



The City of Worcester

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS OF THE CITY OF WORCESTER

Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 18, 2026

Worcester City Hall – Levi Lincoln Chamber,

with remote participation options available via Zoom online at:

<https://worcesterma.zoomgov.com/j/1604564634> and

call-in number 1-669-254-5252 (Access Code: 160 456 4634#).

Attendance:

Zoning Board Members Present:

Jordan Berg Powers - Chair
Lawrence Abramoff - Vice Chair
George Cortes
Erik Bartenhagen – Alternate
Matthew Sacco – Alternate

Zoning Board Members Absent:

Eric Torkornoo

Staff Participating:

Michelle Smith, DPRS
Amy Beth Laythe, DPRS
David Horne, Inspectional Services Department

Call to Order:

Mr. Berg-Powers called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM.

Requests for Continuances, Extensions, Postponements, and Withdrawals

Continuances/Postponements/Withdrawals

Postponements

Item #4 ROW Adj to 7 Paul Clancy Way (ZB-2026-019) Special Permit

Request to Postpone to June 8, 2026
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to June 30, 2026

Item #6 256 Sunderland Road (aka 262 Sunderland Road (ZB-2026-022)

Special Permit & Variance

Request to Postpone to June 8, 2026
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to June 30, 2026

Item #7 318 Park Avenue (ZB-2026-027) Special Permit & Variance

Request to Postpone to June 8, 2026
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to June 30, 2026

Item #9 35 & 37 State Road (aka 1200 West Boylston St) (ZB-2026-033)

Special Permit & Variance

Request to Postpone to June 8, 2026
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to June 30, 2026

Planning & Regulatory Services Division

Worcester City Hall, 455 Main Street, Room 404 (4th Floor), Worcester, MA 01608

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Withdrawals

Item #2 59 Pocasset Avenue (fka 55 Pocasset Avenue) (ZB-2026-030) Variance

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the Postponements.

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the Postponements.

Old Business – Public Hearings

1. 123 Hamilton Street (ZB-2026-079)

Lot 3A:

Variance: For relief from the minimum frontage requirement for a three-family detached dwelling use in a BL-1.0 Zone (Article IV, Section 4, Table 4.2).

Variance: For relief from the minimum side yard setback requirement for a three-family detached dwelling use in a BL-1.0 Zone (Article IV, Section 4, Table 4.2).

Special Permit: To modify the parking dimensional, layout, and/or landscaping requirements, loading requirements, and/or the number of required parking spaces. (Article IV, Section 7.A.2)

Lot 3B:

Variance: For relief from the minimum frontage requirement for a three-family detached dwelling use in a BL-1.0 Zone (Article IV, Section 4, Table 4.2).

Special Permit: To modify the parking dimensional, layout, and/or landscaping requirements, loading requirements, and/or the number of required parking spaces. (Article IV, Section 7.A.2)

Petitioner: S&N Builders, LLC.

Present Use: Presently on the premises is a three-family detached dwelling.

Zone Designation: Located partially within the RG-5 (Residence, General), the BL-1.0 (Business, Limited), and RS-7 (Residence, Single-Family) zoning districts

Petition Purpose: The applicant seeks to divide the parcel and construct a three-family detached dwelling, ±5 parking spaces, and associated site improvements on the newly created lot as well as reconfigure the parking on the existing lot.

Exhibits: Exhibit A: Application; clerked 4/6/2026; prepared by Donald J O'Neil, Attorney

Exhibit B: Survey; dated 1/12/2026, revised 3/24/2026; prepared by B&R Survey Inc.

Exhibit C: Architectural Plans; hand drawn

Exhibit D: Rendering Photo

Exhibit E: Soil Test Pit Report; dated 3/22/2026; prepared by M. A. Elbag Engineering, Inc.

Exhibit F: Roof Water Runoff/Infiltration Calculations; dated 4/6/2026; prepared by M. A. Elbag Engineering, Inc

Testimony Date: 4/27/2026 Constructive Grant Deadline: 7/15/2026

Mr. O'Neil re-summarized the project following the prior meeting: He highlighted that the parcel is split-zoned and that the back portion is RG-5 and the front portion is BL-1.0. He also stated the relief requested is a frontage variance for both lots, a side setback variance for the new building and a Special permit for a common driveway, altered parking layout, and parking reduction (5 spaces per building instead of 6 required). He clarified height concerns raised previously and that the building height is 34.35 ft, below the 40-ft limit.

For the stormwater discussion, he relayed the engineer's findings that there is high groundwater between 18–30 inches, the foundation will be slab with no basement, so he believes that a test pit must be dug near the foundation area immediately prior to construction to confirm water table is low enough which is expected in summer. He spoke about the drip trench system around building being a 3 ft deep x 3 ft wide stone apron for roof runoff and that it functions similarly to an infiltration chamber which sheds excess water via sheet flow to grass. He clarified that staff previously worried about groundwater infiltrating the city system and the engineer confirmed grading prevents this. Mr. O'Neil requested in the condition of approval that condition G be removed, as DPW has no objection, and condition H be removed as unnecessary because referenced parcels are no longer under common ownership and already include infiltration systems.

