



City of Lowell - Planning Board

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 10, 2026, 6:30 p.m.

City Council Chamber, 2nd 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

Members Present

Chairman Linnehan

Member Cheng

Associate Member Sar

Members Absent

Vice Chair Frechette

Member Walker

Member Tenczar

Associate Member Cardoso Silva

Others Present

Dylan Ricker, Senior Planner

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

I. Minutes for Approval

8/17/2026

T. Linnehan motioned to continue the minutes to the 9/24 meeting, T. Sar seconded. The motion passed unanimously, (3-0).

II. Continued Business

Site Plan Review and Special Permit – 123 University Avenue, 01854

TLGLE, LLC has applied to the Lowell Planning Board seeking Site Plan Review and Special Permit approval to convert the existing building at 123 University Avenue into a mixed-use building with two (2)

ground-floor commercial units, and twelve (12) studio apartments. The subject property is located in the Traditional Mixed-Use (TMU) zoning district. The proposal requires Site Plan Review approval from the Planning Board per Section 11.4 for a residential development with more than (3) residential units, and Special Permit approval from the Planning Board per Article 12.1 for the construction of greater than 11 residential units.

On Behalf:

None

Speaking in Favor:

None

Speaking in Opposition:

None

Discussion:

T. Linnehan said the applicant submitted a written request for continuance to the October 5th meeting.

Motion:

T. Linnehan motioned, C. Cheng seconded to continue to the October 5th Planning Board meeting. The motion passed unanimously, (3-0).

Site Plan Review and Special Permit – 131 Davidson Street, 01852

22 Hurd St, LLC has applied to the Lowell Planning Board seeking Site Plan Review and Special Permit approval to convert an existing four-story commercial building to forty-three (43) residential units at 131 Davidson Street (129 Howe Street). The subject property is located in the Downtown Mixed-Use (DMU) zoning district. The proposal requires Site Plan Review per Section 11.4.2(2) to construct a development with more than three (3) dwelling units and Special Permit per Article 12 for the use.

On Behalf:

Matt Hamor, Applicant's Representative

M. Hamor said the applicant revised the parking area on the plan based on Board comments including adding a solid vinyl fencing and fencing in the dumpster area. M. Hamor said some landscaping was added in a location near the parking area, M. Hamor said they would work with DPD on the landscaping plan, and said they were amenable for this as a condition of approval. M. Hamor said the existing chain link fencing would be removed.

Scott Brown, Applicant's Architect

M. Hamor said revisions were made to improve the appearance of the entrance way and they have added planters and wall mounted light fixtures. S. Brown said some minor changes were made based on Board comments. S. Brown said one of the front entrances will be abandoned and consolidated into 1 entrance to improve the appearance. S. Brown said they have provided wall mounted light fixtures. S. Brown said they will be adding an entry canopy over the entrance, and the entrance will be wood colored. S. Brown said the exterior is in good shape and there is not a lot of work needed on the exterior. S. Brown said some mechanical equipment is being removed from the roof, and there will be

some selective repointing. S. Brown said 2 light fixtures will be added to the rear of the building for the parking area which will be dark sky compliant.

M. Hamor said the applicant is amenable to the four conditions included from the comment memo. M. Hamor said they believe the requests from the previous meeting have been met.

Speaking in Favor:

None

Speaking in Opposition:

None

Discussion:

T. Linnehan read the letter submitted by the Parking Director into the record regarding parking in the Davidson Lot.

M. Hamor said they did not intend to imply there was any parking agreement between them and the abutting site. M. Hamor said he was just noting nearby parking areas. M. Hamor noted nearby parking garages, and noted parking is not required in the DMU zoning district. M. Hamor said the units are smaller units, and would likely lead to less cars.

T. Linnehan said the applicant addressed the Boards requests from the previous meeting including landscaping, lighting, parking area screening, dumpster screening. T. Linnehan noted the proposed conditions from Planning staff. T. Linnehan said he believes the applicant addressed the Planning staff and Board concerns.

T. Sar said he has no questions.

C. Cheng agreed that the requests were addressed by the revisions. C. Cheng asked about the dumpster. C. Cheng asked about the sizing of the dumpster, and possible need for daily trash collection. M. Hamor said the area can manage 2 rollaway dumpsters and it is expected they will need to be emptied twice per week, but will empty them more if necessary. C. Cheng asked about the snow storage given the limited area. C. Cheng said a condition should be added if there is too much to store on site. M. Hamor agreed and said this will be necessary. C. Cheng expressed support for the architectural updates given the limited space.

Motion:

T. Linnehan motioned to approve the Site Plan Review with following conditions:

- (1) The applicant shall perform a video inspection of the existing sewer service to confirm its condition and determine whether it is suitable for reuse for the proposed 43 residential units;
- (2) The applicant shall replace the sidewalks surrounding the building with new concrete sidewalks meeting current City and ADA standards. The work shall include a wheelchair curb ramp with a cast-iron detectable warning panel;
- (3) The applicant shall obtain all required permits from the Engineering Department prior to commencing work , including trench, street opening, water connection, and sewer connection permits;

- (4) The applicant shall comply with all current 780 CMR, 527 CMR 1.00, as well as any NFPA regulations that apply per occupancy type;
- (5) The dumpsters shall be screened and pickups shall be increased if necessary and be located in the rear of the parking area; and
- (6) If snow cannot be stored on-site it shall be trucked off-site to ensure parking spaces are not lost.

