



# City of Lowell - Planning Board

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## **Planning Board Meeting Minutes**

Monday, February 2, 2026, 6:30 p.m.  
City Council Chambers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City Hall  
City of Lowell, 375 Merrimack Street, Lowell, MA  
Remote Participation Optional via Zoom

**Note:** These minutes are not completed verbatim. For a recording of the meeting, visit [www.ltc.org](http://www.ltc.org)

### **Members Present**

Chairman Linnehan  
Vice Chair Frechette  
Member Cheng  
Member Tenczar  
Member Walker  
Associate Member Sar

### **Members Absent**

Associate Member Cardoso Silva

### **Others Present**

Mary Brundage, Associate Planner

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A quorum of the Board was present. Chairman Linnehan called the meeting to order at 6: 30 PM

## **I. Minutes for Approval**

1/22/2026

G. Frechette motioned to approve, L. Walker seconded. Motion passed unanimously, (5-0).

## **II. Continued Business**

### Site Plan Review - 558 Gorham Street, 01852

The Lowell Planning Board will hold a public hearing to hear all interested persons relative to an application by NLK Homes LLC to construct one triplex and one duplex (a total of 5 units) at 558 Gorham Street. The subject property is located in the Urban Mixed Use (UMU) zoning district. The proposal

requires Site Plan Review per Section 11.4.2 of the Lowell Zoning Ordinance for a development with more than three units, and Special Permit approval per Section 11.3.2 for four to six dwelling units on a single lot in the UMU zone.

On Behalf:

Kasey Ferreria, Howard Stein Hudson, Applicant's Representative

K. Ferreria explained the changes made to the revised plans including correcting the labeling for gross square footage and showing the adequacy of parking in the garage. He explained that they also did the swept path as requested demonstrating that both large size and medium sized SUVs can access the 16 ft. garage doors without issue. He also provided an exhibit showing where trash and recycling bins can be stored in the garage.

Speaking in Favor:

None

Speaking in Opposition:

None

Discussion:

G. Frechette stated that he sees conflicts with access egress and access with the two buildings facing each other and felt it was a big ask. He liked the plan that was originally approved.

K. Ferreria responded that in the first phase of the project that they initially wanted to have spaces in front of the garages however the engineering department stated that it was not allowed to use spaces in front of the garages as it would block access to the garage. He stated that there is additional space in front of each unit, but it is not allowed to be used for parking. There is a 22-foot driveline between the two buildings which is required for adequate access along with an additional 13 feet in front of each unit. This would provide adequate 90-degree access into and out of the garages.

G. Frechette felt that with the placement and entrance and the proximity to the road that there was not enough to turn into the garage.

C. Cheng stated he had similar concerns. He said looking at the existing conditions that the existing building looks close to the fence line. He also mentioned that the triplex rendering has rear staircases and wondering if that was still part of the plan.

K. Ferreria responded that the plan for the building permit issuance was revised to include just a fire escape door at the back rather than the deck coming down.

C. Cheng asked if that was true for duplex. K. Ferreria responded that they have not gotten to the building permit stage yet but given that those staircases are not in the side setback, it should not be an issue.

C. Cheng asked if there was any flexibility to make the garage space wider as the space is tight with larger vehicles. K. Ferreria responded that would require wider units which would not be possible because of the rear setbacks. K. Ferreira stated that while tight, the current plans have functional egress from the cars.

C. Cheng asked about the parking requirements. K. Ferreira answered that they met the requirements with one additional spot. C. Cheng asked if they considered going to the ZBA for relief on the rear setback. K. Ferreira stated that they would like to avoid that but would consider it.

C. Cheng echoed G. Frechette's concerns about the tight space with the additional unit.

D. Tenczar expressed concerns about safety and trash pick-up and that it is too much.

L. Walker did not have any comments.

T. Sar concurred with D. Tenczar.

T. Linnehan agrees that the parking space is too tight, especially with the snow.

K. Ferreira requested a continuance to rework to add more surface area to plan.

C. Cheng asked K. Ferreira about the trash pickup. K. Ferreira confirmed that the trash pickup will be handled by the HOA as one of the previous conditions of approval.

Motion:

T. Linnehan motioned to continue to 3/2 Planning Board meeting, T. Walker seconded. The motion passed unanimously, (5-0).

