

# CITY OF WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS

## RECONVENED Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting

Wednesday, December 14, 2022 at 6:30 P.M.

In a meeting room in the Washington District Library in Five Points  
380 N. Wilmor Road, Washington

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### Call to Order

Chairman Mike Burdette called the reconvened meeting of the City of Washington Planning and Zoning Commission from December 7, 2022 to order at 6:30 p.m. in the library meeting room in Five Points, Washington. A quorum was established.

### Roll Call

Present: Commissioners Burdette, Milot, Reeder, Scott and Shelton  
Absent: Commissioners Ritter and Williams  
Also present: Planning and Development Director Jon Oliphant, Planner Aaron Paque  
City Clerk Valeri Brod and Attorney Brittany Miller

### Approve Minutes

Commissioner Reeder motioned and Commissioner Milot seconded to approve the minutes from the November 2, 2022 meeting.

Motion carried by voice vote.

### Public Comments

None provided.

### Public Hearing:

*Variance of Nick Hausam for reduction of the front yard setback to install a covered porch at 612 Monroe St.*

Case No. V120722-2: A public hearing was opened for comment at 6:34 p.m. Planner Arron Paque provided details regarding the request by Nick Hausam for variance for setback for the installment of a front porch. Mr. Paque read a portion of City Code Chapter 154.057. Mr. Paque explained that based on the submitted drawing, the setback will be ten feet. He shared that the home was built in 1950, prior to City Code and it was built 13 feet from the street. There is a similar home built nearby. This request does not pose a life or fire safety concern. Staff recommends approving this request.

Chairman Burdette closed the public hearing at 6:36 p.m. There was no additional discussion.

Commissioner Milot motioned to accept the variance and Commissioner Scott seconded.

On roll call the vote was:

Ayes: 5 Burdette, Milot, Reeder, Scott and Shelton

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

### Public Hearing:

*Variance of Grist Mill Ventures LLC to vary from the maximum floor area ratio and rear yard setback regulations in the C-2 district and a waiver of the off-street parking, off-street loading and landscaping regulations at 140 Washington Sq., 106 Walnut St., and 112 Walnut St.*

Case No. V120722-1: A public hearing was opened for comment at 6:36 p.m. on the request of Grist Mill Ventures LLC. Mr. Oliphant shared that Nathan Watson from the Grist Mill is present. He shared that they approached the City with the possibility to develop a pub on the square and this has been discussed and approved by Council. Mr. Oliphant described the property and noted that the property is part of the historic district and will be reviewed by the Historic Commission. They anticipate this occurring in January. Mr. Oliphant noted there are two separate buildings, both built in 1950 and both currently vacant. The last time there was construction on the square was 1980 for the Maloof building. Mr. Oliphant noted there are five components that need approved:

1. The rear yard setback, noting that part of this sits next to an alley.
2. The floor area ratio in relation to the amount of building square footage and the amount of land square footage.
3. The waiver of the off-street parking regulations. This falls in the restaurant bar category which requires one parking space per every four seats in the establishment. He noted that parking may be provided within 300 feet of the premises.
4. The waiver of off-street loading requirements, when code requires off-street loading space if the establishment more than 10,000 square feet. He noted that

the building right next to this makes it impossible to have a turning radius for a truck.

5. Landscaping requirements on the street side and parking lot areas. He noted that every property on the square would have trouble meeting this.

Mr. Watson thanked everyone and noted the code was written for single business.

Leri Slonneger (speaking for herself) has lived on High Street for 54 years. She shared that she has renovated several homes in the City. She asked about the water/sewer placement and about the capacity of the outdoor beer garden as well as the entrances for the building. Ms. Slonneger asked if there is a demolition exit route that will be followed and will it go out the back, causing traffic issues. She also asked about dumpsters in the alley, the basement excavation next to the historical society, damage to Marlene Miller's building. She would like to see detailed plans.

Leri Slonneger (speaking for Marlene Miller) read a statement provided by Marlene Miller who owns an adjacent building and could not be present due to an illness. She provided three points: 1) Regarding the waiver of 20 foot setback, she said the building looks like it will be set back into the alley where residents currently place garbage barrels. She asked if the City will provide pick up space; 2) Regarding the waiver for off-street loading, she is concerned that trash will not be picked if the alley is blocked and asked what provisions will be made. She also shared that she is worried about health code violations; 3) Regarding the increase of maximum floor area, she noted that she has an easement that allows residents a means to escape should there be a fire. She noted brackets that support a patio. She stated that it appears that we will be dismantling the party wall. She asked the Committee pauses until all easements are determined. Her statement has been attached and made part of these minutes.

Mr. Oliphant stated that the easement is a private easement between two property owners, not the City. He also shared that the roof easement would be handled between property owners. Mr. Oliphant shared that off-street loading would be done in the alley and we would look to have provisions to have dumpsters placed near the current area.