C. Cheng seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, (3-0).

T. Linnehan motioned to approve the Special Permit with the following conditions:

- (1) The applicant shall perform a video inspection of the existing sewer service to confirm its condition and determine whether it is suitable for reuse for the proposed 43 residential units;
- (2) The applicant shall replace the sidewalks surrounding the building with new concrete sidewalks meeting current City and ADA standards. The work shall include a wheelchair curb ramp with a cast-iron detectable warning panel;
- (3) The applicant shall obtain all required permits from the Engineering Department prior to commencing work, including trench, street opening, water connection, and sewer connection permits;
- (4) The applicant shall comply with all current 780 CMR, 527 CMR 1.00, as well as any NFPA regulations that apply per occupancy type;
- (5) The dumpsters shall be screened and pickups shall be increased if necessary and be located in the rear of the parking area; and
- (6) If snow cannot be stored on-site it shall be trucked off-site to ensure parking spaces are not lost.

C. Cheng seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, (3-0).

III. New Business

Site Plan Review – 70 Stromquist Avenue, 01852

Kazanjan Enterprises, Inc has applied to the Lowell Planning Board seeking Site Plan Review approval to demolish the existing single-family home and construct two (2) duplexes resulting in four (4) residential units at 70 Stromquist Avenue. The subject property is located in the Suburban Multi-Family (SMF) zoning district. The proposal requires Site Plan Review approval per Section 11.4 for a development with greater than three (3) residential units.

On Behalf:

John Geary, Applicant's Representative

J. Geary summarized the submitted materials. J. Geary said the 4-family use is allowed in the SMF district. J. Geary explained the proposed units. J. Geary said access will be via Weed St. J. Geary said each unit will have 3 parking spaces. J. Geary said the applicant will establish an HOA and units are intended to be sold. J. Geary said they intend to use City trash services. J. Geary said the development is by-right in the SMF zone.

Matt Hamor, Applicant's Representative

M. Hamor explained existing conditions of the site. M. Hamor explained the layout plan for the site. M. Hamor said 2 additional parking spaces are provided to the side of each unit in addition to the garage for

each unit. M. Hamor said an easement will be provided to the Water Dept for the shut off valves, and explained the proposed utilities. M. Hamor said they are amenable to provide the sewer service out onto Weed St. M. Hamor noted the stormwater plan.

Angie Verge, Applicant's Representative

A. Verge said they are proposing 5 new shade trees, and said the only tree nearby is on an abutting property. A. Verge said they are proposed Red Maples and Red Oaks which are native. A. Verge noted there are additional proposed shrub plantings. A. Verge said the landscaping plan was revised to add more plant species.

J. Geary said he believes the submission meets the criteria for Site Plan Review approval.

Speaking in Favor:

None

Speaking in Opposition:

None

Discussion:

J. Geary said the plan is to sell units and expect they would be owner occupied.

C. Cheng asked how tall the building is. J. Geary said it is 35 ft high and 3 stories which comply with the SMF dimensional requirements, and said it meets all dimensional requirements. C. Cheng expressed support for the landscaping plan. C. Cheng asked about the proposed rear balconies. M. Hamor said there are decks off of the first stories. C. Cheng asked which direction they face. M. Hamor said they face each other above the garages. C. Cheng noted there is subsurface infiltration for stormwater. C. Cheng said a requested condition is for a stormwater permit. M. Hamor said it is a typical requirement for new developments and this is issued through the Wastewater Department. M. Hamor said this happens at the time of construction permits. M. Hamor confirmed he has no problems with this as a condition of approval.

C. Cheng asked about the existing fencing. M. Hamor said the fencing along the side will be removed and it will be replaced with the landscaped screening. J. Geary said the white vinyl fence is the neighbors and that will stay and the landscaping will provide additional screening. C. Cheng asked if neighbor's have concerns. J. Geary said they have not heard of any concerns.

T. Sar asked about the location of the parking spaces. M. Hamor said the spaces are tandem. J. Geary said the tandem spaces are for each individual unit so they can be managed more easily.

T. Linnehan noted the street was a dead end street, and expressed support for the landscaping. T. Linnehan said adequate parking is provided. T. Linnehan noted no Variances are required. T. Linnehan noted the proposed conditions from Wastewater, Water, Fire, and Engineering.

