some agencies, such as the Common Council,

have proven that they will look no further than asking the overly simplistic question, “is it ADA compliant?”. This oversimplification is ignorant.

This picture is an example of the type of sidewalk you end up with when you take that oversimplification approach. Given the dangerous blind driveways, the sidewalks proposed in the Prime / City Plan is even worse. Note that this sidewalk is probably 6-ft or more in width.

As noted, the Prime engineer claimed that the design is ADA compliant. I suppose one could make an argument that the picture above is ADA compliant too. That argument would be false and misleading. It cannot be considered ADA compliant as it does not offer an unobstructed clear path of travel of adequate width. In addition to not being ADA compliant, this example certainly does not create a pleasant walking environment, this is not a path that anyone would find any measure of enjoyment or congregate upon or have any desire to frequent, which, by the way, is the primary and overarching objective of the DRI. On one hand, this is just one sidewalk. On the other hand it underscores why the current DRI Plan is a failure; because it puts Prime Corporation first and the public second. On the issue of walkability, like in so many others areas, the Mayor & City Council has made Prime their priority and pubic benefit is abandoned (i.e. walkability, bikeability, the Saranac River Trail, Parking, open space, etc) . That’s why this project, whether approved or not, will forever be deemed as the opportunity of a lifetime squandered.

I’ve reviewed the Site Plan bewilderment to see a 4-ft wide sidewalks, 5-ft wide sidewalks and even now, a year later, 8-ft wide sidewalks along the proposed building and the narrow danger alley wedged between

the wooded riverbank and the 65-ft wall. I then listened to the May Zoning Board Meeting in shock at the misinformation, ignorance and indifference to these important matters. When asked during the meeting whether the 4-ft sidewalk meets minimum ADA standards, Mr. Bradford answered with a simple "yes". This is misleading in several ways. First of all, a 4-ft wide path is not suitable even for two wheelchairs to pass. It may be allowed only by invoking an exception that allows less than the minimum 5-ft wide sidewalk rule only when passing landings are provided at a certain intervals along the route. What he didn't point out is that this exception is intended for sites encumbered with existing buildings and other constraints, not for new development projects without constraint. Such a 4-ft wide sidewalk is not ADA compliant if it should be encumbered by a streetlight, fire hydrant, street tree, landscaping, parking meter, traffic sign, sidewalk ramp, planter, newspaper box, etc. Furthermore, such obstructions are dangerous to individuals with visual impairments. Secondly, a clear path of travel must not meander. Each pedestrian, and especially a person with a visual impairment, has a right to, within reason, have a straight clear path that is free of obstructions. That means the clear path should not be an obstacle course. The pedestrian should not have to turn corners or go around obstructions such as opening doors, street lights, fire hydrants, curb ramps, tables and chairs, etc.. You'll notice in the Prime Site Plan that the pedestrian zone bends at driveways. This is a dangerous situation and not compliant with Federal Guidelines or City local law.

I was further dismayed at the lack of understanding or even concern for the finer points of what makes a walkable community. We were all tortured as the co-applicants, both the City and Prime Co., scrambled for nonsense responses to the question of "why a 4-ft sidewalk?". Charlie actually had the gall to report that he was just then googling sidewalk width and google says 4-ft. Wow! That is a level of indifference and arrogance unmatched. Others waxed poetic about trips to Italy and how nice it is to walk dogs on sidewalks and musing that dogs should be required for everyone; each person chirping out buzz phrases about walkability. The Prime President even suggested that people should walk along the river instead. While the plan and the ignorant responses show a total lack of incompetence, even more importantly it shows an utter disregard for walkability, for nondiscrimination accessibility, for the Plattsburgh community. In defense of Mr. Bradford, I have no doubt that representatives from the Engineers, such as he and Ms.

Gardner surely possess the qualifications and experience and are capable of applying these concepts if given an opportunity. They seem to be in the position of defending a plan led by a hard charging profiteer and their attorney. It is painfully obvious that both Prime leadership, Primes attorney and City leadership scoff at these concepts and in so doing scoff at the Plattsburgh community. It's also clear that the City Community Development Office possess little, if any knowledge and even less concern for these concepts and simply don't care. It appears that Prime's motus operandi is to wage war on the community with a bully-like attorney rather than be a partner or a good neighbor. A walkable community goes far beyond a rudimentary quip about sidewalk width. The Prime attorney even had the audacity to talk about Saratoga Springs where sidewalks on Broadway Avenue in the heart of their commercial district have sidewalks that range typically from a minimum of 15-ft and more commonly 27-ft to as much as 34-ft wide sidewalks. These sidewalks enjoy robust pedestrian activity, economic vitality and create a space people want to be. Since Mr. Gottlieb brought up Saratoga Springs, let's take a moment to analyze.

What are the elements, layouts and dimensions that make for a walkable sidewalk in a commercial district?

Saratoga Springs Sidewalk. Notice the sidewalk zones. Outdoor cafés are located in the Building Frontage zone, attractive furniture and landscaping is included in the Planter / Furniture zone and clear path of travel / pedestrian zone is clear of obstructions and includes ample width for an enjoyable pedestrian experience.

Saratoga Springs Sidewalk. Notice benches and landscaping included in the Planter/ Furniture Zone providing seating and landscaping and leaving ample width for pedestrians in a clear path of travel / pedestrian zone. Studies show that an safe, comfortable pedestrian experience attracts people and invigorates business. Notice the attractive landscaping, people gathering, strolling, shopping.

Saratoga Springs Sidewalk. Notice that the sidewalk width here goes well beyond the bare minimum legal requirement to comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act making for an inviting and attractive pedestrian experience. A place where people gather.

By copy of this email I am hereby filing a formal Title VI Compliance Complaint with the City of Plattsburgh.

Respectfully,

Kevin R. Farrington, P.E.

THE FOLLOWING WAS NOT USED IN THE DRAFT LETTER

Here is an example of a sidewalk that still feels somewhat congested at over 20-ft wide, but offers landscaping public seating, café opportunity, but where the pedestrian zone still includes a clear zone of travel that is free of obstructions and includes a colorful paver to distinguish the various zones to help with Building Inspector enforcement (which can be challenging especially with a poor design. Note also that this pedestrian way includes a building zone at least in the foreground (although the entrance to the building in the background projects out further and is immediately adjacent to the pedestrian zone).

Conclusion.

I'm not suggesting that the development along these two main streets *must* have, outdoor seating, though it would be nice. As we (City staff) put together the City Sidewalk policy, we (and business owners) lamented that the street and sidewalk design, some of which dates back a century, was not designed for better walkability. Now here we are planning to build in the year 2020, and the very best the Prime and the Community Development Office can do is to produce a plan that includes a 4-ft, 5-ft or even 8-ft sidewalk! That's pretty outrageous and a slap an insult to the community. It doesn't meet even the most basic of ADA regulations, completely neglects the City sidewalk local law and policy and is an afront to any concept of walkability in any urban environment. It appears that Prime Corporation cares little about the community and would rather do the absolute bare minimum in terms of considering the public and to send their

attorney to bully and threaten planning and zoning board members, rather than give genuine consideration to quality community design.

Do not stand for it. Do not squander the opportunity of a lifetime. DRI funds can be repurposed for a far better development plan that is far more community oriented. Plattsburgh can do better. And if/when, with your help, Prime packs up and leaves town, we will do better. And the Community will have you to thank for taking a stand!

Thank you in advance for your anticipated stand on these important issues.

Respectfully,

Kevin R. Farrington, P.E.

Zoning Board Comments Submittal

3 messages

Kim Ford <klmousseau@aol.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 1:53 PM
Reply-To: Kim Ford <klmousseau@aol.com>
To: "ron.nolland@gmail.com" <ron.nolland@gmail.com>, "cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com" <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com>

Kim Ford
City resident, tax payer, local real estate developer

I have made numerous comments to this Board over the past several months, so I will not repeat those comments here. I would like to comment on the new/updated images the Prime has submitted to this Board.

In the list of updated images from Prime, they show the “old” version and the “new” version of the building from the corner view. The building “appears” to be shorter, I appreciate the change in appearance.

I would like the Board to address the buildings lack of stepping down the floors on the 3 public sides (I’ll address the riverfront elevation separately). If you look at the elevation of the North side of Bridge St the SEPARATE buildings step down as the elevation goes down – that’s the lovely aspect of row style buildings in a classic downtown. This building COMPLETELY MISSES that lovely and necessary aesthetic. It is necessary for many reasons: 1st WALKABILITY – who wants to walk along the side of a massive building and it’s BLANK MASONRY WALL – which occurs on the Bridge St, Durkee St and the South sides of the buildings. Please note that along the “public walkway” on the south side of the building, it’s a blank wall the entire way. This is a DOWNTOWN location, we should see shops or at least store windows along these elevations, not blank masonry walls. This building COMPLETELY LACKS ALL THE CHARACTER THAT MAKES OUR DOWNTOWN GREAT – small scale row style buildings, awnings, store front windows that follow the grade of the sidewalk, wide sidewalks, accessible parking. 2nd Accessibility: There are only 2 access points for the building on 2 corners. Shouldn't downtown stores be accessed from the sidewalk in front of the stores? ***Please take a moment and imagine if our downtown were filled with buildings like this one...would it still be considered a downtown?***

In regards to the **Riverfront** side of the building – this is absolutely atrocious and is an INSULT to our community and beautiful riverfront. We are utilizing other LESSER DRI funds for the Saranac River Front, meanwhile the biggest amount of DRI funding is going to this massive masonry wall that we’ll see along our beautiful New Saranac Riverwalk. In the previous applications, Prime used the examples of San Antonio’s riverwalk – I have been to this Riverwalk and does not compare at all with what Prime is proposing along our riverwalk. Yes there are buildings in close proximity to the riverwalk in San Antonio, but those buildings are filled with cafes, restaurants, bars and shops – adding activity and vitality to the walkway – we will have a brick wall.

