

## PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

A hearing before the Village of Hudson Falls Planning Board was held on May 22, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

Attendees: David Hutchinson, Chairman  
Lynn Leland, Board Member  
Diane Santa Croce, Board Member  
Deborah Breeyear, Board Member  
Richard Wagner, Board Member  
William Nikas, Village Attorney

Absent: Joelle Timms, Board Member  
Robyn Cronin, Board Member

Public Present: 5 members of public present

Chairman Hutchinson called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

The first item on the agenda is a site plan review application submitted by Bove Realty, 76 Railroad St., Mechanicville, NY 12118 for proposed use of 23 Main Street, Hudson Falls, NY 12839 as a carwash/laundromat.

Ethan Hall from Rucinski Hall Architecture addressed the board representing Bove Realty. He explained this is a two-parcel property and showed the board on a map where the zoning district lines ran between the properties. The first parcel is a mixed-use zone, and the other side is a residential use. The project would involve use as a three-bay carwash with a laundromat and utility room. An entrance and exit would be coming off from John Street as well as an exit only on to Main Street with a right hand only turn allowed. It would be two manual and one automatic wash. The building would be a block building with a gable roof and overhang. A brief discussion ensued involving, parking, functionality of the building and the flow of the lands involved.

Board Member Wagner asked if there was a clean bill of health on the parcel from the previous gas station being there. Mr. Hall and Mr. Bove said that as far as they know the tanks have been taken out and DEC has closed all of them down.

Chairman Hutchinson asked questions involving the property lines as far as where the mixed-use line is, and the residential line is. There is a rectangle of land in the drawing that appears to be in the residential area but part of the mixed use. It is in the residential area of that zone. A brief discussion ensued involving property lines.

Chairman Hutchinson made the comment that the intersection where this project would be located is one of the busiest in town and car washes tend to have a line at certain times. Mr. Hall stated there would be an attendant there to help and that was the reason for the entrance and exits to be designed as they were.

Board Member Wagner ask what the proposed hours were for the business. Mr. Bove stated the car wash would remain open 24 hours and the laundromat would close around 10:00pm. Mr. Wagner asked about the signage for traffic flow and Mr. Hall stated there would be directional signs installed. Mr. Wagner asked if there were any architectural plans for the building as what they were presented shows no plans for the building. Mr. Hall replied they are planning to do a split faced block building with a shingled roof.

Board Member Wagner said the recommendation from Washington county about getting the sewer department approval. He is wondering where all the water will go. Mr. Hall said it will go through an oil/water separator that will be underground and does not create a lot of noise. There has been no response from the sewer agency yet. Chairman Hutchinson asked about the amount of water usage. A brief discussion ensued.

Board Member Leland asked how long it would take to complete the build of the project. Their estimate is about four months. Chairman Hutchinson asked about lighting for the building. Mr. Hall stated lighting would be down lighting on the building itself as there are plenty of streetlights for the lot. Mr. Hutchinson asked where the signage would be. Mr. Hall stated on the gable on the front end of the building facing Main Street. Board Member Wagner stated there are ordinances in the village for signage and it was agreed they would follow those in place.

Board Member Wagner believes, Superintendent Mike Fiorillo of the Village DPW and Water departments should be involved in this decision as to how much water is used and where it is coming from. A discussion ensued.

Board Member Santa Croce is concerned about the cars on John Street backing up on to the Main Street. A discussion was had about the flow of traffic and where cars could queue in the parking lot. Chairman Hutchinson asked if they had considered doing a traffic study to determine if this location is viable a car wash. Mr. Hall stated they did not do one as they believe the traffic will be negligible.

Board Member Wagner is concerned about the car wash being open for twenty-four hours. He does not want kids/teens hanging out there. He does not believe people will be washing their cars at 2:00 and 3:00 am. Mr. Bove stated they own car washes in several other locations such as Schuylerville and Glens Falls and they do not draw people to hang out. Chairman Hutchinson asked what the daily usage was (how many cars) at some of these other locations. Mr. Bove stated 72 cars per day and approximately 29 cars in the Schuylerville location that has four bays. Their Schuylerville location would be the most like this one in proximity to a traffic light.