Amy Beth Laythe, Planning Division, provided a detailed restatement of relief requested and confirmed that condition G can be stricken as DPW is satisfied and condition H can be partially adjusted. Staff still require a stamped stormwater checklist, even if project is exempt from full standards. Ms. Laythe also relayed comments from the fire department.

Public Comment:

Natalia & Santino Romeo, of Sutton supported the request and agreed with the engineer that infiltration was impossible due to groundwater conditions.

Board Comment:

Mr. Berg Powers had no additional comments.

Mr. Abramoff sought clarification on condition H. Staff reaffirmed the need for a stamped checklist. Mr. O'Neil agreed to provide the checklist if it would not trigger additional requirements later.

Mr. Bartenhagen requested clarification on architectural variations and praised the aesthetic rendering.

Mr. Sacco had no objections.

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the application with conditions as amended, recommendations, and waivers.

New Business – Public Hearings

3. 17-19 Wall Street (ZB-2026-001)

Variance: For relief from the minimum rear yard setback requirement for a non-residential use in an RG-5 Zone (Article IV, Section 4, Table 4.2).

Variance: For relief from the minimum exterior side yard setback requirement for a non-residential use in an RG-5 Zone (Article IV, Section 4, Table 4.2., Note 7).

Special Permit: To extend, alter or change a privileged pre-existing, nonconforming structure and/or use (Article XVI, Section 4)

Petitioner: Conte Group, LLC

Present Use: Presently on the premises is a restaurant.

Zone Designation: RG-5 (Residence, General) zoning district

Petition Purpose: The applicant seeks to construct an addition to the restaurant.

Exhibits:

- Exhibit A: Application; clerked 4/28/26; prepared by Conte Group, LLC
- Exhibit B: Survey Existing Conditions; dated 4/18/2023; prepared by B&R Survey Inc.
- Exhibit C: Survey Proposed Conditions; dated 1/30/2026 prepared by Robert D. O’Neil Jr, RPLS
- Exhibit D: Site Plan; dated 4/18/2023; prepared by B&R Survey Inc
- Exhibit E: Architectural Plans; dated 11/19/2025; prepared by J. R. Associates \ Design Services

Public Hearing Deadline: 7/2/2026 Constructive Grant Deadline: 8/6/2026

Raymond Lipolito, on behalf of the applicant Joe Conte, gave an overview of the project. He stated relief is being sought for rear and side yard setbacks as well as a special permit to expand a pre-existing, nonconforming restaurant by enclosing the existing rear bump out for staff circulation only - there will be no customer seating in the expanded area.

Joe Conte noted for trash, a dumpster at a neighboring business is used.

Michelle Smith, Planning Division, gave an overview on behalf of the city and clarified the setback. The applicant confirmed the wall height will not increase. There was a discussion of the external materials: and that brick veneer is acceptable to mimic existing architecture. The board members stated that they prefer maintaining the existing façade integrity. Staff emphasized conditions restricting expansion to employee use only. Ms. Smith also noted the Fire Department requires sprinklers & heat alarms in the expanded area.

Dave Horne, Inspectional Services, noted that because the building is so close to the property line, the applicant should take special care when pouring the foundation to make sure they do not cross the property line and everything is correct.

Public Comment:

Robert O’Neil, Surveyor, confirmed the setback dimensions.

Board Comment:

Mr. Berg Powers had no objections to this project and was ready to move forward

Mr. Abramoff agreed.

Mr. Cortes has no issues with this project.

Mr. Sacco had no additional comment.

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the application as amended with conditions as amended, recommendations, and waivers.

New Business – Public Hearings

5.	114 Lincoln Street (ZB-2026-021)		
Variance:	For relief from the minimum frontage requirement for a multi-family dwelling, low rise use in a BL-1.0 Zone (Article IV, Section 4, Table 4.2)		
Variance;	For relief from the minimum parking requirements for a multi-family dwelling (Article IV, Section 7, Table 4.4)		
Variance:	For relief of the minimum recreational space required for new residential uses in a BL-1.0 zone (Article IV, Section 4, Table 4.2, Superscript 3)		
Special Permit:	To modify the parking dimensional, layout, and/or landscaping requirements, loading requirements, and/or the number of required parking spaces. (Article IV, Section 7.A.2)		
Petitioner:	Bach Associates, Inc		
Present Use:	Presently on the premises is a vacant lot.		
Zone Designation:	The property is split zoned between the BL-1.0 (Business, Limited) and the RG-5 (Residence, General) zoning districts		
Petition Purpose:	The applicant seeks to construct a ±5,580 SF, ±6-unit multi-family, low-rise dwelling, a ±9-space surface parking facility and to conduct associated site improvements.		
Exhibits:	Exhibit A:	Application; clerked 2/25/26; prepared by Donald J. O’Neil, Esq.	
	Exhibit B:	Survey, Architectural & Civil Plan set; revised 3/31/2026; revised 5-14-2026; prepared by Joe Graham, P.E. and Robert O’Neil, P.L.S	
	Exhibit C:	Response to Staff Comments; dated 3/31/2026; prepared by EJ Graham, LLC	
Public Hearing Deadline:	5/18/2026	Constructive Grant Deadline:	6/9/2026

