

Conservation Advisory Council | City of Newburgh, New York

123 Grand Street, Newburgh, New York, 12550

Phone: (845) 569-7366 e-mail: conservation@cityofnewburgh-ny.gov

Council Members:

Chuck Thomas, Chair

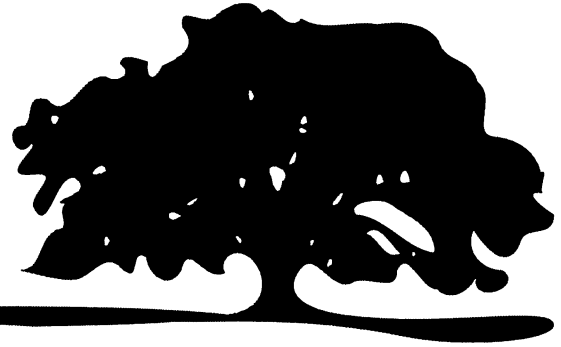
C. Kippy Boyle

Marcel Barrick

Deborah Dresser

Karen Eberle-McCarthy

Gail Fulton



December 17, 2017

MEMO TO: Lisa Daily, Chair
City of Newburgh Planning Board

FROM: Chuck Thomas, Chair
Conservation Advisory Council ("CAC")

: Proposed Project – 27 N. Water Street

The above-referenced project is coming before the Planning Board for review. A Federal Consistency Assessment Form, and a sketch of plans for the project were presented and reviewed by the CAC at our regularly scheduled meeting on November 2, 2017. An updated Short Environmental Assessment Form was received on November 16, 2017. A representative of the applicant met with the CAC at our regularly scheduled meeting on December 4, 2017 to present updates and answer questions.

We offer the following comments and recommendations to the Planning Board and the applicant based on the CCF. Our comments are also to be included in the official record of any Public Hearings.

Overview:

The proposed Amended Plan will re-use a portion of the existing building for a restaurant, and create a striped cross-walk with traffic control and an additional 22 on-street parking spaces on the west side of Marine Drive between 27 N. Water Street to the east, and city-owned land to the west.

Recommendations and Concerns:

Coastal Consistency Review. The project lies within the LWRP (Local Waterfront Redevelopment Plan), and thus review by the Conservation Advisory Council is mandated by law. The CAC received the Federal Coastal Consistency Assessment form from the applicant. The Conservation Advisory Council, as the agency mandated to review the submitted **Coastal Assessment Form**, has the following comments and questions:

1.i. "Could this result in discharges....?" Additional parking spaces may be capable of accumulating pollutants from various sources but particularly fluid leaks from vehicles and inadequate storm water management could result in discharges into coastal waters.

The Council is concerned that the development of the waterfront is being driven by private interests instead of a larger vision. There is not a determination of impacts of the overall development within the LWRP area including the other significant proposals that are emerging for the waterfront area.

There has been no evaluation of the impact of the developments and the projected needs for additional parking in the vicinity of the waterfront. The Council contends that a Parking Management Master Plan is needed for the entire waterfront area including the LWRP area west to Grand Street.

This proposal appears to preclude the addition of a dedicated bike lane even though the City adopted a Smart Streets program that recommends bike lanes. Is it possible to sunset the inclusion of the additional parking on the west side of the road after a given term of a determined length – perhaps for 3 years, to evaluate effects and to allow for the development of a Master Parking Plan and the addition of a dedicated bike lane? This would provide the applicant opportunity to recoup costs but allow the City to evaluate alternatives.

The Conservation Advisory Council strongly recommends collecting the roof runoff and directing it to landscaping elements as irrigation rather than sending it to the City of Newburgh storm sewer system. Can water from the street be redirected to landscaped areas to recharge ground water as is recommended in the adopted green streets planning? We recommend using rainwater from any surface or source as supplemental irrigation or as a sole source of irrigation on green infrastructure. This can include grassed walkways, bioswales and tree pits that are designed to retain water or raingardens in all possible locations over the entire project.

1. Storm water drainage is of concern along Marine Drive, especially with additional parking on the west side. How is this being handled?
2. Parking: There is currently no Parking Master Plan for the LWRP. Parking areas are being spot-inserted into Open Spaces and now along a state highway in order to accommodate individual interests. This is ill-advised. The City cannot avoid the parking issue as it tries to solve our urgent need to attract businesses. Successful waterfront development will depend on a Master Parking Plan. We urge the City to initiate or reconvene the Traffic and Parking Committee, and to include Planning Board members and stakeholders. This must be part of the overall Master Plan update.
3. Pedestrian Safety Along A State Highway: Currently there are parking spaces along the east side of Marine Drive, with a painted 4 foot buffer between the spaces and the traffic lane. It is perilous exiting from the drivers' side. Often there is continuous vehicle traffic, travelling well over 30 mph. The amended site plan calls for 22 additional parking spaces on the west side, separated from traffic by one-foot buffer lines. The City Planner has explained that Marine Drive (Water Street) is too wide and its width can be reduced and still remain within NYS DOT regulations. If the 4' buffer is barely safe, won't the reduction of buffers increase the dangers for pedestrians exiting vehicles? How will this reduction ensure safety for persons exiting vehicles?
4. Bicycle Safety Along A State Highway: The Amended Site Plan is not conducive to the Master Plan which calls for a walkable, bicycle friendly city that connects the waterfront with upper Broadway. How will bicycles be able to maneuver safely along Marine Drive, with passengers exiting a 1-foot buffer or how will passengers be able to safely avoid bicycles?

Respectfully Submitted



Charles Thomas

Chair, CAC

Cc:

Jason Morris, City Engineer
Planning Department