Chairman Hutchinson said the other county recommendation was to ensure compatibility with the recommendations for the Southern Gateway in the Hudson Falls Downtown Revitalization Plan 2020. This particular property is mentioned several times in this as to what the village saw for future development that would compliment the historic pattern in that location on Main St. Some of the historical suggestions made he would hope that they would attempt to make it architecturally leaning towards that possibly in the returns on the eaves, fascia, and gable. A brief discussion ensued.

Upon motion made by Board Member Wagner, seconded by Board Member Santa Croce and carried, the meeting was opened to public comment.

Stephanie Bitter, attorney retained by neighboring property owner Martha Wheeler presented the board with a letter and reviewed with them the contents of the letter. The Wheeler house is historic in nature, it has been recognized by Washington county in the past. The question she has about this project is it is in a mixed-use zone. When she looks through the mixed used zone it does not recognize a car wash as being a permitted use. Her other concern is that a small portion of where the parking is, will be in the residential zone. If the parking is permitted for residential use that confuses her too. Ms. Bitter continued to review her letter and concerns with the board as a discussion took place. Ms. Bitter listed what she believes to be allowed in a mixed-use zone should be classified as a retail business and this excludes automotive business. Automotive business should be in a commercial zone. She asked the board to put this question to the Code Enforcement officer for the Village and look at section 215. 20. It is her opinion that this project should be looked at closely by this board due to its proximity to her client's house. The letter asks that the board deny the application.

Jeffrey Wheeler, 1 Dalton Ave., he resides on the back side of where they are proposing to build this car wash. He said the board spoke about kids hanging out there and they are doing that now. He has found hypodermic needles just walking through that parking lot. Kids going through the lot at 2:00-3:00 in the morning. He thinks a business would deter that with lighting and a building on the property. He is for the business; he thinks the lot looks hideous the way it is and it would be nice to see somebody do something nice with it.

Carol Mullen, 50 Main Street agrees with most of both sides, but she feels the traffic is going to be worse and it is going to be dangerous. She feels we need a car wash but wishes we could find a better place for it. She feels it is not a good way to present the Village of Hudson Falls in a prominent area.

Scott Ottalagano, 62 Wall Street agrees a business is a good thing for that location. It eliminates hazards of kids hanging out there. He does not feel traffic will be an issue, he does not feel it will create a problem. He believes it will create a few jobs and if they go along with the architectural façade to fit in with the area, he is supportive of the project.

Mary Murphy, 6 Poplar Street is a healthcare professional, and she is concerned about the traffic, especially emergency vehicles as they travel that route, any delays could mean life and death.

There being no further comments from the public, Board Member Wagner stated with Ms. Bitter's concerns about this being an allowable use in this zone he feels we should get an interpretation from the zoning board. Village Attorney Nikas stated if they did go in front of the zoning board, it would be either for a variance or for interpretation. Attorney Nikas stated he feels they may need to table this for this evening as their SEQR form is incomplete. There are questions that need to be answered and we need the sewer district approval. A discussion

ensued. Attorney Nikas reiterated we can move this meeting to next month to allow time to get the answers needed to proceed.

Chairman Hutchinson felt the list of considerations that need to be further investigated are as follows:

- Does the Zoning Board need to be included? (Attorney Nikas stated if they do hold the meeting over for the next month there is some research that could be done to determine if this is necessary.)
- The board needs to hear from the Washington County Sewer Agency
- The Planning Board would like to see a bit more developed look at the materials to be used on the building.
- Answers needed to the Stormwater part of the SEQR form

Board Member Wagner asked how many washing machines would be in the laundromat. Mr. Bove said based on the size they are estimating five or six. Mr. Wagner said this information goes along with parking as well as water usage. There will be one outside vacuum cleaner farthest from the street. A brief discussion ensued.

Attorney Nikas will have a discussion with Ms. Bitter concerning the zoning.

Chairman Hutchinson tabled the project until the next Planning Board meeting. The public hearing will remain open until this time.

Upon motion made by Board Member Leland, seconded by Board Member Santa Croce and carried the minutes of the February 27, 2023, Planning Board Meeting were approved as submitted.

There being no further business to come before the Board the meeting was adjourned at 6:48pm.



Deputy Clerk