Don O’Neil, Attorney, gave an overview of the project on behalf of the applicant. He stated that the applicant is looking to convert the vacant lot to a 6-unit building with rear parking. He seeks relief for frontage, 3-space parking reduction (9 vs. 12), and a special permit for landscape buffer and driveway width (18 ft vs. 20) and the applicant withdrew the variance request for recreational space after staff clarified the 10% requirement can be met via combined small open areas. He stated that infiltration is also being provided on this lot.

Michelle Smith, Planning Division, gave an overview of the project on behalf of the city. She stated that the some of the relief is due to the split zoned nature of the property. She reiterated the relief requested and spoke to staff comments related to visual interest on the architecture plans. She also asked about parking management.

Attorney O’Neil responded that parking would be assigned and spoke to the architecture changes that may be made. He also spoke to a pergola being on the Lincoln Street façade with a walkway. Mr. Berg Powers said he is amenable to the pergola.

Public Comment:

None

Board Comment:

Mr. Berg Powers is amendable to this project and the only question he had was about the Lincoln Street façade and the applicant answered that so he is good to move it forward.

Mr. Abramoff said he was also good with this project.

Mr. Cortes would like to make sure the recreational space exists. Mr. O'Neil stated that they will also provide two picnic tables at the rear of the property or an amenity for the residents. Mr. Cortes asked to see the elevations again. He said he would like to understand the materials and colors that would be used. He said he doesn't feel it looks residential to him. Mr. O'Neil said the height contributes to that feeling. He said the design was challenging. Mr. Berg Powers said he agrees. Mr. Abramoff said landscaping and trees will help.

Mr. Bartenhagen said he is good to move forward

Mr. Sacco said he is good to move forward.

Mr. Berg Powers said it would be great to see something interesting as a final comment.

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the application with the withdrawal of the variance for recreation space and the conditions, recommendations, and waivers.

New Business – Public Hearings

8.	25 Wabash Avenue (ZB-2026-028)	
Variance	For relief from the minimum lot area requirement for a multi-family high-rise dwelling use in a RG-5 Zone (Article IV, Section 4, Table 4.2)	
Variance:	For relief from the minimum frontage requirement for a multi-family high-rise dwelling use in a RG-5 Zone (Article IV, Section 4, Table 4.2)	
Variance:	For relief from the minimum side yard setback requirement for a multi-family high-rise dwelling use in a RG-5 Zone (Article IV, Section 4, Table 4.2)	
Variance:	For relief from the maximum compact parking space requirements (Article IV, Section 7, Table 4.4, Note 3.b.)	
Special Permit:	To modify the parking dimensional, layout, and/or landscaping requirements, loading requirements, and/or the number of required parking spaces. (Article IV, Section 7.A.2)	
Petitioner:	Monroe Management, LLC	
Present Use:	Presently on the premises is a two-family dwelling.	
Zone Designation:	RG-5 (Residence, General) zoning district	
Petition Purpose:	The applicant seeks to convert the two-family dwelling to a 4-unit multi-family low-rise dwelling with the addition of 2 stories, ±4 parking spaces, and associated site improvements.	
Exhibits:	Exhibit A:	Application; clerked 4/6/2026; prepared by Monroe Management, LLC
	Exhibit B:	Site Plan; dated 2/16/2026, revised 4/2/2026; prepared by New England Environmental Design, LLC.
	Exhibit C:	Architectural Plans; dated 4/2/2026; prepared by Alves Drafting &

Consultation

- Exhibit D: Zoning Narrative; prepared by New England Environmental Design, LLC
- Exhibit E: Public Comment Letter; received from Alain & Marcia Grenier; dated 4/26/2026
- Exhibit F: Public Comment Letter; received from Justin Grenier; dated 4/23/2026

Public Hearing Deadline: 6/10/2026

Constructive Grant Deadline: 7/15/2026

Rayn Gavin, New England Environmental Design, on behalf of the applicant Adam Gaval/Monroe Management, gave an overview of the project to convert an existing two-family dwelling to a multi-family dwelling with 4 units by adding 2 stories to the existing structure. He stated additional work proposed included expanding the driveway and adding additional parking at the rear of the property. If all compact spaces were proposed, that would be a total of 5 spaces where 8 parking spaces are required. He also stated a significant amount of trees are being removed, but arborvitaes are proposed around the entire property boundary. Relief of number of parking spaces, parking requirements with regards to landscaping and setbacks are sought from the board.