In Prime's new image submittals, they have attempted to put their proposed building in “context” with the other buildings. Another insult to the Board and all citizens of the City – look at the thickness of the line they use for the existing buildings compared to the lines they use for their building- are they trying to infer that their building is light and airy compared to the block buildings of our downtown? Don’t let their graphic display fool you – the Google map show a better comparison of the MASSIVE BLOCK BUILDING compared to the row style architecture of our classic downtown.
Finally the real RED FLAG of this project, the Northeast corner of danger, I’ve addressed this appalling corner in previous comments. This corner poses a threat to pedestrian safety, promotes LACK OF WALKABILITY – who wants to take a chance walking along this narrow sidewalk to be hit by an exiting vehicle from Prime’s underground parking lot?
SIDEWALK WIDTH and setback. Please make them adhere to the setback at this corner. The CITY REQUIRES MINIMUM 5FT SIDEWALKS EVERYWHERE IN THE CITY. Including brand new sidewalks that we are currently installing on Kansas Ave and Kentucky St. The 5ft is an ADA requirement for bypassing wheelchair width.
At the last meeting the term WALKABILITY was used quite a bit, but as this building has been designed, it is not a nice building to walk around, it is a luxury upscale prison wall.
Thank you for your time,
Kim Ford

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 2:01 PM
To: Kim Ford <klmousseau@aol.com>
Cc: "ron.nolland@gmail.com" <ron.nolland@gmail.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com
[Quoted text hidden]

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 2:02 PM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, Joe McMahon <mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>

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Comments for Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting, May 18, 2020

3 messages

Laura Palkovic <lpalkovic416@gmail.com> Sat, May 9, 2020 at 4:31 PM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com
Cc: laura palkovic <lpalkovic416@gmail.com>

I am submitting this comment in response to the Special Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting of Monday, May 4, 2020. Please take these thoughts into consideration before the follow-up meeting on May 18.

In the course of the May 4 meeting, which I watched on You Tube, one of the Prime applicants discussed the idea of “walk-ability” as it related to the Prime building plan. He set about disabusing the Board and listeners that ‘walk-ability’ should be a concept widely applied to the general citizenry in this case, but be used instead as a selling point specifically for the Prime project.

Forget the common people. Make it “walk-able” so the wealthier tenants can walk to work and to shops and restaurants. This would be a way to reduce or even eliminate automobile traffic in downtown Plattsburgh. All you need is this nice building, filled with high income tenants and in (maybe) five or ten years Plattsburgh’s red ink will flow black.

Pardon my use of the colloquial, but I think this idea is ass backwards. Build a high end high rise during a poor economy (exacerbated by a pandemic) and high income tenants will rush to rent so they can get rid of their cars and walk to work? Is there a problem with this logic? Well…

First of all, where are the businesses within walking distance right now, that offer jobs with the kind of wages and salaries necessary to cover the rent for a one bedroom apartment such as Prime plans to build? And how about the rents for the two and three bedroom apartments? Prime representatives never mention those rents. Other Prime sites that I’ve researched start at around $1300, not the $1200 quoted for Plattsburgh and increase to a max of about $3500 for the top of the line three bedroom. That’s the going price today. By the time all the work is done on this project I would be surprised if the lowest starting rent remains at $1200. You might want to get it in writing.

Second, as our economic situation is right now (and for the foreseeable future) where are the stores and supermarkets and other businesses in walking distance that will draw these tenants to this building? Yes, Prime plans retail space, but even they concede it’s going to be a challenge to fill it. And it’s not going to be able to fill it with all the retail businesses and offices needed to fill all the tenants’ needs.

I would suggest the more sensible move would be to use the DRI grant to get businesses back on a strong economic footing, and once the city can boast good paying jobs up and down Margaret Street and its environs, then build your gentry friendly apartment building, so your tenants can walk to work, to doctors’ offices, to the pharmacy and supermarket, to shops and the veterinarians’ offices for their dogs and other assorted pets, and every once in a while take a ramble along the Riverwalk with the rest of the hoipolloi.

That, I think, would take, optimistically, about twenty years, and require a significant expansion of business in downtown Plattsburgh. Which means downtown will have to expand. It can’t expand east; the Saranac River and Lake Champlain are in the way. My best guess is that if Plattsburgh expands, initially at least, it will have to be

west, through the residential areas along Cornelia, Court, Brinkerhoff and Broad Streets, and to a lesser degree north and south along Oak and Catherine Streets.

Maybe thirty years. Maybe forty. I could see it happening. But because the expansion of business attracted new people with good incomes who wanted the convenience of downtown living and had the income to pay for it. I don't see it happening simply because there's a big apartment building sitting in an economic wasteland.

Submitted by Laura Palkovic, Plattsburgh Resident, May 9, 2020

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Mon, May 11, 2020 at 10:15 AM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>

[Quoted text hidden]

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Tue, May 12, 2020 at 11:42 AM
To: Laura Palkovic <lpalkovic416@gmail.com>
Cc: laura palkovic <lpalkovic416@gmail.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com
[Quoted text hidden]

Zoning Board of Appeals Comment 5/18/2020

3 messages

Lisa Contini <lisacontini@gmail.com>
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my concerns. Whatever is done downtown should be for the benefit of the people that alre

Certainly, downtown Plattsburgh can use some sprucing up, but I am opposed to the plan of putting apartments on Durkee Street Plattsburgh?" There is always noise. At night people walk around and speak loudly, largely due to the bars and restaurants. Will how you can possibly expect to fill 115 units. If they are super cheap, some will fill, but what kind of transformation will a large apa attract?

I have lived in the area for 17 years. Plattsburgh is a lovely place, but we must be honest. Except for events like the Battle of Pla business "destination". People who enjoy our area are usually passing through on their way somewhere else. You can't change t live, and no one is going to move here just so they can live downtown in new apartments. The apartments won't increase the nun schools. So, if by some miracle you actually fill the new apartments, it means existing occupied rental units become empty. This supply that does not have an existing demand! How can it work? What are you thinking?

The Glens Falls bank has just been destroyed for parking for the Strand. What is going to be done with the Key Bank building? W parking on Durkee St. You can't expect the elderly, disabled, or mother's with strollers and small children to walk with their grocer parking, especially in the winter. In all fairness, changes downtown must be beneficial to the existing businesses and population too far.
What happens to all the revitalization investments once downtown businesses start to fail, one after another? What good is a love are already empty! Take a look at other small and modest size NY cities with lovely apartments downtown woven beautifully next cities have dead downtowns. Ours can die too.

And why should the developer care what really happens to Plattsburg? They get a tax break even if the project fails. Then what? give them something to protect, something they can lose if they don't do their part. The tax break to the developer is just plain stu

Plattsburgh has a long history of poor planning and poor use of resources. Railroad tracks on the shore of the lake removed the p and commerce. And the location of the water treatment plant; whose brainstorm was that?. What bizarre planning! Certainly, pr convinced city planners that these were good ideas. Projections are not reality. Anyone can manipulate data to produce an attrac whatever commerce or dwellings you want next to the Amtrak station in that huge, unused, empty lot. At one time, it was conside perfect for development now, so why disrupt commerce downtown by removing needed parking?

Plenty of NY cities have once booming downtowns that are ghost towns today. And it can happen here as well! Nobody has a fu disrupt something that is working? Sure, the Durkee lot situation can be improved, perhaps with development of small commercia destroying needed parking isn't the way.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my concerns. Please send me some type of reply so that I know my communication has b

Respectfully,
Lisa Contini
lisacontini@gmail.com
(518) 570-9386

Reply Forward

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 2:00 PM
To: Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

[Quoted text hidden]

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 2:03 PM
To: Lisa Contini <lisacontini@gmail.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com

[Quoted text hidden]

Zoning Board of Appeals Comment 5/18/2020

4 messages

Luis Sierra <lfsierra@earthlink.net> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 1:29 PM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com
Cc: Scott Allen <scottallen@aesnortheast.com>, Kevin Farrington <kevinfarrington@aesnortheast.com>, Carol CJK <carolcjk@gmail.com>

Mr. Ronald Nolland, Chairman

City of Plattsburgh Zoning Board of Appeals cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

subject **"Zoning Board of Appeals Comment 5/18/2020"**

Dear Ron,

Please vote <u>NO</u> on the city's request to change the boundary lines of Durkee Street parking lot to 3.3 acres and ensure that Prime is <u>not</u> granted a special use permit to build apartments on the first floor.

The redevelopment of the Durkee Street lot needs to be considered in conjunction with the overall DRI and Prime needs to meet all city zoning code requirements for special use permits. No exceptions.

Among the reasons not to grant Prime's special use permit request to build apartments on first floor are the following:

1. safety risks

2. first floor apartments potentially will fail to attract tenants

3. If you approve this request, it sets a precedent, opening up the possibility that other downtown property owners, who currently have first floor commercial space, will convert to residential use. This will exacerbate off street parking shortage and the availability of year round free parking in the center of downtown, only one aspect of keeping downtown vital.

