

**Town of Hertford – Planning & Zoning Board of Adjustments
February 20, 2023 - 7:00PM**

Board Members Present: Marvin Sutton, Gracie Felton, Sara Winslow, Milton Long,
Andrew Almodova, Rhonda Waters, Joe T. White
Board Members Absent: None
Staff Present: Janice Cole, Sarah Nixon
Town Council Present: None
Public Present: Pamela Oliveira, Bob Oliveira

This meeting was held in person at the Herford Community Center and was called to order at 7:00PM by Vice-Chairman Marvin Sutton.

Board Member Sara Winslow delivered the invocation.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Secretary Sarah Nixon delivered the Oath of Office to new Board Member, Rhonda Waters.

Approval of Agenda

Board Member Sara Winslow made the motion to approve the agenda. Motion was seconded by Board Member Gracie Felton.

Vote was 5-0 to approve the agenda.

Approval of Minutes

Board Member Gracie Felton made the motion to approve the December 19, 2022, minutes. Motion was seconded by Board Member Sara Winslow.

Vote was 5-0 to approve the minutes.

New Business

Election of Officers

Zoning Administrator Janice Cole opened the floor up to nominations for Chairman. Board Member Andrew Almodova nominated Board Member Sara Winslow. Board Member Gracie Felton nominated current Vice-Chairman Marvin Sutton. Mrs. Cole asked if there were any more nominations.

Motion was made by Board Member Rhonda Waters to close the nominations. Motion was seconded by Board Member Gracie Felton.

A vote was taken which resulted in 2 votes for Board Member Marvin Sutton for Chairman, and 3 votes for Board Member Sara Winslow for Chairman.

Board Member Sara Winslow is now the Chairman.

Mrs. Cole opened the floor for nominations for Vice-Chairman. Chairman Sara Winslow nominated Marvin Sutton for Vice-Chairman. There were no other nominations. Chairman Sara Winslow made the motion to close nominations. Motion was seconded by Board Member Gracie Felton. Vote was 5-0. Marvin Sutton remains as the Vice- Chairman.

Consider a Special Use Permit to allow apartments at 109 North Church Street (C-1 District)

Chairman Sara Winslow opened the public hearing. Chairman Sara Winslow asked if Mrs. Cole had anything she wanted to address to the committee before the hearing began. Mrs. Cole wanted to explain that the applicants are not yet the owners, but they have provided us with a contract to purchase, and they are now doing their due diligence in order to assure that they will be able to do what they are wanting to do with the building before the purchase is final. The final vote will not be taken at this time.

Board member Gracie Felton stated that she needed to recuse herself from this discussion, since she owns a business inside of the building that will be discussed. Chairman Sara Winslow stated that alternate Milton Long was to come forward.

Mrs. Cole stated floorplans have been provided to have 4 apartments on the second floor and 2 apartments on the first floor, and the applicants could explain in regards to the retail space, and they could speak to the parking.

Chairman Sara Winslow turned the meeting over to Pam Oliveira.

Mrs. Oliveira stated that when the building was looked at, they were looking at 3 things. The importance of the building to Downtown, what would be the best investment, how could the building be best utilized, and to go back to the building's original character. The use of the building would remain as mixed use, with retail downstairs with hopefully retaining the tenants that are currently there, even though some shuffling of the businesses may happen. Mrs. Oliveira also wanted to address the housing shortage, and the upstairs has room for apartments. There is also ample parking for 6 apartments.

Chairman Sara Winslow asked if there were questions from the Board Members.

Board Member Milton Long asked about the diagram. Mrs. Oliveira stated they are leaving the retail space pretty much untouched, unless some shuffling of the businesses has to happen.

There was a brief discussion about the tax map and parking.

Mrs. Cole stated that the Town has hired a surveyor to conduct a survey of Barrow's Alley and that parking lot. The process was delayed, and the Town has not received the survey as of yet. Board member Milton Long stated he had an issue with it being stated on the diagram that extra parking would flow over into the church parking lot. There was a discussion on that issue, and it was stated that those spots would not be used for the apartment tenants parking, it would be used for the public to park.

ETJ Member Joe White was in the audience, and he spoke on behalf of the Church, and stated that the church does not agree to sharing these spots, as stated on the diagram provided. Mrs. Oliveira replied that she understood.

Chairman Sara Winslow stated she had some of the same concerns as Board member Milton Long when it came to the parking.

Chairman Sara Winslow asked how many apartments are upstairs, as it is right now. Mrs. Oliveira stated it appears there are two.

Chairman Sara Winslow stated that when it comes to the first floor, she has had business owners express to her, their concern of having apartments on the first floor taking up space that could be utilized for retail. Other residents have expressed concern as well as using possible retail space as rental space. Mrs. Oliveira stated that if the community could support retail, they would certainly rather have the retail. The other issue is making the building financially viable. The plan is also to keep the corridor open, and to provide a public restroom since there currently is not one downtown.

Chairman Sara Winslow asked for the hours of when the corridor and public bathroom would be open to the public. Mrs. Oliveira stated it would be locked at night.

Board Member Andrew Almodova had a question as to what type of tenants are being targeted for these apartments. Mrs. Oliveira stated that there are both 1 and 2 bedroom apartments, and what the idea is, is maybe to have teachers, firefighters, or small families and for it to be financially feasible for renters.

Board Member Gracie Felton (who recused herself, and is now in the audience), had concerns about the diagram of the downstairs retail space. Also, to the upstairs diagram, seems to take away the current restaurants upstairs dining area. Mrs. Oliveira stated that it may take away the upstairs dining area, but this is all conceptual and it may change. Plans could change and the current plan may not be viable.

Chairman Sara Winslow asked about an escape route in case of a fire, for the upstairs. Mrs. Oliveira stated that would be made to meet the requirements.

Chairman Sara Winslow asked if there were any other questions.

Chairman Sara Winslow closed the public hearing.

Chairman Sara Winslow asked Mrs. Cole if she had anything to add. Mrs. Cole stated that all the questions and concerns are very well considered. As the Board, you are limited to what is and what is not allowed in the Ordinance. Mrs. Cole stated the real question here seems to be the parking and what is required. Mrs. Cole suggested that we wait to decide, until the Town receives the survey of Barrow's Alley.

Chairman Sara Winslow stated she would feel more comfortable waiting until the survey is received before making any decisions, and the Board agreed as well.

Announcements/Other Business

None.

Adjournment

With no further discussion, Vice-Chairman Marvin Sutton made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded by Board Member Milton Long.

Vote was 5-0.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:33 PM.

Chairman Sara Winslow

Secretary, Sarah Nixon

Date