Michelle Smith, Planning Division, summarized the project on behalf of the City. She reviewed the relief requested and recommendations for conditions of approval. She recommended striking condition C and D based on newly submitted plans and also adding a new condition K to reflect that the parking has been reoriented to ensure final revised plans match the new submission. She gave an overview of alternative development options for this site. Ms. Smith stated staff would like to see 2 trees retained that are currently larger trees. She also stated that the proposed architecture is somewhat out of character with the surrounding neighborhood in that most homes in the area are 2 or 3 stories. She also gave historical context of this house within the neighborhood. She asked for the applicant to address how parking would be managed. Ms. Smith called attention to the resident comments that were included for the board's review.

Adam Gavel responded to the questions from the City. He presented a board that showed other 4 story buildings in the general area on Heywood Street, Dillon Street and Woodford Street and also a 4 story building on the corner of Vernon Street and Alpine Road. He also stated the building across the street would be higher than this proposal. He said parking will be assigned by unit. He believes the parking is improving as now the residents back out onto the street and in future they will have a parking area to turn around. He said he believed the comments from the neighbors were regarding water and this project is not proposed to increase any water runoff to any of the neighbors.

Public Comment:

Kim, Wabash Avenue resident, stated the biggest concern in the neighborhood is parking. She described the parking and traffic on Wabash Avenue. She didn't feel having all compact parking spaces would accommodate the needs of the potential residents. She addressed the applicants photo comparison to other buildings and structures in the area and feels the proposal does not reflect the neighborhood.

Marcia Grenier, 28 Wabash Avenue, stated that comments were submitted before the meeting and agrees with everything the previous resident said. She feels that the proposal does not fit in with the neighborhood. She said there are no 4 family dwellings anywhere near this location. She also stated she doesn't feel folks will have compact cars and the street is very congested. She also commented on the heat island effect in the area.

Board Comment:

Mr. Berg Powers stated he drove by the location and it is tight. He does admire the ambition of this project and the addition of an accessible unit. He feels it is more massing than anywhere else on the street and the street is congested. He feels he is uneasy on this proposal.

Mr. Abramoff says this is a lot for this parcel. He would like to hear from the rest of the board members but has reservations.

Mr. Cortes said Worcester is the home of the 3-decker which doesn't mean there couldn't be a 4 level home, but depends on the neighborhood. He questioned the obstruction of views/light from other homes in the area due to the size of this project. He questioned where people would park and traffic flow on the street. He stated he is not sold on the 4 units.

Mr. Bartenhagen said on a different street and on a different lot, he would feel more positively. At this location, it strikes him as too much massing. He offered that the examples shared by the applicant are on bigger lots and don't feel so out of proportion. He said this lot is narrow and has many trees and was struggling to envision how the parking would work. If there were 3 units rather than 4, the parking situation would be better by one unit. He also lamented losing all the trees. He said this project strikes him as too much.

Mr. Sacco thinks it would be a great triple decker. He is not in favor of the proposal at this time.

Mr. Berg Powers advised the applicant that the votes of the board would most likely not be in favor of the proposal and advised that the applicant should continue the hearing to work on revisions.

Mr. Gauvin requested a continuance to June 29, 2026

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to continue the public hearing to June 29,2026 with a Constructive Grant Deadline of July21, 2026.

New Business – Public Hearings

10.	o Grafton Street (ZB-2026-035)		
Variance:	For relief from the minimum frontage requirement for a multi-family low-rise dwelling use in a BL-1.0 Zone (Article IV, Section 4, Table 4.2)		
Special Permit:	To modify the parking dimensional, layout, and/or landscaping requirements, loading requirements, and/or the number of required parking spaces. (Article IV, Section 7.A.2)		
Petitioner:	Joseph Jreij		
Present Use:	Presently on the premises is a single-story industrial building.		
Zone Designation:	BL-1.0 (Business, Limited)		
Petition Purpose:	The applicant seeks to construct 2 multi-family low-rise dwellings with ±12 units each, ±23 parking spaces, and associated site improvements.		
Exhibits:	Exhibit A:	Application; clerked 4/27/2025; prepared by David Sadowski	
	Exhibit B:	Survey; dated 2/18/2005; prepared by HS&T Group, Inc	
	Exhibit C:	Site Plan; dated 3/13/2023; revised 3/14/2026; prepared by D.J. & Associates	
	Exhibit D:	Circulation Plan; dated 3/13/2023; revised 3/14/2026; prepared by D.J. & Associates.	
	Exhibit E:	Architectural Plans; dated 3/9/2026; prepared by TASC AID	
Public Hearing Deadline:		7/1/2026	Constructive Grant Deadline: 8/5/2026

David Sadowski, DJ & Associates, on behalf of the applicant gave an overview of the project. He also stated that the owner, general contractor and architect were all present for any questions. He stated staff comments came late in the afternoon so not much time has been spent in reviewing. The project is to

construct two 12 unit apartment buildings with 1 and 2 bedroom apartments to meet the needs of the City and this project will be compliant with Inclusionary Zoning as well as have accessible apartments. He understands that 16 units could be constructed by right, but would like to construct 24 units. If continued, he would like a straw vote to see if the board is favorable for the additional units. Additionally he added that an Order of Conditions has already been issued by the Conservation Commission and gave an overview of the stormwater and wetland plans. He spoke about the requirement to have 10% of the lot area set aside for recreational use in this zone.