Motion:

C. Cheng motioned to approve the Site Plan Review with following conditions:

- (1) The applicant shall obtain all required permits from the Engineering Office prior to commencing work, including but not limited to trench, street opening, sewer, water, and driveway permits, as applicable. All work shall be subject to the required Engineering Department inspections;
- (2) Any utility trenches within the existing roadway shall be restored in accordance with City standards, including milling and paving the trench area in one continuous patch;
- (3) The existing water and sewer services shall be cut and capped at their respective mains after demolition of the existing building;
- (4) The applicant shall comply with all current 780 CMR, 527 CMR 1.00, as well as any NFPA regulations that apply per occupancy type;
- (5) The applicant shall obtain a Stormwater Permit from the LRWWU for the subsurface infiltration system;
- (6) The applicant shall connect the project's sewer line to the existing 10-inch PVC main on Weed Street using the existing wye, as directed by the LRWWU;
- (7) The applicant shall have an HOA agreement recorded for the shared sewer service; and
- (8) The applicant shall have all new lines inspected when being installed by the Water Department.

The motion was seconded by T. Sar. The motion passed unanimously, (3-0).

Zoning Amendment – Curbcut Requirements

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 40A, Section 5, the Lowell Planning Board will hold a public hearing to hear all interested persons relative to an ordinance to amend "The Code of Ordinances City of Lowell, Massachusetts," with respect to Chapter 290, thereof entitled "Lowell Zoning Code" by amending Section 6.1.10, entitled 'Table of Dimensional Requirements for Off-Street Parking' to extend the maximum curbcut in the Traditional Single-Family (TSF), Traditional Two-Family (TTF), and Urban Single-Family (USF) zoning districts from 15 ft to 20 ft.

On Behalf:

None

Speaking in Favor:

None

Speaking in Opposition:

None

Discussion:

T. Linnehan read staff comments into the record. T. Linnehan noted Engineering was in favor of the change because it would increase off-street parking.

C. Cheng said these zones are the only zones that have a 15 ft maximum, all other zones have larger max curb cuts. C. Cheng noted a special provision for single- and two-families allowing for an extension up to 24 ft as long as all parking areas are paved with a pervious surface. C. Cheng said there is already a way for most properties to extend their curbcut.

T. Sar clarified that the Board is recommending changes, T. Linnehan explained the Planning Board's review process.

T. Sar said he is in favor because there will be less cars on the street.

C. Cheng said these zones have the smallest lots and can understand the concerns about removing on-street parking and reducing green space. C. Cheng noted that property owners can widen driveways within their property.

T. Linnehan noted there is a debate between on-street vs off-street parking.

C. Cheng noted there is a pathway to expand curbcuts via pervious driveways and noted an applicant can seek a Variance. C. Cheng said changing this regulation defeats the intention of the pervious paving area exception.

C. Cheng noted this was updated in 2010, and said this should be considered before a final decision by the Council. C. Cheng said this should be added to the recommendation.

C. Cheng said more cars off the street is a good thing.

T. Linnehan said during the winter during snowstorms there is no on-street parking, and said the driveways help during storms. T. Linnehan noted the parking on dirt and grass. T. Linnehan said he understands both the concerns regarding the change and the reasons it is beneficial.

C. Cheng asked whether the Engineering comments mentioned on-street parking blocking driveways. T. Linnehan said the conversation was related to driveway permits and the increased off-street parking.

T. Linnehan said the Board can send a non-binding recommendation indicating that there was no public input or presentation, only comments from Planning and Engineering. T. Linnehan noted the pervious parking area expansion pathway. T. Linnehan said understanding the reasoning for the request would be helpful.

T. Sar said the Council is asking to extend and they can choose to extend that.

C. Cheng said he is unsure, and they are only looking at a proposed number. C. Cheng said there is a pathway to do this and is concerned about overriding that without more details as to why this is being proposed.

T. Linnehan said he is unsure of the proposal, and noted there are both positives and benefits.

T. Sar said he understands the challenge. T. Sar noted there are many requests to expand driveways. T. Sar asked if Variances are frequent. D. Ricker said there are frequent requests and sometimes applicants seek Variances.

C. Cheng noted the language required for granting a Special Permit from the ZBA to expand parking areas which include criteria ensuring the driveway does not impact stormwater infrastructure or on-street parking.

T. Linnehan said the Board said they could make no recommendation due to no applicant present, no public input in favor or against, comments from Planning concerned about reduced on-street parking and landscaping, and Engineering comments in favor of the expansion to reduce cars parking on street. T. Sar and C. Cheng agreed.

C. Cheng added an item that the Council consider the existing mechanisms to expand curbcuts beyond 15 ft, in Section 6.1.10 asterisk number 3.

Motion:

T. Linnehan motioned for no recommendation for the following reasons:

- (1) No applicant was present to advocate for the proposal;
- (2) No public input was received in favor or in opposition to the proposal;
- (3) The Department of Planning and Development's concerns related to reduced on-street parking and a reduction in green space;
- (4) The Engineering Department's support of the expansion related to a reduction in cars parking on-street; and
- (5) Due to the existing regulations in Section 6.1.10 asterisk 3 allowing single- and two-family properties to expand curbcuts to 24 ft when using pervious paving.

C. Cheng seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, (3-0).

IV. Other Business

V. Further Comments from Planning Board Members

VI. Adjournment

T. Linnehan motioned to adjourn. T. Sar seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 PM.