The City is giving away $4.3 million to Prime (3.3 acres if boundary lines are changed) for $1 (one). A deal Plattsburgh can’t afford.

Prime's Plan does not promote walkability something that is very important to ZBA. Prime's DRI does not include smaller mixed-use development and as currently depicted in their plans phase one of the project will make it impossible to walk on Durkee street because sidewalks will be 50% smaller (they propose four foot rather than the nine foot sidewalks which are standard Margaret St., Brinkerhoff St. and City Hall Place.

Prime's plan hopes to bring over 297 additional tenants to downtown. Their parking needs which may be up to 300 cars, will add to traffic congestion and downtown walkability and safety. Just from a parking perspective Prime has failed to provide sufficient parking for downtown businesses and created a challenge for people to shop and dine by making parking laborious.

It's disappointing that a city with so much potential has relied on Prime who has not carefully listened or seems to care about feedback from concerned citizens. It has railroaded a plan that raises the question of who is actually benefitting. Prime bases its development criteria on Saratoga Springs or other cities, an unfortunate and misguided comparison that reflects their inability to seriously consider and develop a plan that will bring vitality to Plattsburgh. After all it is a "**Revitalization**" initiative and it would seem that Prime would, above all else, carefully identify where vitality lies and then develop a plan with the participation of those who live and work in the area and the city's citizens. Prime's plan is more of "Downtown **Reimagination** Initiative".

The long-term economic impact of this pandemic is uncertain and by all measures the USA is in for a rough ride for the foreseeable future. Small cities like Plattsburgh will not be riding the crest of whatever rising economic wave comes, most likely we will either go under or the trickle of benefits will be small. Prime's plan does not take into consideration what may come, clinging to conditions that no longer exist.

If Prime is approved it is highly likely that it's contribution to Plattsburgh will be a devastated downtown (businesses will close or relocate, more empty store fronts, existing economic anchors might fail, etc.) and a lot of empty apartments (who will live downtown if there's no vitality?). The only beneficiary is Prime to the tune of $4.3 million. Truly a sad and preventable state of affairs. The city must act now to stop this debacle.

I'd like to offer a final observation based on my personal past professional experience. For 18 years in a faraway city called New York I worked as an urban planner and advocate, researching urban and housing issues affecting low income city neighborhoods (Harlem, East Harlem, Morningside Heights and the Lower East Side in Manhattan, parts of the Bronx and Queens). A hallmark of a dynamic urban plan is the ability of the developers to adapt to the realities of the urban area and respond effectively to residents needs by engaging in a dialogue and listening. A plan presented by a consulting agency supported blindly and insistently by elected officials and incapable of responding to citizens and changing circumstances should raise concerns. It indicates something is amiss, not only is the participatory process being undermined or hijacked but it also raises questions about who is really going to benefit (socially, politically and financially) from the plan.

Please vote NO on Prime Plattsburgh LLC.

Thank you.

Sincerely, Luis

Luis F. Sierra

7 Point View Terrace

Plattsburgh, NY 12901

Home : 518-310-1678

Cell : 518-570-8830

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 2:00 PM
To: Luis Sierra <lfsierra@earthlink.net>
Cc: Scott Allen <scottallen@aesnortheast.com>, Kevin Farrington <kevinfarrington@aesnortheast.com>, Carol CJK <carolcjk@gmail.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com
[Quoted text hidden]

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 2:00 PM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, Joe McMahon <mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>

[Quoted text hidden]

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lfsierra@earthlink.net <lfsierra@earthlink.net> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 2:00 PM
Reply-To: nobody@earthlink.net
To: City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com>

I apologize for this automatic reply to your email.

To control spam, I now allow incoming messages only from senders I have approved beforehand.

If you would like to be added to my list of approved senders, please fill out the short request form (see link below). Once I approve you, I will receive your original message in my inbox. You do not need to resend your message. I apologize for this one-time inconvenience.

Click the link below to fill out the request:

https://webmail.pas.earthlink.net/wam/addme?a=lfsierra@earthlink.net&id=11ea-96d5-fce0ad58-b2ef-002128049e1e

Oppose durkee street build

1 message

mandy beaudin <mandarinestar@yahoo.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 4:03 PM
To: Cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

The prime/durkee st parking lot build is a terrible idea and will ruin the integrity of downtown Plattsburgh, not to mention make it horribly inconvenient for the public and community to use any of the services/government buildings or local business in the area due to extreme lack of parking in the proposal.
I oppose this project.

Mandy Beaudin
Sent from my iPhone

ZONING BOARD COMMENT

3 messages

Marc Gendron <mfgendron@icloud.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 2:25 PM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Dear Zoning Board Members,

I am emailing you regarding my position on the DRI- Prime grandiose plan of building apartments on Durkee st. Given that we are in a pandemic, loss of revenue in the county, State of New York especially and soon the city of Plattsburgh and the lack of tax revenue from our neighbors to the north…. PLEASE think of voting NO.

I am against such plan from the very beginning. I am not against Plattsburgh development but not at this time nor not at this location.

I have always said to build either where the Witherall Hotel was (now the torn down Glens Falls National Bank) which would help bring back Margaret street alive and maybe make it like Church st in Burlington OR build the complex down by the marina.

I hope this ridiculous idea is defeated next Monday and that the funds are used or saved for another plan.

I URGE YOU TO VOTE NO….ALL OF YOU.

Please do NOT go against the wishes of the population of Plattsburgh who is in the majority AGAINST this plan.

Thank You,

Sincerely,

Marc Gendron

917-685-2725

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 2:43 PM
To: Marc Gendron <mfgendron@icloud.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Shelise Marbut
Senior Account Clerk

41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
www.cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
(ph) 518.461.2668** - Temporary remote number due to Covid-19
(ph) 518.536.7520 – Office line. Voicemail only. Returning calls sent to voicemail.

[Quoted text hidden]

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 2:43 PM
To: Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Joe McMahon <mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>

[Quoted text hidden]

Zoning Board of Appeals Comment 5/15/2020

3 messages

mloweaver@icloud.com <mloweaver@icloud.com> Wed, May 13, 2020 at 9:23 PM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Members of the Board,

For several years I have been fortunate to be able to shop, dine, and now, under COVID-19, shelter in place downtown in the city of Plattsburgh with my sister-in-law.

I am aware that the Board has been asked to approve a special use permit to amend the boundaries of a planned development, and a special use permit for the use of apartments on a multi-story building in the planned unit development.

I am quite concerned that these planned variances will have a detrimental effect on parking, especially for Margaret and Durkee Streets businesses. It has sometimes been hard enough for me to find parking spaces now, without walking too far (I'm 80 years old.) Elimination of 100 or so parking spaces will make it much more difficult.

Then, if commercial spaces on the first floor of the building are converted to additional apartments, even more public parking spaces would be lost for residential parking.

Thus for these reasons, I respectfully request that the members of the Board vote "No" on the appeal #2232 of the special use permits.

Sincerely,
Marion

Marion O. Weaver
1165 Hoffman Rd.
Olmstedville, NY 12857
518-532-7898

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 12:42 PM
To: mloweaver@icloud.com

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph

518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com
[Quoted text hidden]

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 12:42 PM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

[Quoted text hidden]

Comment for ZBA meeting May 18

3 messages

Rachelle Armstrong <rachellec.armstrong@gmail.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 10:52 AM
To: City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com>

Dear Chairperson Nolland and Members,

I have additional comments as a result of seeing PRIME's new drawings. Thanks to the members who requested these new street views and the inclusion of the 6' person in them.

I have three areas I'd like to address--the development's relative height, concern about sidewalk width on Bridge St., and concerns about adequate parking.

1. The new drawings further reassure me that the project's height is not unreasonable as it doesn't tower over surrounding buildings as some suggest. The new drawings allowed me to see that some of the first floor residences (on north and south side?) are above the sidewalk. It would be helpful to know the exact elevation of these above sidewalk level units.I believe the Durkee St. side will be commercial, and therefore not in need of a variance. I know that PRIME's plan includes ExecuStay units. Could these be designated for units in closer proximity to the sidewalk?
2. I share the members' concerns about sidewalk width on Bridge Street; it is too narrow, especially considering that trees will be planted. I think it would be worthwhile to eliminate the parking on the northside of the development in order to broaden the sidewalk. I know PRIME was trying to accommodate the need for parking across from the Bridge Street businesses, but spaces will still be available by the bridge. When the Highway Oil station was there, no spaces were available. What is lost on Bridge St. will be gained with more spaces along Durkee Street.
3. I've heard several members express concerns about Prime's parking calculations and whether they are adequate. I think these questions need to be viewed within the context of the City's general parking plan. I have spoken to a member of the Parking Committee, and discovered that that body was on the verge of finalizing plans when COVID struck. Another member, MaryAnn Bukolt Ryder wrote a letter of support for the project. My point is that the ZBA may need direct input from this committee in order to make an informed decision regarding parking. The Parking Committee's task was to replace all 289 spaces lost to development. I believe they have done that as well as, if I am correct, consider another of your concerns: the question of how to handle off street parking during a snowstorm.

Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,
Rachelle Armstrong

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 11:16 AM
To: Rachelle Armstrong <rachellec.armstrong@gmail.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901

518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com
[Quoted text hidden]

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 11:17 AM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, Joe McMahon <mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>

[Quoted text hidden]

Zoning Board Comment - Durkee Street Project

3 messages

Sandy <sezsandy@aol.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 2:31 PM
Reply-To: Sandy <sezsandy@aol.com>
To: "cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com" <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com>

I appreciate this opportunity to voice my concerns regarding the Durkee Street Project. My purpose here is to remind everyone of what the project, as proposed by Prime, does NOT do:

- It does not provide the City with any compensation for the “sale” of riverfront property in the heart of downtown Plattsburgh.

- It does not generate any additional tax revenue for the City for the next 20 years.

- It does not solve the parking problem in the downtown area; it will, in fact, exacerbate the situation to the detriment of all downtown businesses and their workers.

- It already does not meet a number of zoning requirements, and now is asking to be allowed to build first floor apartments. Zoning requirements are there for a reason. Should we really continue bending the rules in order to make this project work?

- Architecturally, it is not in keeping with the character of the downtown area. It does not allow for sufficient greenspace; in fact, it essentially walls in the Riverwalk . In no way does this enhance the City’s riverfront.

- It does not give anyone outside the city – North Country residents, tourists, Canadian visitors – any reason to want to visit the downtown area. It does not make downtown more attractive.

Proponents of the project counter all this by insisting that this project will be successful in revitalizing the downtown, based on two assumptions: that relatively expensive apartments will be filled by people interested in living downtown, and that businesses will be attracted to this new downtown location.

While we can appreciate the optimism, we should also realize that people who want to live in a downtown area are looking for ready access to a variety of activities, entertainment, shopping, restaurants, and services. Does downtown Plattsburgh really offer enough to attract new residents? And downtown businesses rely largely on foot traffic. Foot traffic requires that parking be readily available. Won’t the limited parking discourage new businesses from locating downtown?

This project has great potential – to become an albatross hanging around the City’s neck for years. All ventures have their risks, but this project has too many risks and too few benefits.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sandy Sexton

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 3:39 PM
To: Sandy <sezsandy@aol.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Shelise Marbut
Senior Account Clerk

41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
www.cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
(ph) 518.461.2668** - Temporary remote number due to Covid-19
(ph) 518.536.7520 – Office line. Voicemail only. Returning calls sent to voicemail.

[Quoted text hidden]

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 3:39 PM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Joe McMahon <mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>

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Mr. Ronald Nolland, Chairman
City of Plattsburgh Zoning Board of Appeals
cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Re: ZBA comments 5/18/2020: Appeal 2232

May 14th, 2020

Dear Zoning Board members:

I immediately felt welcomed when coming to Plattsburgh, NY in 1987. Downtown business owners like myself have worked together over the past 20 years to improve our downtown. I like many property owners downtown were excited about the thoughts of downtown revitalization and were in support of previous plans that was a joint effort between downtown business owners, landlords and residents, which would have had plenty of year round free public parking still in Durkee Street Lot, cooperative flexible work spaces with artists, craftsmen and outdoor activities.

I am not opposed to well-thought out development that benefits the community and would help breathe new life into our downtown. However, Prime's project to build 115 apartments with over 15, 800 square feet of commercial space is too large and will create hardships for downtown business owners like myself due to poor planning. Business owners, like me work day and night to try to make a living. As an owner of several commercial properties on Margaret Street, I can tell you firsthand that I am genuinely worried that the trend for on-line shopping will continue to rise and we will continue to fight to survive, especially given safety measures that may become our new way of life. Given this fact, I fear that the center of our downtown will be left with a hole in the ground or a huge building, which will only be half full. Prime's proposed development for Durkee Street Lot can NOT succeed as currently planned.

I ask the Board not to grant the city's request to change the property boundaries of the Durkee Street lot into 3.3 acres for Prime, but rather retain some of this acreage to provide the 165 parking spaces that downtown property owners like myself have paid into for years and were promised! The city's replacement parking plan falls gravely short of what they are required to provide as a condition of DRI. Angled parking on Durkee Street and metered parking on Margaret and neighboring streets are not equivalent to having free off street, year round parking in the center of our downtown as we were assured. I've looked at Prime's site plans and parking calculations and would hope that all members of both boards would deny Prime's current proposal and tell them that they need to downscale this project. ZBA & PB members' need to make sure that Prime provides every single parking space required by city code. Prime's insistence to only provide 58% of what is required by city zoning code is a slap in our face!

As someone who owns both residential and commercial real estate, I know all too well the importance of providing MORE not less parking than is needed for my tenants. Unfortunately Plattsburgh does not have public parking and everyone needs a car to not only get around, but to get the essential items they need every day. Prime should want to provide sufficient parking for all its tenants, because it is in their best interest to do so and helps them market this venture.

In order to compete with businesses uptown we need convenient free parking, no traffic and easy access to restaurants in walking distance to professional offices and entertainment. It is unbelievable that either board would consider any request for any special use permit given the fact that Prime fall short in meeting city zoning codes and SUP for parking, open green space, set-backs and fire safety. 5 stories of aluminum siding right up against the 3 ft of Saranac river trail is hardly an asset to our downtown and community.

Prime's request to build apartments on the first floor should be denied. I like other property owners, who have struggled for years with commercial retail space have been denied the same request several times! I will be one of the first of many expecting to receive the same consideration, if Prime is allowed to put residential units on their first floor.

I ask the Board to direct Prime in creating a mixed use development with at least 8,000 square feet less of commercial space, because its previous plan did not include the 5,800 square feet that Prime is now adding from the former Farmers' market. Let's not forget that Prime's developer even noted that commercial space is extremely difficult to rent and will be even more challenging given Covid 19.

Finally, I would ask the members of both ZBA and Planning Boards to work on a comprehensive redevelopment plan with Prime, downtown business owners, landlords and residents that will be a good fit for our downtown and work on making it more not less walkable. One of things that I enjoyed most about growing up in Italy was eating in outdoor cafes and walking around town after dinner. I, like other restaurant owners downtown try to create open air eating during spring and summer by placing tables and chairs on the sidewalk and streets in front of our doors. Fortunately for me that my restaurant is located on Margaret Street, because I have ample room to put tables and chairs on the sidewalk rather than on the street like my competitors. Customers seem to really enjoy it.

I hope board members will think about the local businesses and the people who live downtown when making any decisions about developing the Durkee Street parking lot.

Sincerely,

Saverio Minardi,

Owner of 2, 86 & ~~87~~ Margaret and 93 & 94 Margaret Street

Plattsburgh, NY 12901

May 15, 2020

VIA EMAIL: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

To: City of Plattsburgh
Zoning Board of Appeals, and Planning Board

From: Scott B. Allen, LS

Re: Prime Plattsburgh, LLC & City of Plattsburgh Application for Redevelopment of Durkee Street Parking Lot

"Can I, as a planning board or zoning board member, vote NO or impose significant conditions on a contentious project and still avoid an Article 78 challenge on the grounds of making an "arbitrary or capricious" decision"? If you are a zoning board or planning board member, you have probably asked yourself that question a lot. Are you casting your vote based solely on emotional issues, public pressure, political pressure, or is your vote based on specific review criteria set forth in your zoning ordinance, prior precedents, and the specific facts in an application? Zoning board and planning board members face those questions on each project that comes before them. Every planning board or zoning board member I have ever known wants to get it right. No one on these boards wants to be accused of making an "arbitrary or capricious" decision.

At no time in recent memory has a project in the City of Plattsburgh been more contentious than the Prime Plattsburgh LLC/City of Plattsburgh proposal for the redevelopment of the Durkee Street parking lot. But let us set aside for the moment the overwhelming public outcry, numerous petitions, oral comments, and written comments in opposition to this project. Let us, for the moment, look at the review criteria set out in the zoning ordinance, and decide whether a NO vote (or imposing significant conditions) is appropriate. Section 360-31 sets forth what the Zoning Board should base their Special Use Permit review on. Sections 360-21 and 360-28 set forth what the Planning should base their Site Plan review on. I will not repeat those sections here in their entirety, as you are well familiar with them by now. But I will summarize the most substantive elements of the review criteria and provide the basis for a NO decision (or for imposing significant conditions), without your vote being considered "arbitrary or capricious".

<u>For the ZBA - Special Use Permit Review:</u>

First, some background. **The Zoning Ordinance does not limit the ZBA's review to just the boundaries of a PUD.** The subject parcel is zoned "C". According to the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Plattsburgh, Planned Unit Developments **<u>AND</u>** *"Apartments on the first floor of a multistory building within a Planned Unit Development"* in zoning district "C" require Special Use Permits. Only the ZBA has the power to issue Special Use Permits in the City of Plattsburgh. Special Use Permit review is required to ensure that the character of the community and other public health, safety and welfare concerns are protected. Special Use Permits are not automatic. More specifically, according to Zoning Ordinance Section 360-31.B. an applicant must satisfy the ZBA that the **project's general character, height, use of structures, open space, treatment of grounds, general fitness of the structure relative to its location, provisions for parking, and impact on street usage**, ALL adequately safeguard the public health, convenience of the

rest of the neighborhood, and general character of the neighborhood. Let us take a closer look at each of these.