Michelle Smith, Planning Division, stated that the 10% of recreation space is determined by the whole of the lot area. She added since these wetlands are not ponded, they would not qualify for an exception. She stated the applicant can apply for a variance from the 10% recreation space if needed. Ms. Smith gave an overview of what counted towards recreation space. If the additional variance were sought by the applicant, it would require an additional application and new notice before it could be heard by the board.

Mr. Berg Powers asked for clarification if the current plans meet the 10% requirement. Ms. Smith said it is just not clear if it does and the applicant would have to provide evidence either way. Mr. Berg Powers advised the applicant that the board cannot decide whether or not it is required, it is up to the applicant to provide that information or request the variance.

Mr. Sadowski offered opportunities where recreation space could be available on the property and some options. Ms. Smith asked for the conversation to be had with staff outside of the hearing.

Mr. Sadowski said staff recommendations in the memo are agreeable to the applicant, the only piece that is outstanding is the 10% of the lot area for recreation space.

Michelle Smith, Planning Division, gave an overview of the project on behalf of the city. Staff recommends postponement for the resolution of the recreational space. She reviewed some of the comments related to the architecture.

Mr. Sadowski asked about the side of the building facing Grafton Street and whether or not a “fake door” can be on the end of the building. Ms. Smith said generally false doors are discouraged and other design elements could be incorporated and recommended the board request a revised plan that shows what is proposed.

Public Comment:

Andre Cassis, Shrewsbury, is the general contractor and is in agreement with everything that has been said. He said he is unsure of the rooftop as a recreation space but can be discussed.

Board Comment:

Mr. Berg Powers said his vote will be to continue to get an answer on the recreation space and answers on design elements, but if those questions were answered, he would vote yes. He asked the other board members to answer in the same manner so the applicant understands there will be a path forward if he is able to comply with the requirements.

Mr. Abramoff said he agrees with the chair on the open space and design elements and would support if those questions were answered.

Mr. Cortes asked for clarification by the applicant on the recreation space uses be provided to the board. Mr. Sadowski said he believes the wetlands shouldn't be counted but understands what is being asked to provide. Mr. Cortes stated he is otherwise in agreement with the chair for the suggestions made.

Mr. Bartenhagen said he is in general agreement and this is a good proposal if the details can be worked out. He said for the recreational area, either come back with the plans in compliance or request the variance, but the applicant should try to find the appropriate space required because recreation space and wetlands are both important.

Mr. Sacco stated he has no problem with the relief request and has no further comment.

Mr. Berg Powers stated the applicant seems to have a path forward if the can identify the 10% recreation space and work with staff to find a solution and requested a continuance from the applicant. Mr. Sadowski requested the continuance and every effort will be made to comply with the recreation space requirement.

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to continue the public hearing to the June 29, 2026 meeting with a Constructive Grant Deadline of July 21, 2026.

New Business – Public Hearings

11. 9 Dalton Street (ZB-2026-042)

Special Permit: To allow a multi-family low-rise dwelling in an RL-7 zone (Article IV, Section 2, Table 4.1).

Special Permit: To modify the parking dimensional, layout, and/or landscaping requirements, loading requirements, and/or the number of required parking spaces. (Article IV, Section 7.A.2)

Petitioner: Cozy Corner, LLC

Present Use: Presently on the premises is a vacant lot.

Zone Designation: The property is split-zoned between the BL-1.0 (Business, Limited) and the RL-7 (Residence, Limited) zoning districts

Petition Purpose: The applicant seeks to construct a 5-unit multi-family low-rise dwelling with ±10 parking spaces and make associated site improvements.

Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Application; clerked 4/7/26; prepared by Matthew Eckel, Attorney

Exhibit B: Survey, dated 5/7/26; prepared by Jarvis Land Survey, Inc

Exhibit C: Site Plan; dated 3/19/2026, revised 5/12/2026; prepared by Quinn Engineering, Inc.

Exhibit D: Floor Plans; dated 6/12/2025; revised 4/12/2026; prepared by Simplex Homes.

Exhibit E: Stormwater and Lighting Narrative; dated 4/1/2026; prepared by Quinn Engineering, Inc.

Exhibit F: Rendering Photos Submitted

Public Hearing Deadline: 6/11/2026 **Constructive Grant Deadline:** N/A

Todd Brodeur, Attorney, on behalf of the applicant gave an overview of the project to construct a 5-unit dwelling, 9 parking spaces and associated site improvements. Also present are the property owner and the project engineer. He stated there are no issues with the conditions of approval except for the number of trees and the request of the additional dormer. He said trees can't be planted close to the infiltration unit and the dormer did not look appropriate in any renderings.