Site Plan Review - 75 Chapel Street, 01852

The Lowell Planning Board and Lowell Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing to hear all interested persons relative to an application by Eduardo Pinotti to convert the existing 4-unit residential building to a 6-unit residential building. The subject property is located in the Urban Neighborhood Multi-Family (UMF) zoning district. The proposal requires Site Plan Review approval from the Planning Board for the expansion of a residential development with more than 3 residential units. The proposal also requires Variance relief from the Zoning Board of Appeals under Section 6.1.11 #5 for having stacked parking spaces and for any other relief required of the Lowell Zoning Ordinance.

\*This item was revisited and heard later on the agenda\*

On Behalf:

None

Speaking in Favor:

None

Speaking in Opposition:

None

Discussion:

T. Linnehan stated that it was the application continued to the meeting tonight. The Board had questions on the adequacy of the access, the safety of pedestrian walkways coming out on both right and left sides of the building, how snow was going to be removed and trash removal, comments from the

fire department regarding the fire alarm system and sprinkler system and the costs associated with that. T. Linnehan stated that the Board has not received any new information from the applicant and that there is no one present representing the application.

C. Cheng noted that last time he went by the property after the last snowstorm that only one of the access ways was cleared with snow. He has serious concerns with snow removal on the site especially it being a one-way access.

Motion:

T. Linnehan made a motion to deny the application for the following reasons:

1. Inadequate vehicular access going in and out of the site.
2. Unaddressed pedestrian safety issues regarding the walkways to adequately mitigate safety concerns where walkways intersect with vehicular passageways.
3. Absence of a snow removal plan.
4. Unaddressed fire safety concerns by the Fire Department regarding the fire alarm system and sprinkler system.

D. Tenczar seconded. The motion passed unanimously, (5-0).

**III. New Business**

Special Permit- 202 Barker Avenue, 01850

The Lowell Planning Board and Lowell Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing to hear all interested persons relative to an application by Danny Rivera to split the existing lot at 202 Barker Ave and construct a single-family home on the new lot. The subject property is located in the Traditional Single-Family (TSF) zoning district. The proposal requires Special Permit approval from the Planning Board under Section 5.1.1(7) to reduce the frontage requirement. The existing lot requires Variance relief from the Zoning Board of Appeals under Section 5.1 for minimum lot area, minimum lot area per dwelling unit, maximum Floor Area Ratio, and for any other relief required of the Lowell Zoning Ordinance. The newly created lot requires Variance relief from the Zoning Board of Appeals under Section 5.1 for minimum lot area, minimum lot area per dwelling unit, and for any other relief required of the Lowell Zoning Ordinance.

On Behalf:

John Geary, Geary and Geary, LLP, Applicant's Attorney.

J. Geary described the proposed project. The subject property is consists of 11,068 sq. ft. of land with a three bedroom, one-and-a-half-bathroom single family home with two garages. It is a corner lot. The garages are currently used for storage. If approved, the garages would be demolished to make way for a single-family home on the newly created lot. The Special Permit is required pursuant to Section 5.1.17 to reduce the frontage by 15 feet for Lot 2 with the existing home. Lot 1 will not require a Special Permit. Lot 2 will contain 4,226 sq. ft. of land and Lot 1 will contain 6,842 sq. ft. of land. The proposal includes constructing a three-bedroom, 2-bathroom, 2200 sq. ft single family home on the newly created lot. J. Geary explained that the neighborhood exhibit plan shows that what they are proposing is in terms of frontage and lot area is consistent to what exists within the neighborhood. J. Geary mentioned that the trees were identified on the lot and the amount of impervious materials. He stated that there will be about 29% reduction of impervious surface.

J. Geary pointed out the relative criteria from the Lowell Forward plan. He stated that it achieves the main objective to create additional housing within the city by creating a market rate modestly priced energy efficiency home on the newly created lot. He stated that there is no adverse environmental impact or substantial impact to City services.

Matt Hamor, Landplex, Applicant's Engineer.

M. Hamor presented the site plan. He pointed out the existing driveway, walkways and garages on the property. He outlined the proposed lot lines, building, driveway consisting of two spaces, walkway and infiltration trenches for the impervious surface on that lot along with a 2-in diameter shade tree. He stated that the existing driveway and curb cut on Lot 1 would be removed.

