

City of Watervliet Planning Board

Minutes

Wednesday February 25, 2026

Members in Attendance:

Eli Sands
Fred Timberland
Jim Hayes
Steve Hoffman

Also in Attendance:

Melissa Cherubino, General Manager
Paul Laboissiere, Code Enforcement Officer

Acting Chairman Eli Sands opened the meeting at 6:04pm.

1. Site Plan Review of a proposed multi-family development at 2313 Second Avenue SBL # 32.51-2-39 (the "Property")

Christian Luizzi, Director of Real Estate Development at Luizzi Companies (the "Applicant"), presented a concept plan for a three-story, 26-unit multi-family proposal with over 1.5 parking spaces per unit and two access drives off Second Avenue, one from the alleyway (the "Project"). Also presenting was Owen Hoffman of McFarland Johnson Inc. ("MJ" or the "Engineer"). Existing conditions on the Property are impervious as the site is fully paved and there are two existing structures that will be demolished as part of the Project.

Traffic counts from the site at peak hours – defined as rush hour 9am and 5pm – are expected to bring 20 vehicles exiting or entering the site respectively. According to Owen there are no environmental constraints on the Property. The Applicant will be seeking two area variances, (1) for lot coverage of 87% with 13% greenspace which is 7% deficient in greenspace; and (2) rear setbacks of 2-3' which is 17-18' deficient from the 20' rear setback requirement.

Board members were generally supportive of the Project. Eli asked the market and composition of the units. He also questioned whether the building could be moved to the front property line to match the existing structures on Second Avenue.

Christian described market rate units, 50% one-bedroom and 50% two-bedroom geared toward college students, young adults or empty nesters. The Applicant has considered closing off alley access to reduce glare for neighboring properties. However, this rear area would be the location of a dumpster with landscaping or fencing to enclose the dumpster.

Eli also questioned whether removing even two parking spaces could increase green space and encourage more planting. Christian agreed that there could be a tree planted near the ADA accessible parking space.

Steve questioned whether the Fire Chief had reviewed the drawings for fire truck access. Melissa agreed to share the drawings with the Fire Department for review. Owen confirmed that the three-story structure would be sprinklered.

Board members requested dumpster location, signage, lighting, utility connections, landscaping and sidewalk improvements which the Applicant will provide for the preliminary site plan review. He will also provide renderings of the façade. At that time the Board will coordinate State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”) review.

2. Capital Roots

Emily Scimeca from Capital Roots proposed installation of three demonstration projects on Nineteenth Street. First, she presented proposed planters and suggested that an empty tree box could be the site for tree planting in coordination with Capital Roots’ urban forestry director, Brian Adams. The second proposal is outdoor seating for the restaurants on Nineteenth Street, in some instances in lieu of a parking space if sidewalk conditions cannot accommodate seating. Third, she proposed a demonstration traffic circle at the intersection of Nineteenth Street and Twelfth Avenue to slow traffic entering from Latham.

Board members approved landscaping without reserve. However, several supported outdoor eating while others had concerns about hazards of blocking the right of way or reducing availability of on-street parking. All board members were against the traffic circle demonstration. With that direction, Emily proposed returning with more detailed plans for the March meeting.

Steve made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:46pm, seconded by Fred and approved unanimously.