Amy Beth Laythe, Planning Division, gave an overview of the project and relief requested on behalf of the city. She highlighted that this density would be allowed by right in a different configuration and also indicated that late Fire Department comments were received. She ended with Planning Board Site Plan will be required.

Chris Keenan, Quinn Engineering, spoke to a condition of creating a hammerhead turn around and eliminating the snow storage onsite. He believes the hammerhead would not make maneuvering they driveway any easier. Ms. Laythe stated this was to make sure snow storage didn't end up in the landscape buffer. Mr. Berg Powers asked why that would be a concern. Mr. Keenan stated the applicant is happy to remove snow storage from the landscape buffer. Mr. Berg Powers told the applicant to reflect that on the plans.

Public Comment:

None

Board Comment:

Mr. Berg Powers believes this is fine. He feels this is a good use of the space and likes people trying new things and uses the space well. Would like the board to weigh in on striking the couple of identified conditions (d and i). He would be amenable.

Mr. Abramoff has no problem striking the identified conditions. He appreciates that by right, the same number of units could be accommodated, so since they are getting special permissions, they are accommodating all the conditions imposed he has no problem supporting this.

Mr. Cortes had a questions regarding the reduction in the one parking space. Mr. Brodeur said staff recommended the reduction. Ms. Laythe explained the constrained space for turning around within the driveway and it was hoped that by removing one space, that would offer more area for cars to turn around within the driveway, however, the applicant has sited the dumpster in the removed parking space area instead of leaving the open area. Mr. Cortes said the staff did identify an issue with the original configuration so safety is the first priority, so I am supportive of the reduction.

Mr. Bartenhagen asked the applicant to address the turning analysis within the driveway. Mr. Brodeur said the turning plan. The garage spaces are direct in and direct out and the surface spots require a 3 point turn. He said the trash removal was not on the original plan and this provided an opportunity for a dumpster location. Mr. Keenan stated that in front of the dumpster could still be used as a turn around space. Mr. Berg Powers said that is what is likely to happen. Mr. Bartenhagen said he is agreeable to eliminating conditions d and i.

Mr. Sacco said he had no additional comments

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the application with amended conditions, recommendations, and waivers.

New Business – Public Hearings

12.	141 Highland Street (ZB-2026-049)
Special Permit:	To allow a food service (includes consumption/sale of alcoholic beverages) and/or providing dancing or entertainment use in a BL-1.0 zone (Article IV, Section 2, Table 4.1, Business Use #8)
Petitioner:	Achara Weydt
Present Use:	Presently on the premises is a 4-story, mixed-use building with commercial tenants on the ground floor and residential units on the upper floors. The applicant presently operates a food service establishment in one of the commercial spaces (known as 141 Highland Street).
Zone Designation:	BL-1.0 (Business, Limited) zoning district and is within the Commercial Corridors Overlay District - Elsewhere (CCOD-E)
Petition Purpose:	The applicant seeks a special permit to allow for the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages as part of the existing food service use.
Exhibits:	Exhibit A: Application; clerked 4/28/26; prepared by Thomas Jaffarian, Attorney

Public Hearing Deadline: 7/2/2026

Constructive Grant Deadline: TBD

Thomas Jaffarian, Attorney on behalf of the applicant, gave an overview of the project for the restaurant to serve alcohol. He stated there would be no entertainment and is in full agreement with the conditions of approval.

Amy Beth Laythe, Planning Division, gave an overview on behalf of the City. She reviewed that no parking changes are required with this special permit approval.

Mr. Jaffarian stated there will be no outside seating and no changes are proposed to what currently exists with the floor plan, the current floor plan will remain as is.

Public Comment:

None

Board Comment:

Mr. Berg Powers said he is happy to say yes to this.

Mr. Abramoff said he had no problem supporting this application.

Mr. Cortes asked the applicant the service hours and if it were every day of the week. Mr. Jaffarian stated that alcohol would be served 7 days a week.

Mr. Bartenhagen had no additional comments

Mr. Sacco had no additional comments

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the application with conditions, recommendations, and waivers.

13. 59 Oread Street (ZB-2026-050)

Variance: For relief from the maximum front yard setback requirement in the Commercial Corridors Overlay District (CCOD-D) (Article IX, Section 6.A.2.).

Special Permit: To modify the parking dimensional, layout, and/or landscaping requirements, loading requirements, and/or the number of required parking spaces. (Article IV, Section 7.A.2)

Petitioner: Worcester Lagrange LLC

Present Use: Presently on the premises is an industrial building and a portion of an unpaved parking lot.

Zone Designation: BG-6.0 (Business, General) zoning district and is within the Commercial Corridors Overlay District - Downtown (CCOD-D)

Petition Purpose: The applicant seeks to bring the existing building and parking layout into compliance after the property was divided and a new parcel was created.