1. **Use of structures**. This criterion relates to the proposed apartments on the first floor. You have been told by the applicant that the proposed first floor apartments on Bridge Street will not have direct access to the street, however, they are still considered first floor apartments by code. Although the applicant has stated that the first floor along Durkee Street is planned for commercial use, you have been given no guarantee that the first floor along Durkee Street will not be used for apartments. If you believe that approving first floor apartments in the city's downtown will set a precedent for more first floor apartments in the city's downtown, and result in a negative impact to the "general character of the neighborhood", then **you can and should vote NO** or require the co-applicants to revise their plan and disallow first floor apartments.

2. **Treatment of grounds**. This term relates to the placement of improvements on the site. If you believe that the project's massive five plus story walls located only 4 feet from the edge of the long planned Saranac River Trail will be a detriment to the safety and welfare of those pedestrians that will use this walkway, then **you can and should vote NO**, or require the co-applicants to revise their plan and allow more than 4 feet from the edge of the their high-rise to the edge of the Riverwalk.

3. **Fitness of the structure relative to its location**. The project proposes a single, monolithic, 200,000 plus square foot structure in the center of downtown. This size structure dwarfs any other privately owned structure in downtown. The neighborhood is generally (with a few exceptions) characterized by mostly 30 to 50 foot wide 3 story buildings with first floor commercial space and apartments above. This style of building and ownership has served the downtown well. As buildings become vacant, new owners find them affordable to take on, renovate, and repurpose. If you believe that the redevelopment of the Durkee street public parking lot should consist of smaller individual buildings, either free-standing or joined by party walls, and capable of being sold separately, then **you can and should vote NO**, or request that the co-applicants revise their plan and find a way to make the project sub-dividable into smaller components.

4. **Impact on street usage**.
    a. You **cannot ignore** the change to adjacent street traffic patterns and parking arrangements that any project causes. The displacement of an existing 289 off street public parking spaces caused by the Prime project has caused the city to plan/construct/provide parking spaces elsewhere to mitigate that loss of off street parking. Part of the city's parking mitigation plan is to provide diagonal parking on Durkee Street. This condition (diagonal parking) is shown right on Prime's site plan. Even though the city will be responsible for constructing those improvements, the City is a co-applicant, and therefore **you must consider** the proposed parking on Durkee Street as an integral action directly related to this project. If you believe, as does the NY State Department of Transportation Regional Traffic Engineer (see email string from last year) that diagonal parking on busy, narrow city streets is unsafe and creates an unnecessary hazard (i.e. - does not safeguard public health, safety and welfare), then **you can and should vote NO**, or request that the co-applicants revise their plan and remove proposed diagonal parking on any adjacent streets.

b. Sidewalks are considered part of a street. If you believe that a new project in downtown Plattsburgh, that has the ability and space to construct an 8 foot wide or wider street sidewalk, should do so in order to better provide for public health, safety and welfare, instead of providing only 4 foot wide street sidewalks (see Durkee Street), then **you can and should vote NO**, or request that the co-applicants revise their plan and provide 8 foot wide (or wider) street sidewalks throughout the entire project.

My standing on this matter is as an owner of the business at 10-12 City Hall Place (AES Northeast) for over twenty years, as an employer with 49 staff members (30 of whom work at 10-12 City Hall Place), and as a landlord with four (4) apartments at 10-12 City Hall Place.

A few other points:

Downtown Plattsburgh is unique by comparison to similar small cities in that our downtown is a regional employment center, and the county seat. Employees and government service consumers drive to our downtown and need convenient parking. Our downtown is not, nor will it soon be, a utopian urban downtown where the residents are the only employees and consumers that sustain the downtown.

Both boards should also consider that the low bid recently submitted for the Saranac River Trail construction came in at $3.2m which amount was $700,00 over the city's budget. Concerns were raised by the city common council during their 5/14/2020 meeting and some indication was given that the Saranac River Trail project may be shelved indefinitely. Consideration should be given to the walkability and overall pedestrian circulation of the project if the Saranac River Trail were not built along the easterly side of the project. The applicant has stated that the SRT would play a significant role in their project's walkability and pedestrian circulation plan. Consideration should be given to requiring the project to build the portion of the SRT that borders their project or fund the construction in the form of a community impact fee.

/s/ Scott Allen

Zoning Board Meeting of 5/18/2020

4 messages

Shaun O'Connell <communityeventsbyshaun@gmail.com> Wed, May 13, 2020 at 7:53 PM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Hi City of Plattsburgh -

I am one of the people who has watched in horror as the Durkee Street Project morphed from a great proposal for:

- A Downtown Community Gathering Place - "a town square"- with lots of green space at the center and safe stairways leading down to the Saranac River - with easy access for fishing - tubing - canoeing - kayaking - I even saw a plan for a "permanent wave" to be set-up in the river for the enjoyment / attraction of kayakers and other boaters.
- The original proposal was for a green space surrounded by artisan shops/restaurants and our farmers' market with apartments on the floors above the retail spaces....

- Instead I hear Prime now wants apartments on the first floor as well as the five stories up? I saw the drawing of the proposed huge dark edifice - no green space - no community space - no parking of any consequence - no doors or store fronts on the Bridge Street side - much like the wall at Dannemora Prison - In one drawing - there appeared to be no parking or even a sidewalk along Bridge Street - So much for downtown Plattsburgh becoming the inviting walking city we had all hoped for.
- But I think the most upsetting feature of this proposal is to put up a fence to block access to the beautiful Saranac River - with a narrow walk way between the riverbank fence and the 5 story private building looming above - This proposed area has already been dubbed "Rapists' Row".

- Finally - my heart broke when I drove by the site this past weekend and saw that a tall chain link fence has been installed to prevent people from going down to the river to imagine and enjoy the wealth of possibilities - for tourism - recreation - and just sitting - beside the mighty Saranac.
- I do have a personal stake in that stretch of the Saranac River that runs behind the Farmers' Market - My social action group - People for Positive Action is responsible for collecting donations from many diverse local groups to purchase and install the row of park benches that follows the riverbank there - for people to sit for a minute - and enjoy watching the river run.

Sincerely - Shaun O'Connell
Lifelong Resident of Plattsburgh, New York

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 12:43 PM
To: Shaun O'Connell <communityeventsbyshaun@gmail.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read

41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com
[Quoted text hidden]

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 12:43 PM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

[Quoted text hidden]

Shaun O'Connell <communityeventsbyshaun@gmail.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 12:45 PM
To: City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com>

Thanks - Shaun
[Quoted text hidden]

Zoning board comment

3 messages

s king <moalem56@yahoo.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 9:37 PM
To: Cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Dear zoning board members:

I urge you to vote down and not accept the current City of Plattsburgh and Prime LLC plans for development of the Durkee St. parking area. My objections are as follow:

1. Excessive tax abatement. If prime needs a tax abatement then its business model is flawed. If local developers can build a project without this outrageous abatement, then so can Prime LLC. No one gives me a tax abatement for my property! This tax abatement short changes the resident city taxpayers as well as the local public school.

2. The size of development is out of character with the surrounding area.

3. The development is not needed, certainly not one of this size. A more sensible development, that pays taxes, is in order and preferable. I seriously doubt, at the rent prices Prime mentions, and for the size of the apartments, that there will be enough tenants with enough income to rent all that is planned to be built. One could have a mortgage for about the same amount of money and own a property!

This development is not a good fit for Plattsburgh and I ask that the zoning board turn it down in its present presentation. I am certain that far more beneficial and creative developments can be found for the DRI money.

Sincerely,
Steve graf
8 Lynde St.
Plattsburgh
Moalem56@yahoo.com

Envoye de mon iPad Pro

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:24 AM
To: s king <moalem56@yahoo.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com

[Quoted text hidden]

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:24 AM
To: Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

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ZBA - Prime

3 messages

Zukowski Properties <zukowskiproperties@gmail.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 7:59 PM
To: McMahonJ@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Joe
Please let it be know Steve Zukowski and I are very opposed to the Prime LLC project!! EZ Properties / ED and Amy Zukowski have paid millions of dollars in taxes and they are who the ZBA and all city officials should be listening to (as well as many other local property owners and residents)

THIS city needs more than to give its land and grant $$$ to an out of town company for a apartment building. We need to attract people here first - JOBS/Companies.
The tax payers of Plattsburgh wish for their voices to be heard. The character and lack of parking are reason enough to stop PRIME!!

Please consider our voice
Steve Zukowski and Diane Felix

EZ Properties
518.563.6021
e-zproperties.com

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:21 AM
To: Zukowski Properties <zukowskiproperties@gmail.com>
Cc: McMahonJ@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com
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City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:21 AM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

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Zoning Board of Appeals Comments 5/18/2020

3 messages

Jeff Moore <jmoore1748@gmail.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 2:44 PM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

I would like to reiterate my strong support for the Prime development project slated for Durkee Street. Prime has shown time after time throughout this process their willingness to listen to public input and implement changes wherever possible. The latest changes are another example of their commitment to making this project a reality. I supported the project before these changes and maintain my support now.

I would like to address some misconceptions stated by the anti development people. Some say they are for development on Durkee Street but not this development. I watched some meetings early in the process and people were vocal right from the beginning of their opposition to development of an apartment building on the Durkee Street lot. So to claim they are for development on the Durkee lot and that this project isn't in the spirit of the DRI is completely false. The largest chunk of money was to develop the Durkee Street lot. It was also made clear at these early meetings that they were looking for something transformative. Another patch of green space is not transformative. There are people on the PCC and others opposed who were against ANY development there from the beginning. They want it to remain a parking lot. Period. Now some of those same people are saying they just want the building to be smaller. They use that as an excuse because who else is going to put in a bid for a smaller apartment building? Local developers knew about and had 2 years to prepare a bid for this project. I think we have since found out it wasn't financially feasible to build a smaller apartment building, hence the single bid. And others seem like they have an ax to grind for various reasons.