M. Hamor further explained the neighborhood analysis, pointing out undersized lots and lots with less than 70 feet of frontage, essentially showing that 72 lots are non-conforming in that area. He also showed where there would be a reduction of impervious surface.

Speaking in Favor:

None

Speaking in Opposition:

None

Discussion:

G. Frechette stated that he had it was too much of deviation from the zoning for him to reconcile. Lot 2 would still have less than what is required for the densest zoning districts except for the urban zoning districts. Also, by allowing this, it creates the request for the variance for the floor area ratio (FAR) because of the large home on that lot.

C. Cheng made the same observations. He stated that it looks like there are currently two lots in the neighborhood that are smaller but those are the outliers and would be adding to those outliers. He mentioned that possibly putting fencing to delineate the two lots. J. Geary responded that could add fencing. He would also like to see a window on the blank wall on the rendering. He liked the idea of adding trees and that the stormwater was addressed. C. Cheng suggested that a window could be added on the blank wall on the architectural rendering on the proposed home.

D. Tenczar noted that there are lot of tiny lots in that neighborhood and understands G. Frechette's concerns. He said the idea of a fence makes sense. He likes the proposal with the fencing and possibility modification to the exterior of the proposed home.

J. Geary appreciated all the concerns. He stated that it is possible to do an ADU but it made more sense to the applicant to construct a more robust single-family home. That at the end of the project, there would two single family homes on that corner that are professionally landscaped. He said that the fence is a great idea to show the separation of the lots. The existing home was also going to be rehabbed. He reiterated that the neighborhood exhibit shows other small lots in the area.

L. Walker stated concerns about the amount of space that the new home would take up whereas right now that space is essentially open space. She stated that she had a hard time with taking the currently existing conforming lot and subdividing it into two non-conforming lots. She felt that it was not a good precedent to set because over time the neighborhood will change.

T. Sar expressed concerns about the size of the proposed home. J. Geary responded that the applicant would consider a smaller home.

T. Linnehan stated that it is a pretty busy lot as it is and that what the applicant is trying to do would actually make the lot more pleasing than it is today. He concurs with C. Cheng the fence and the window on the blank wall. He said that while the lot is small, it fits in with the neighborhood.

J. Geary stated that they will be before the ZBA in a week and they will weigh in on lot size. He mentioned that they are willing to continue to take another look at the architectural plans. As far as the landscaping goes, the existing lot is currently not landscaped well. With the proposed new home, that it will be clearly landscaped and the existing driveway would be revegetated.

G. Frechette stated that fencing would actually accentuate how small the lot and not having a fence would actually be more pleasing. Part of the challenge is that the existing structure is already large and is going to take up most of the space on that lot and does not look in character with the neighborhood. He reiterated that is such a deviation from what the zoning requires.

J. Geary stated that the proposal would be beneficial to the neighborhood and that it would a lot better than what currently exists. A single-family home that fits a family would be better for the city than an ADU. J. Geary responded that with the three structures already there and potentially a fourth with an ADU that the lot would look crowded.

D. Tenczar asked if it would make sense for counsel to come back with a new proposal although he is ready to vote on it tonight.

T. Linnehan wasn't sure what else could be done with the plans proposed.

C. Cheng stated that matter before the board is relief from frontage for Lot 2, Lot 1 has the required frontage. For the relief on the FAR lot requirement, the ZBA would be making that decision. He did not have an issue with the footprint of the proposed house as it fits within the setbacks and there was not could be done with the existing home in reducing the footprint.

T. Linnehan asked if Lot 2 would still 4000 sq. ft on a revised plan, would that change anyone's mind.

M. Hamor added that they will go ZBA for ZO variances and that they would typically go to the Planning Board after for the definitive subdivision approval. He stated that moving the existing driving down from the intersection would improve the access to the lot.

J. Geary stated he is ready to move forward with a vote.

Motion:

C. Cheng motioned to approve the Special Permit with the following conditions:

1. A window be added to prevent a blank wall not including the door.
2. Add landscaping approved by DPW to delineate between the two lots.

D. Tenczar seconded. Supermajority is required for the Special Permit. Motion fails (3-2), with G. Frechette and T. Walker dissenting.

**IV. Other Business**

**V. Further Comments from Planning Board Members**

**VI. Adjournment**

D. Tenczar motioned to end. C. Cheng seconded. The motion passed unanimously, (5-0). The time was 7:57 PM.