Exhibits:	Exhibit A:	Special Permit Application; clerked 4/29/2026; prepared by Joseph Duquette, Attorney
	Exhibit B:	Variance Application; clerked 4/27/2026; prepared by Joseph Duquette, Attorney
	Exhibit C:	Variance Exhibit; dated 4/9/2026; prepared by Control Point Associates, Inc.
	Exhibit D:	Recorded ANR Plan; recorded 4/3/2026; prepared by Control Point Associates, Inc..
	Exhibit E:	Site Plan Rendering for REC Worcester; dated 10/4/2025; preparer unknown
Public Hearing Deadline: 7/1/2026 & 7/3/2026 Constructive Grant Deadline: 8/5/2026		

Joe Duquette, Attorney on behalf of the applicant, gave an overview of the item to rectify zoning violations that were created by a parcel split and change in ownership. He said there is no work being proposed at this parcel other than internal utility work.

Michelle Smith, Planning Division, gave an overview of the item on behalf of the City and confirming this is clean up from the parcel split so now the building does not comply with the maximum front yard setback.

Public Comment:

None

Board Comment:

Mr. Berg Powers said he is a fan of REC and supports their efforts.

Mr. Abramoff, Mr. Cortes, Mr. Bartenhagen and Mr. Sacco all had no comments

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the application with conditions, recommendations, and waivers.

14. 714-716 Pleasant Street (ZB-2026-053)

- Variance:** For relief from the minimum lot area requirement for a multi-family low-rise dwelling use in a RL-7 Zone (Article IV, Section 4, Table 4.2)
- Variance;** For relief from the minimum frontage requirement for a multi-family low-rise dwelling use in a RL-7 Zone (Article IV, Section 4, Table 4.2)
- Variance:** For relief from the minimum side yard setback requirement for a multi-family low-rise dwelling use in a RL-7 Zone (Article IV, Section 4, Table 4.2)
- Variance:** For relief from the minimum parking requirements for a multi-family dwelling use. (Article IV, Section 7, Table 4.4)
- Special Permit:** To allow a multi-family low-rise dwelling use in the RL-7 Zone (Article IV, Section 7, Table 4.1)

Special Permit:	To modify the parking dimensional, layout, and/or landscaping requirements, loading requirements, and/or the number of required parking spaces. (Article IV, Section 7.A.2)		
Petitioner:	AA Eagle Properties, LLC		
Present Use:	Presently on the premises is a two-family dwelling.		
Zone Designation:	RL-7 (Residence, Limited) zoning district		
Petition Purpose:	The applicant is seeking to convert the existing two-family dwelling to an 8-unit multi-family low-rise dwelling with the addition of a full third story, ±12 parking spaces, and associated site improvements.		
Exhibits:	Exhibit A:	Application; clerked 4/30/26; prepared by Mark Borenstein, Attorney.	
	Exhibit B:	Survey; dated 3/18/2026, revised 4/14/2026; prepared by B&R Survey, Inc	
	Exhibit C:	Architecture Plans; dated 4/4/2026; prepared by 508 Design & Build, LLC	
	Exhibit D:	Façade Renderings; dated 5/4/2026; prepared by 508 Design & Build, LLC	
	Exhibit E:	Lighting Plan; dated 5/1/2026; prepared by Shepherd Engineering, Inc	
	Exhibit F:	Historic Planner Notes; dated 4/13/2026; prepared by Michelle Johnstone, COW Historic Planner	

Public Hearing Deadline: 7/1/2026

Constructive Grant Deadline: 8/5/2026

Mark Borenstein, Attorney on behalf of the applicant, who was also present, and showed a video as an overview.

Amy Beth Laythe, Planning Division, gave an overview of this project on behalf of the city. Ms. Laythe posed some follow-up questions and proposed changes to conditions for the applicant.

Mr. Borenstein followed up with clarifying the changes to conditions and highlighting more information about the relief requested and answered staff questions asked by Ms. Laythe.

Public Comment:

Adam Gaval, 717 Pleasant Street, gave his view as a neighbor and reviewed the project and spoke highly of the developer.

Costa Rezzi, 712 Pleasant Street, stated he would welcome the new apartments. He said the building was never renovated and he knows the developer will do good work.

Charles Walmott, Worcester, stated he is a contractor and has worked with the developer and spoke highly of his work and work ethic.

Jean McInerney, 720 Pleasant Street, relayed a history of the neighborhood having lived there for so long. She does not feel this development fits in the neighborhood as this area is mostly owner occupied. She feels the parking is not sufficient and there is not ample room for snow storage. Ms. McInerney spoke about the compressors for the HVAC units that will be closest to her property and the relief requested. She spoke about elevations and water flow from the property. She also spoke about the proposed Newton Square rotary improvements and the impacts on this area of Pleasant Street for traffic and that this property will not be able to take a left turn into the driveway. She feels the size of the project is too large.

