

Village of Lansing  
Planning Board Meeting  
Minutes of Monday,  
March 11, 2024

The meeting of the Village of Lansing Planning Board meeting was called to order at 7:06 PM. A Zoom option was also provided.

**Present at the meeting:**

**Planning Board Members:** Mike Baker, Lorraine Capogrossi, Jim McCauley and Lisa Schleelein.

**Absent Member:** Pat Gillespie

**Alternate Member:** Yamila Fournier

**Village Legal Counsel:** Natalie French

**Village Engineer:** Brent Cross

**Village Trustee Liaison:** Susan Ainslie (Zoom)

**Village CEO:** Michael Scott

**Public included:** Carla Marceau representing the Community Party; Hope Anderson representing Northeast Pediatrics, LLC; Mike McCracken and Matt Napierala representing the Hospitality Restaurant Group and Brian Crandell from The Ithaca Voice.

Baker appointed Fournier as a voting member in place of Gillespie who is absent.

**Approval of the Minutes**

Fournier moved to approve the February 27, 2024 minutes. Seconded by Fournier.

Ayes: Baker, Capogrossi, Fournier and McCauley.

Nays: None

Abstain: Schleelein

**Public Comment Period:**

Susan Ainslie as Trustee liaison. Carla Marceau is observing for the Community Party.

Schleelein moved to close the Public Comment period. Seconded by McCauley.

Ayes: Baker, Capogrossi, Fournier, McCauley and Schleelein.

Nays: None

Baker read the following agenda item:

**Continue the Public Hearing for Special Permit #2024-4740**

*Northeast Pediatrics, LLC, located at 10 Graham Road West (Tax Parcel #47.1-1-17.12), is proposing to construct additional parking spaces for their facility. As per Village Code Sections 145-42.2C(1) and 145-58B(2), a Special Permit is required.*

46 Scott stated that he received a letter and a tentative planting plan from Anderson which was provided  
47 to the Planning Board. Scott stated that the proposed planting plan contains an additional 14 tree  
48 units to the property leaving it 7 units short of the required number as per Village Code.

49

50 Anderson stated that the project has become very expensive with the added requirements and hopes  
51 the Planning Board will understand the letter and the situation that Northeast Pediatrics is in.

52

53 Baker stated that the Tree Law needs some tweaking and that this special permit is the first  
54 commercial property to come to the Planning Board under the new Law. Baker continued by saying  
55 that the Northeast Pediatrics property is well kept and certainly does not look out of place as far as  
56 landscaping goes. Baker feels that due to the need for more parking and the saturated backyard,  
57 adding the additional 7 units to the property would look congested. The Tree Law states that if the  
58 required units cannot be met, a donation to the Tree Bank would be necessary. The Tree Bank funds  
59 can be used to plant other trees in the Village that are in need of landscaping or used for climate  
60 smart applications that offsets our carbon foot print. Northeast Pediatrics already has solar panels  
61 mounted on the roof of the facility. Considering all of these factors and recognizing that we cannot  
62 waive the required tree units, the Planning Board can, however, reduce the cost of the required  
63 donation to the Tree Bank. Given all of this, Baker recommends the Planning Board take the position  
64 of reducing the required cost to the Tree Bank.

65

66 Capogrossi agrees with Baker and asked some questions about the proposed types of trees and plants.

67

68 McCauley also agrees and added that aesthetics and not overplanting is the intention of the Tree  
69 Law.

70

71 Schleelein added that shade and carbon replacement are also vital parts of the Law. Schleelein also  
72 stated that bushes in front of the parking spaces are important when it comes to headlight glare.

73

74 Fournier stated that the primary goal for the Village Tree Law is for ecosystem services and agrees  
75 that 7 additional units on that parcel may be too much. Fournier analyzed the proposed layout and  
76 advised on possible substitutions.

77

78 Fournier and Anderson discussed the pros and cons of certain proposed plantings. Fournier  
79 recommended that Anderson get a second opinion from someone with more experience with native  
80 plants.

81

82 French agrees that the Planning Board should take into consideration the existing solar panels when  
83 considering an amount to be donated to the Tree Bank.

84

85 Baker recommends the Planning Board consider a donation as little as one dollar in a case like this.

86

87 Fournier does not agree with being that generous.

88

89 John Courtney had recommended \$1,250/tree for the tree and labor in an earlier conversation with  
90 Scott. At 7 tree units, that would be almost \$9,000.

91

92 The Planning Board discussed the recommended payment number.

93

94 Fournier suggested the idea that Northeast Pediatrics purchase the remaining required units and give  
95 them to the Northeast Pediatrics employees that may not be able to afford them.

96

97 Anderson stated that Northeast Pediatrics can scarcely afford to add the proposed plants as is.

98

99 Schleelein suggested a phased planting schedule to ease the large cost all at once.

100

101 Fournier stated that sometimes the cost is less if the plantings are done all at once. Fournier suggested  
102 that Northeast replace the N Triphammer Road street trees that are dying and receive credit for their  
103 replacement.