The PCC and others claim business owners and others are afraid to speak out. That's understandable. But when business owners and others are afraid to speak out in FAVOR of the project the PCC rejects that claim. I guess it's only a legitimate claim when they use it.

As far as the Parking garage being dangerous, I disagree. I have gone in and out of parking garages in Montreal several times and they do not have a car length before going in and out. I've never seen that as an issue.

Regarding the sidewalks, the one on Durkee Street will be a big improvement to what is there now and on Bridge Street with the recent change seems to mitigate whatever concerns people had.

In my last letter I mentioned green space and reiterate my feelings. We have Trinity Park, Monument Park, Harborside, all under utilized, and will be adding the Arts park and Saranac Riverwalk. I do not think it is necessary to add any more green space. And a side note, when we add all of these things we have to keep in mind the added cost the City has to take on to maintain them.

I don't think there is an issue with the first floor apartments. The apartments are accessed from the inside of building. They are attractive from the outside. If the argument is we already have empty storefronts wouldn't we want residential that's occupied rather than vacant space? I don't have much to say about this. I like how it looks.

As I have said in a previous letter, all of these projects together are going to transform the downtown in a positive way. I cannot imagine letting this opportunity slip through our fingers.

Thank you,

Sue Moore
City of Plattsburgh

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 3:39 PM
To: Jeff Moore <jmoore1748@gmail.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Shelise Marbut
Senior Account Clerk

41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
www.cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
(ph) 518.461.2668** - Temporary remote number due to Covid-19
(ph) 518.536.7520 – Office line. Voicemail only. Returning calls sent to voicemail.

[Quoted text hidden]

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 3:39 PM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Joe McMahon <mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>

[Quoted text hidden]

The comments below are written by a professional historian with a specialization in urban theory, placemaking and gentrification theory.

VOTE NO because this project was flawed from its inception. The City conducted extensive public consultations. And developing the Durkee Street Parking Lot was amongst the least popular options. The citizens of Plattsburgh would have preferred refurbishing existing buildings and improving the existing streetscape and enhancing the popular Farmers Market. This is not what is being proposed here.

VOTE NO because city authorities would like you to believe that the state of New York imposed this project on the City of Plattsburgh. That is false. The state did impose a much more modest development, with only 45 units, on the Durkee Street Lot. Ask Prime LLC if they would be willing to build a smaller mixed-use structure, more in keeping with the original DRI initiative.

VOTE NO since the mass of this building is vastly out of scale with the rest of our quaint downtown. In all of the renderings provided, we can see this behemoth towering over the pre-existing and quaint buildings on Durkee Street. I would argue that the Prime LLC big-box development is ten times the size of the average historic building in the downtown area. My message is simple: It's just too big.

VOTE NO because the New York State Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation agrees with my determination. It noted in their submission to the DGEIS that "The City is encouraged to review the scope of the project, to see if downsizing is an option/alternative."

VOTE NO as the goal of our DRI funds was to revitalize the existing downtown area. The goal was not a corporate giveaway of a parking lot that serves residents, shoppers, visitors, businesses, landlords, service providers and service users in the downtown. The parking plan provided by the City is still short of 150 spaces, and the City has never addressed the issue of a reasonable snow ban parking regime.

VOTE NO since we can see how Prime Companies LLC will benefit from this deal, but we fail to see how the taxpayers of Plattsburgh will benefit. The misguided notion that the 115 high rollers who live in the project will be shopping in the pawn shops and second-hand stores downtown is laughable at best. They will shop uptown, in Big Box stores and online. To think otherwise is folly.

VOTE NO as the so-called "retail apocalypse" means that we don't need more retail space in downtown Plattsburgh. In July 2109 I counted the number of empty storefronts in the City of Plattsburgh and found that there were 32. This figure has remained constant. We need to fill our current retail spaces before building more. And we need to continue to provide free parking to encourage downtown visits.

VOTE NO because the COVID19 crisis is having such severe economic impact on our community. We were already a low-to-modest income community, but now we are facing furloughs, layoffs and mass unemployment. To build such a large development aimed at a high-income market in such a state of emergency would be folly. Perhaps some day our city will re-open, but now is not the time for risky, large-scale, upmarket ventures in such a downmarket downtown.

VOTE NO because Dean DeVito, in his presentation before your board has pronounced that Plattsburgh, surprisingly, has no upmarket "product". He expressed confidence that this project would succeed. But

Prime has built a similar project in Schenectady, NY called Electric City. A year after it opened in 2019, there are still empty units, and the entire first floor commercial space, all 100,000 sq ft of it, remain unleased and *empty*. Please ask Dean DeVito to verify what I saw online. The same will happen in Plattsburgh. No "national retailers" will move in to rent these spaces. Also check out the rent Prime is charging for this space, almost $200,000.00 per month. It is simply laughable to think that anyone would be able to pay such rents in our modest downtown.

VOTE NO because in the words of SUNY Plattsburgh urban geographer Liou Xie, the Prime Plan is a "thoughtless design with no public amenities". Prime has used this opportunity to pack as many units as possible into the space available. Such a tall building looming up to the sidewalks of Bridge and Durkee leave no green space, no public space, and the Saranac River walkway will be a narrow, shadowy alley behind the blind wall of a parking garage. Hardly something with the potential to charm visitors.

VOTE NO since this project goes against everything I know about successful placemaking. It goes against everything I know about Smart Streets. It goes against everything I know about Strong Towns. It is also inconsistent with theories of how successful gentrification emerges. *Jane Jacobs would have voted no.*

VOTE NO so as not to impose a punitive PILOT agreement onto the taxpayers of Plattsburgh. The idea that Prime would pay only 32% of their taxes over a twenty-year period means that local taxpayers will have to make up the 68% left unpaid by Prime LLC. And this, for a project which presents ZERO well-paying jobs to our community. For this reason alone, this project must be opposed. The project will also remove the $70,000.00 per annum generated by the Special Assessment District Fees from the City's revenues. (People seem to fail to look at the "opportunity cost" of this project in this regard.)

VOTE NO to giving the Prime LLC the whole Durkee Street Property. Why should Prime Companies, LLC take ownership of the south end of the lot, which includes the popular Plattsburgh and Farmer's Market? They intend to make it into a paid parking lot which generates revenue. Why shouldn't the City be receiving those revenues going forward? Citizens of this City can't help but see the naked *greed* that lies behind this riverfront property grab.

VOTE NO because our surveys show that without proximate parking for its customers, the North Country Food Coop could close. AES Northeast, a design and engineering firm, and the largest private employer in the downtown, has said it will likely sell its current property and move to the Town. The owner of Raymond James Financial has gone on record to say he will leave the downtown if this goes forward, as his elderly clients need nearby parking. John Seiden, who owns apartments at 43 Durkee Street, is already having tenants refuse to renew their leases because they fear the loss of convenient parking. The Farmers and Crafters Market will also be leaving the downtown area, and could also fail in a location next to a sewage treatment plant. In short, this project stands *not to revitalize our downtown, but to kill it.* The responsibility for this now lies in your hands, and it must feel like a heavy burden of responsibility. Now is your chance to put a stop to this boondoggle in the name of ordinary citizens.

VOTE NO, because we are watching you, and history will judge you.

Syl M. Beaudreau

Zoning Board Comment - Prime

3 messages

Tara Glynn <glynn.tara@gmail.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 9:30 PM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

To whom it may concern:

We are writing to state the grave concerns we have about the proposed project by Prime LLC for the Durkee Street lot and to request the Zoning Board reject this proposal in its current form. We are residents of the city of Plattsburgh and both work within the city as well.

We have attended nearly every DRI meeting, numerous city hall meetings, and have reviewed both critiques and explanations of this project. To date, no one has been able to explain with any detail why this is a good project or what benefit it provides to the community. This project seeks to remove free parking that our community highly depends on without a concrete plan to sufficiently replace the parking within the downtown area. The various plans that have been proposed do not meet the current capacity of parking and fail to consider the new parking demands a development would bring. It is important to note that there have been various plans because the plans for parking replacement keep changing which highlights that the consequences of this development have not been properly thought out. These various plans also fail to take into consideration the impacts this development, and the removal of this parking lot without sufficient parking put in place, will have on our vulnerable populations such as the elderly, disabled, and low-income. This development negatively impacts the walkability of our downtown, something that nearly all of our local businesses rely on. The latest plans for the development appear to include four foot sidewalks, a dangerous amount of driveways, and a dramatic shift of the parking from near the city center to further flung areas like the marina. This project claims to be, at least in part, about bringing jobs to downtown Plattsburgh yet this cannot be true when there has been little care shown to how this development will negatively impact our existing businesses. If those businesses fail, this will lead to job losses, not gains.

There is then the issue of the negative impact this development will have on the city as a whole. They are seeking a PILOT deviation which will result in a massive tax reduction for the developers but will lead to an increase in taxes for the rest of the city residents. This is better detailed in the January 29th letter from the Plattsburgh Board of Education. As city residents, we strongly oppose this as we fail to see why we should bear the increased tax burden when we are gaining nothing and in fact are losing access to a public good, namely easy and free parking access downtown for our own use and the use of guests who come visit us and patronize our local businesses.