Board Comment:

Mr. Berg Powers stated this project is in his neighborhood. He said when he first saw the project he felt this was a lot of massing for this project. He is amenable to moving forward, but has concerns. He asked if there were any changes proposed to the exterior of the structure for the basement level units. Mr. Borenstein said there would be modifications to the windows only. Mr. Berg Powers is interested in the City's request to keep some of the features of the original building as he thinks the building is out of place/weird for the area. He feels this is a good place for more density and while there isn't a lot of room for parking in the immediate area, there is plenty of on street parking not far from this property. He stated it is mostly renters in this neighborhood. He feels one parking spot for every unit is probably enough based on his experience.

Mr. Abramoff said the building is huge for 8 units. Mr. Borenstein said in response to Mr. Abramoff's comment that this building was previously a two-family with over 4,000 SF per unit. He stated the applicant learned that the previous owner only occupied one unit and the other unit was vacant and in disrepair. Mr. Abramoff said the applicant is trying to get a lot in there but he feels he can support this.

Mr. Cortes said he hears the abutter and she made good points. He feels she addressed her comments to the neighborhood and that there can be a compromise by reducing the number of units to 6 which would provide additional parking. He would like to retain the character of the neighborhood rather than creating something that may not be right. Mr. Borenstein responded that the applicant looked at the Now|Next plan to provide housing for the missing middle on the west side of Worcester and you usually don't see projects like this in this area. He said this area is very walkable and enjoyable and there is a need for units especially on the west side. Mr. Cortes said he understands Mr. Borenstein's points, and says folks won't rent somewhere when they don't have parking. He sees the reduction in units as a small compromise and is not in favor of the 8 units.

Mr. Berg Powers said it's not people who do have cars that choose not to rent in a certain place, it's people who don't have cars choose to live in places where they can get around easily.

Mr. Bartenhagen asked about the current square footage. Mr. Borenstein stated 8,650 SF. Mr. Bartenhagen confirmed that square footage is not being expanded and asked about the addition to the third floor. Mr. Borenstein said that it is attic space that the volume is being increased. Mr. Bartenhagen confirmed the ceilings are being raised in certain areas. Mr. Borenstein stated the building is still below the maximum height requirement and not asking for a Variance for height. He said there are plenty of occupied third floors and attic residences in the neighborhood. He acknowledged this is additional density. Mr. Bartenhagen asked about unit configuration. Mr. Borenstein said all units will be 2 bedroom with one parking space per unit and depending on the needs of the residents, some units could have more than one space. Mr. Bartenhagen stated he is amenable to striking the conditions as requested by the applicant. He said he understands the points of view raised by Mr. Berg Powers and Mr. Cortes. He said it's a big lot with a big building surrounded by other relatively large buildings and it does seem like a little too much and he is on the fence.

Mr. Sacco said this is a tough one, but leaning towards yes. He feels this is one of the best areas of the city and a good place for this project.

Mr. Berg Powers took a straw poll of the board on the item:

Mr. Berg Powers said he would vote yes. Mr. Abramoff said he would vote yes, Mr. Cortes said he would vote no, Mr. Bartenhagen said he would vote no, Mr. Sacco said he would vote yes.

Mr. Berg Powers told the applicant that they would not have the votes to pass, so his suggestion is to continue and work through other options. Mr. Borenstein asked if there was a unit count that would get the board members to vote yes. Mr. Berg Powers said it sounds like 6 for sure. Mr. Bartenhagen said maybe even 7, but 6 for sure. Mr. Berg Powers said his suggestion is to continue to the June 29th meeting. Mr. Borenstein asked to have a sidebar with his client.

Ms. Smith asked the board for other changes they would want to see if this item came back before the board. Mr. Berg Powers said there was agreement to strike conditions d and g and to make an amendment to condition h. He said he is happy for whatever to the outside.

Mr. Borenstein said if the board would be open to 7 units, the applicant is willing to modify the design and ask staff to reflect the relief accordingly. Mr. Berg Powers said the item would still need to continue to update the plans. Mr. Borenstein said updated plans would be submitted to Planning.

Mr. Berg Powers stated the parking variance would change to 1 space and 1 space with the Special Permit and the applicant could work with Planning to make everything work. He asked if that worked for other board members. Mr. Cortes said that would increase the number of parking spaces available. Mr. Borenstein said the requirement would be less with one less unit but the parking layout would remain the same. Mr. Cortes said that would be a compromise and Mr. Bartenhagen said he would vote in favor.

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to close the public hearing.

Ms. Smith gave updated relief numbers for the board vote.

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the application with amended conditions, recommendations, and waivers.

Other Business

14. Communications

15. Discussion of Board Policies and Procedures

16. Approval of Minutes 4/6/2026, 4/15/2026; 4/27/2026

On a motion by Mr. Cortes, seconded by Mr. Abramoff, the Board voted 4-0-1 (Bartenhagen abstained) to approve the meeting minutes from 4/6/2026; 4/15/2026 & 4/27/2026 .

Adjournment:

On a motion by Mr. Bartenhagen, seconded by Mr. Cortes, Board voted 4-0 to adjourn at 9:32pm