Mr. Oliphant shared that the water/sewer agreement will update the water and sewer and it would go through the alley. He imagines it will be in the spring. Mr. Oliphant shared that basement excavating is the responsibility of the property owner to keep it on their property.

Mr. Watson stated that some these items will be worked out as they progress. He shared that the first floor will have 122 seats and the outdoor space on the second floor will have about 75 seats. It will be partly closed for the elevator and stairs. He shared that the rest will be open air and it will be enclosed to look like a two-story building. He also shared that the restaurant will look for year-round use and may use umbrellas and space heaters. He noted that they are respecting the easements but there will be things to work out such as utilities and that the contractor will help to not disturb neighbors. Mr. Watson also shared that they are separate structures and will not be attached. He also shared that engineers will ensure the integrity of the structures and they need to maximize the site to include kitchen and that it would be difficult for any business on the square to meet all the regulations. Mr. Watson shared that trash pickup is frequent so it doesn't sit long. They want to cooperate with neighbors and their goal is to not have any issues that are caused by changes.

Jewel Ward, president of the Washington Historical Society shared concern that the possible requests will affect the Historical Society that sits right next door. She shared additional concern if the building becomes a two-story building on the east side, this may affect a wall on their building that contains utilities.

Mr. Watson said the plans submitted tonight were only for review for the PZC to consider and don't contain these items. He noted that they are in the process of pricing everything out which will provide additional details. This will then give them a chance to sit down with neighbors to find solutions.

Commissioner Burdette noted that Dean Essig requested to speak but not present. He opened the floor for any other public comments.

Chairman Burdette closed the public hearing at 7:02 p.m.

Commissioner Milot motioned to accept the variance and Commissioner Scott seconded.

Commissioner Scott acknowledge previous comments but clarified that this commission is to review what is being presented. He noted the items brought forward but hopes there will be future dialog to work out other aspects of the project. He feels the items being requested are reasonable and shared other items like trash, and HVAC should be addressed. He feels this is good for the City and feels anyone who develops this site would ask for these same variances.

Commissioner Reeder said his concern is the rear setback and noted that there is a blind corner near the alley. He shared his concern for semi-trucks in the alley being able to open a door if the building were to be pulled forward. Commissioner Reeder also stated that the off-street parking is not favorable but the City still needs to determine the number of spaces that are available. He counted 59 spaces that would be needed but what if they want to develop the rest of the block. He shared his concern that part of the parking lot is private and can be shut off at any time and feels they need to plan for future parking.

Commissioner Burdette said the City is in process of getting parking.

Commissioner Reeder stated that if City could have gotten the parking lot from the fire, it would be helpful for this.

Commissioner Scott questioned the distance and asked they can approve this with a caveat of lesser feet.

Commissioner Reeder would feel more comfortable if it was brought it back three feet. It was noted that even three feet would need a variance.

Mr. Watson clarified that the kitchen design may be affected including functionality. He provided that mirrors may help to view down an alley. The distance between a truck and the building were discussed and Nathan noted that trucks are likely unload form the back or they use a different truck for alley deliveries. He noted that they already operate in alleys in DeKalb and Ottawa.

Commissioner Milot noted if we approve as proposed, would it pass building code inspections, with a door opening on an alley.

Commissioner Scott noted that the placement of the door is not for this commission to decide. He also noted that parking will always be an issue. He continued to share that the alley is the only issue and this area won't get developed without the 20 feet.

Commissioner Burdette asked about the roles of the Historical Society and the Historical Preservation Commission. Jewel Ward from the Historical Society noted they are independent form each other and they would like to work together on these issues.

Mr. Oliphant said he is confident they can have some sort of means that vehicles can see pedestrians and the last thing the City wants is for there to be any conflict for anyone in the alley.

Commissioner Scott, Commissioner Reeder and Mr. Oliphant briefly discussed utilities that run through the alley.

Commissioner Milot asked about the open beer garden on the second floor. It was clarified that it is only open on the front of the building and there are other units that include Airbnb and a hospitality area.

Commissioner Scott noted that they will need to work out structural issues with adjacent buildings done by a structural engineer and noted there will be drift issues that will be reviewed.

Commissioner Milot shared concerns with garbage pickup. Jeff Pohl, a partner, said there were several garbage cans and dumpsters in the alley and this might require some change of habits but it is not an issue with garage.

Commissioner Burdette noted for them to make the plans, this needs to be approved.

On roll call the vote was:

Ayes: 4 Burdette, Milot, Shelton, and Williams

Nays: 1 Reeder

Motion carried.

**Old Business**

Mr. Oliphant shared that there is no meeting in January.

**Commissioner/Staff  
Comments**

None provided

**Adjournment**

At 7:22 p.m. Commissioner Scott moved and Commissioner Milot seconded to adjourn.  
Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

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Valeri L. Brod, City Clerk

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