Lastly, there is the concern about the lack of public voice in this project. As stated above, we have attended nearly every DRI project meeting and numerous city hall meetings. We have signed petitions and talked with our local officials. We are not unique - literally hundreds have done the same. Yet to date, this large public outcry has not been properly addressed. We have been dismissed and vague comments have been made saying there is public support, though no evidence has ever been provided.

It is our hope that these concerns are heard by the Zoning Board and that the valid concerns that have been repeatedly raised by Plattsburgh's citizens and the Board of Education are heeded. This project, in its current form, should be rejected.

--
Tara Glynn and Ryan Demers
15 Tom Miller Road
Plattsburgh, NY 12901

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or any attachments. Please notify the sender immediately by reply e-mail and delete this from your system. Thank you for your cooperation.

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City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:23 AM
To: Tara Glynn <glynn.tara@gmail.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com
[Quoted text hidden]

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:23 AM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

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Zoning Board of Appeals public comment for Monday May 18 Meeting

3 messages

Timothy Palkovic <palkovtj@plattsburgh.edu> Sat, May 9, 2020 at 3:30 PM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Some notes to help the ZBA board members as they consider the Prime LLC building by Tim Palkovic

I have not seen any consideration of **snow removal in parking lots** for those residents who must park on streets. Now the affected residents park in one half of the DSL during snow storms. What provision will exist if the Prime building goes in?

I understand that the city is deficient in finding parking spaces; and cannot find long term off street parking to replace the spaces lost from the DSL. Is this true? **Where will the replacement long term 289 spaces lost to the prime development be?**

I understand that **the city plans to install parking meters to control parking**. Is this true? If so what are the detailed plans? Prime can not ignore parking issues though city parking issues extend beyond the DSL.

How will Prime charge for non residents who park in the lot? How will access be controlled?

I understand that gates will be installed at both the entrance to the underground parking and the surface lot. This is typical of developers making a profit when parking is in short supply. (Reference: The Walker Study.)

Prime and the city need to address the relationship of the road ways, parking spaces and sidewalks. As proposed, **the sidewalk on the North of the building is not walk-able.** It needs to be widened to 8 feet, the standard for downtown.

The entrance-exit to the underground garage has not been detailed. It will be especially dangerous in morning and afternoon hours when Route 9 is heavily traveled. It also is next to the pedestrian plaza around the corner. How will this intersection be negotiated? **A traffic light may be needed.**

There are no windows on the East side of the Prime building next to the river walk. Having windows on this side of the building would humanize the space and make the alleyway less threatening at night.

The materials covering the building are not clearly delineated. I had assumed that they were largely brick and stone veneer to blend with the other buildings in the area. Now I am not so sure. Can the architect clarify? Can he show actual examples?

The **dumpster next to the parking lot entrance** was mentioned in previous meetings. It is right on the pathway from the Westelcom park. Are there plans to reposition the dumpster?

The second floor balconies are being addressed by the Prime architect's drawings. The issue here is the appropriateness of a **zoning variance for first floor apartments.**

Are there **floor plans for the retail spaces?** How will goods be delivered? How will venting for restaurant cooking be achieved?

While apartment floor plans for other Prime projects are available online **there have been no floor plans presented specifically for apartments in this building**. When is Prime going to submit them? I do not believe any variances should be granted until this is done.

Prime representatives have repeatedly quoted the rental price as "$1200 per month for a one bedroom apartment." However, their proposal also includes plans for two and three bedroom apartments. These **rental prices should also be submitted to the boards before the project is passed or rejected.**

Clearing snow on the Bridge Street sidewalks; **4 feet wide tapering down to 3 feet by the river is a hazard** in any season but especially in the winter. Where will the snow go so that people can walk? When snow is plowed off the street onto the sidewalk, where will that snow go so that pedestrians have a clear walking space?

The narrow sidewalk on the Bridge Street side of the building restricts walking. As proposed, it is not a part of a walk-able downtown. It does not conform to code for a good reason. There is no room for pedestrians to pass let alone people in wheelchairs to pass.

In addition, a **narrow sidewalk** next to a towering building with inadequate set back **creates a threatening atmosphere.** It will appear to give the building an inadequate, unstable grounding. My wife relates a story of one of her teachers once telling her that large women (she was a large woman herself) should have big feet, otherwise they look like chickens. This is an apt description of the Prime building as it is currently presented.

Finally, in spite of Charlie Gottlieb's assertions that other cities have happily followed Prime's directives, we must follow our own path. We are not other cities. We know who we are. Furthermore his arrogance in attempting to run the board meetings is annoying.

Submitted by Tim Palkovic, city resident

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Mon, May 11, 2020 at 10:14 AM

To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>

[Quoted text hidden]

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Tue, May 12, 2020 at 11:41 AM
To: Timothy Palkovic <palkovtj@plattsburgh.edu>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com

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Comment for the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting on Monday, May 18, 2020

3 messages

Timothy Palkovic <palkovtj@plattsburgh.edu> Sat, May 9, 2020 at 3:37 PM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Social infrastructure is a key concept relating to the DRI that has not been previously discussed. The concept of social infrastructure is the practice of using space to encourage social interaction to build community. The advocates of the current plan for the Durkee Street Lot are blind to the issues of social infrastructure. Lack of social infrastructure for the wider community of Plattsburgh and the surrounding area has been a key issue for those people who have opposed the proposed Prime LLC development. Social infrastructure is not always a building but is always a safe space where different people are brought together for social interaction.

Palaces for the People; How social infrastructure can help fight inequality, polarization and the decline of civic life, by Eric Klinenberg, develops these themes. A *Palace for the People* is a place where people can come together without having to buy anything or pay admission. The benefits are social cohesion. The Plattsburgh Farmers and Crafters Market is one example of a *Palace for the People*.

In previous years I exhibited paintings at the market. I developed a network of friends and associates who bought my paintings. Paintings and crafts do not sell as quickly as vegetables; but the social interaction was the unwritten contract between us. Even before I began to exhibit, Saturday trips to the market were a regular part of my social life. It was a place where people could come, not only to shop, but to meet, talk, and exchange ideas. Its central location in the hub of downtown encouraged further visits to other shops and restaurants in near by venues on and around Margaret Street. The current plan to move the market to a remote spot with poor access and appeal diminishes the city's cultural life.

The proposed Prime building as presented may also be deficient in social spaces for its residents. It does offer a gym. However, there has been no discussion of the availability of a common room or rooms for social gatherings as is expected in an upscale apartment building. There is no social space outside the building either. A tree lined path on the parking lot side of the building begins at the dumpster and turns north into an alleyway between a blank wall of the Prime building and the Saranac River. These walkways do not offer amenable social spaces for either residents or citizens.

Loss of parking in the center city is the second core issue of the current plans for the DRI. Parking has been discussed elsewhere but loss of parking is directly related to social infrastructure. The Parking Committee has not found sufficient parking spaces to replace the 289 lost by the proposed development. The Committee is aware of this issue; it soft peddles the proposed paid parking kiosks in a weak attempt to mask their plans. Parking kiosks will discourage visitors and impoverish the life of the city making the loss of parking more toxic to social infrastructure.

Submitted by by Tim Palkovic, City Resident

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Mon, May 11, 2020 at 10:14 AM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>

[Quoted text hidden]

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Tue, May 12, 2020 at 11:41 AM
To: Timothy Palkovic <palkovtj@plattsburgh.edu>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
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Comments for Zoning Board of Appeals, Monday May 18, 2020

3 messages

Timothy Palkovic <palkovtj@plattsburgh.edu> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 10:29 PM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

The following are my further notes to aid the committee members in their deliberations.

Tim Palkovic

The proposed Prime LLC building disappoints. It does not fit the historic character of the surrounding buildings. It is simply too big for the space on the DSL.

The character of the building clashes with the architectural character of buildings near by. For example, the buildings across Bridge Street are built on a row house concept with each building stepping down as the land drops down approaching the River. The five story building is out of scale with the existing buildings gaining another story as the massive structure ends by the river.

What goes on in the mezzanine level of the building? Is it living space or does it merely cover the service units such as air conditioning?

The entrance/exit to underground parking on Bridge Street will require entrance/exit from the east bound lane only. There is also an issue of safety for pedestrians crossing on the sidewalk while automobiles are negotiating the driveway

The design thoughtlessly defeats the original proposal to augment the parkland potential of the Saranac River Trail. The building blocks the view of the river from every point of the Durkee Street area. The Prime building also does not feature the river view from the apartments. The windows on the East side of the building appear to be high and small. Why has the river view not been featured?

Instead of the once proposed expanded garden islands in the Durkee Lot, the plan presents pedestrians with a dreary experience. Walking down from the Westelcom Park they first approach the garbage bins for the Prime LLC building. Then they engage the walkway hugging the side of the building that runs the width of the Lot. Turning the corner finds not a plaza but an alleyway leading down to Bridge Street.

The Prime building does not encourage city walk-ability; setbacks should be at least 8 feet not 4 feet. How can Prime LLC in good conscience propose a 5 and 6 story building with 4 foot sidewalks?

Not only will we lose the promised parkland but also lose sufficient parking spaces. The plan adds dangerous one way traffic on Durkee Street. Angled parking plans as proposed on Durkee Street have been tried before in Plattsburgh. They do not work.

The city parking plan does not replace the long term 289 parking spaces in the current DSL with other long term parking. The city scheme is deficient in parking. To compensate for this weakness they plan to add parking meters

as well. This will discourage visitors to downtown

My opinions on the proposed development of the Durkee Street Lot are formed by these three standard books; **Strong Towns**, **Palaces for the People** and **Walkable City Rules**. These books offer fundamental city planning principles.

Strong Towns by Charles L. Marohn, Jr. argues that large block developments offer the illusion of wealth but in reality create long term unpayable liabilities. He persuasively argues that rehabbing old areas of a city are more financially productive than shiny new buildings. The Prime building is an example of the kind of project that is a detriment to a city

A reviewer of **Palaces for the People** by Eric Klienberg says that “This book, but especially the conclusion, warns of the danger of delegating public works to private companies, particularly companies who project a community-minded motto but are really profit driven.” The Farmers Market is an example of a *Palace for the People* because it brings together people of different backgrounds for social interaction. The City Council has diminished the Farmers Market’s social potential by locating it out of the city core and placing it next to the sewage treatment pools.

Dar Williams, reviewer of **Walkable City Rules** by Jeff Speck says “Yes I DO want to make my town more livable, walk-able, equal and fun.” A walk-able city is a key element in rejuvenation of a city. The proposed Prime LLC building with its narrow sidewalks on the Durkee Street Lot does none of these things. It proposes a gated community in a civic space that separates and isolates people.

Submitted by Tim Pakovic, City Resident

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:26 AM
To: Timothy Palkovic <palkovtj@plattsburgh.edu>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
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City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:26 AM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

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Comment for the ZBA meeting, Monday, May 18, 2020

3 messages

Timothy Palkovic <palkovtj@plattsburgh.edu> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:43 AM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

To the ZBA,

Liou Xie, PhD, urban geographer, at the Center of Earth and Environmental Science, SUNY Plattsburgh called the Prime building a "thoughtless design" before it was unanimously voted down by the County Planning Board.

The Prime building is an ugly monster. This can not be changed by glossy computer renderings or detailed elevations.

The Prime does not serve in any way. It overpowers and diminishes walk-ability, traffic flow, parking, civic gathering, and the Saranac River view.

If approved we will be paying for the project in diminished taxes for twenty years.

Finally we simply do not know the end of the Covid 19 pandemic or its final effect on the world or on our local city economy.

We must say NO to this project.

Tim Palkovic

City Resident

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:45 AM
To: Timothy Palkovic <palkovtj@plattsburgh.edu>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
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City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:45 AM
To: Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

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Re: ZBA comments 5/18/2020: Appeal 2232-Durkee St-SUP-amend boundaries + 1st floor Apts

2 messages

Andy MacDougall <serious_61@yahoo.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 11:52 AM
To: cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Greetings Beth, thank you for acknowledging my input on this issue yesterday and passing it along. I am forwarding the following missive on behalf of a neighbor who currently has no online access. - Andy.....

Mr. Ronald Nolland, Chairman
City of Plattsburgh Zoning Board of Appeals

May 13th, 2020

Dear Zoning Board members and Chairperson:

I have lived in Plattsburgh for most of my life. My grandfather started our family appliance business in the mid 1930's right after the depression. We like many local business owners have worked hard to service our customers and make sure that we help people in our community. Even though we have built up a strong customer base and established long-lasting relationships with people from all over the North Country, Covid-19 has caused economic hardships for everyone.

I ask the members of the Zoning and Planning Board to listen to people who live, work and shop downtown. Prime's Plattsburgh project is too large for the center of our downtown and I fear that not only Prime's project won't survive, but that it will forever kill our chances of local businesses coming back to life. Plattsburgh is NOT Saratoga, NY. We have always had higher unemployment and fewer good paying jobs. Downtown businesses like so many in the North Country struggled previous to Covid-19 to make a living. Today most businesses will be faced with the reality that they can't reopen.

Though I would love a full-service grocery store downtown, I do NOT believe that building 115 apartments with 15,800 sq. ft. of commercial space will survive. The reality is that over 32 store fronts are vacant downtown now. The only edge that downtown businesses have is free parking, which Prime admits they can't guarantee to provide the public. The truth is, the city has failed to provide downtown business owners and tenants all 289 free parking spots that currently exist in the Durkee Street parking lot off-street, year-round, which the City is supposed to replace. Prime Plattsburgh LLC needs to be held to the same standards as all developers and must meet not only city zoning code requirements, but all special use permits identified by ZBA and PB. Plattsburgh does not have public transportation and therefore anyone living downtown, like myself, has to have a car to get their food, medications, and other bare necessities. There is no way that Prime or anyone can compete with Amazon or on-line shopping, especially now that people are scared to go out of their homes to shop due to the chance of getting the Corona virus.

Though I am vehemently opposed to Prime's current design, I would invite Prime to scale down their project to something that not only is in character of our historic downtown but that will meet the needs of our community, and provide enough parking on site for all its residential tenants and commercial customers, with a playground and green space for locals and visitors alike, to recreate in the center of our downtown.

As someone who walks and bicycles everywhere, I can tell you what a difference a well-planned downtown means. Two-way streets enable easy flow of traffic and wide sidewalks enable all pedestrians, including those who have handicaps, to get around town with more ease.

Hopefully,

Tim Wilson

32 Broad Street, Apt. #1

Plattsburgh, NY 12901

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 12:39 PM
To: Andy MacDougall <serious_61@yahoo.com>

Hi Andy,

Thank you. I will pass Mr. Wilson's comments on as well.

Beth
[Quoted text hidden]

Fw: Zoning Board Comment Prime

3 messages

Vincine Fallica <Vfallica@outlook.com> Thu, May 14, 2020 at 9:57 PM
To: "cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com" <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com>

See Below

From: Vincine Fallica <Vfallica@outlook.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 14, 2020 8:30 PM
To: cityinfo@platsburghcitygov.com <cityinfo@platsburghcitygov.com>
Subject: Zoning Board Comment Prime

I like the smaller plan with the green 'event' space facing the river that maintains a decent amount of parking. The charm of Platts' will be lost without enough parking to keep the downtown businesses alive. The Prime plan is a prescription for a desolate and depressed 'Main Street.
Vincine Fallica, 73 Adirodack Lane, Plattburgh

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:25 AM
To: Vincine Fallica <Vfallica@outlook.com>

Thank you for your comments. I have passed them on to the Community Development and Building Inspector's offices.

Thank you,
Beth

Beth A Carlin
Assistant to Mayor Read
41 City Hall Place
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-7701 ph
518-561-7367 fax
carlinb@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov
www.cityofplattsburgh.com
[Quoted text hidden]

City Info <cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com> Fri, May 15, 2020 at 8:25 AM
To: marbuts@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov, Matthew <MillerMa@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov>, mcmahonj@cityofplattsburgh-ny.gov

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City of Plattsburgh Zoning Board of Appeals
cityinfo@plattsburghcitygov.com

Re: ZBA comments 5/18/2020: Appeal 2232 May 14th, 2020

Dear Zoning Board members

I have owned Hobies Restaurant at 68 Margaret & 39 Durkee Street in Plattsburgh, NY for over 5 years. I am at my restaurant daily. Many of my customers come into Hobies through the entrance on Durkee Street and enjoy sitting atop with the view of the Saranac River. Like my customers I am very concerned that they will no longer be able to park in the Durkee Street Lot, because the entire lot is going to be owned by Prime Plattsburgh LLC.

Our business relies on free off street parking, especially during the winter time. Many of my cliental are elderly and would find it impossible to walk several blocks to get to the front door. I also service people who live downtown and though their landlords have been promised that the city would replace all 289 parking spaces, they have only begun construction of the Pavone parking lot, which will only create 102 parking spaces. Downtown business owners, our employees, people who work at Social Services and JCEO and their clients along with tenants living downtown will all be fighting for these spots, especially once the city installs parking meters on Margaret Street.

The city's plan to make Durkee Street a one-way street will create traffic congestion and will tie up deliveries and pick-ups on Durkee Street. Restaurant owners such as myself, Our House Bistro, The Pepper and Irises all rely on getting weekly and sometime daily deliveries of fresh produce, meat and other perishable items. Making Durkee Street one-way will also lead to more cars traveling on Margaret Street, which will make it an impossibility to have cafes along the street. Once Durkee Street has angled parking and is no longer a two-way street, Maui-North, Ashley's and other business owners will struggle to find space to receive deliveries.

One reason that my customers enjoy coming downtown is because it is convenient, quaint and quiet, especially during the summer months. They really enjoy eating outside. However outdoor seating will quickly end once downtown streets, become overcrowded and an additional 300 people living downtown try to find free parking year round. Prime's tenants will be competing with everyone for the limited parking spaces downtown.

Business owners like myself have paid special assessment taxes to the city for years with the guarantee that we would always have use of at least 289 parking spaces year round for free. Even though we may no longer have to pay these fees, our taxes will be going up, because Prime won't have to pay city and school taxes for twenty-years.

Prime should NOT be allowed to put any apartments on the first floor of any building, because it will create even more problems for parking and set a terrible precedent for other property owners to convert their commercial space into apartments. Board members need to look out for the best interest of our downtown and city and not give into what Prime wants to build! It is the ZBA and Planning Board's job to make sure that all development meets all city zoning codes.

Ziad Sassine

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