104

105 Schleelein feels that \$1,250 is too much for one tree planting suggested. However, in this case she  
106 did not feel \$1 supports the importance and spirit of the tree law and suggested \$250.

107

108 Capogrossi agrees with lowering the price and stated that Northeast Pediatrics has been a long-time  
109 good neighbor and has dealt with obstacles like a lack of parking and the deterioration of Graham  
110 Road West.

111

112 French told the Planning Board that approving the planting plan and determining the Tree Bank  
113 donation amount are the 2 items needed to be determined.

114

115 After a discussion, it was agreed that a more specific landscaping plan was needed and that a \$250  
116 donation would be given to the Tree Bank. These items could be added to the conditions of a  
117 resolution for the special permit.

118

119 Fournier moved to close the public hearing for Special Permit #2024-4740. Seconded by Schleelein.  
120 Ayes: Baker, Capogrossi, Fournier, McCauley and Schleelein.

121 Nays: None

122

123 Baker read through Part 2 of the Short EAF and answered the required questions.

124

125 Baker read the following resolution:

126

127 ***VILLAGE OF LANSING PLANNING BOARD RESOLUTION FOR SEQ***

128 ***REVIEW OF SPECIAL PERMIT NO. 2024-4740 ADOPTED ON MARCH 11, 2024***

129 *Motion made by:*         Lisa Schleelein    

130 *Motion seconded by:*     Yamila Fournier    

131

132 **WHEREAS:**

133 A. *This matter involves consideration of the following proposed action: Special Permit No.*  
134 *2024-4740, for the proposal by Northeast Pediatrics, LLC, located at 10 Graham Road*  
135 *West (Tax Parcel #47.1-1-17.12), to construct additional parking spaces for their facility.*  
136 *As per Village Code Sections 145-42.2C(1) and 145-58B(2), a Special Permit is required;*  
137 *and*  
138

139 B. *On February 12, 2024 and February 27, 2024 and March 11, 2024, the Village of Lansing*  
140 *Planning Board, in performing the lead agency function for its independent and*  
141 *uncoordinated environmental review in accordance with Article 8 of the New York State*  
142 *Environmental Conservation Law - the State Environmental Quality Review Act*  
143 *(“SEQR”), (i) determined that the proposed action provided for herein is an Unlisted*  
144 *Action in accordance with SEQR; (ii) thoroughly reviewed the Short Environmental*  
145 *Assessment Form (the “Short EAF”), and any and all other documents prepared and*  
146 *submitted with respect to this proposed action and its environmental review; (iii)*  
147 *completed its thorough analysis of the potential relevant areas of environmental concern*  
148 *to determine if the proposed action may have a significant adverse impact on the*  
149 *environment, including the criteria identified in 6 NYCRR Section 617.7(c); and (iv)*  
150 *completed the Short EAF); and*  
151

152 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:**

153 1. *The Village of Lansing Planning Board, based upon (i) its thorough review of the*  
154 *Short EAF, Part I, and any and all other documents prepared and submitted with*  
155 *respect to this proposed action and its environmental review [including any Visual*  
156 *Environmental Assessment Form deemed required, and comments and*  
157 *recommendations, if any, provided by the Tompkins County Department of*  
158 *Planning in accordance with General Municipal Law Sections 239-1 and 239-m],*  
159 *(ii) its thorough review of the potential relevant areas of environmental concern to*  
160 *determine if the proposed action may have a significant adverse impact on the*  
161 *environment, including the criteria identified in 6 NYCRR Section 617.7(c), and*  
162 *(iii) its completion of the short EAF, Part II, including the findings noted thereon*  
163 *(which findings are incorporated herein as if set forth at length), hereby makes a*  
164 *negative determination of environmental significance (“**NEGATIVE***  
165 ***DECLARATION**”) in accordance with SEQR for the above referenced proposed*  
166 *action, and determines that an Environmental Impact Statement will not be*  
167 *required; and*

168

169           2. *The Responsible Officer of the Village of Lansing Planning Board is hereby*  
170           *authorized and directed to complete and sign as required the Short EAF, Part III*  
171           *confirming the foregoing **NEGATIVE DECLARATION**, which fully completed*  
172           *and signed Short EAF shall be attached to and made a part of this Resolution.*

173 *The vote on the foregoing motion was as follows:*

174 *AYES: Baker, Capogrossi, Fournier, McCauley and Schleelein.*

175 *NAYS: None*

176 *The motion was declared to be carried*

177 Baker completed and signed Part 3 of the Short EAF

178 Baker read the following agenda item:

179 **Informal Presentation**

180 *Mike McCracken, Director of Development for the Hospitality Restaurant Group, will be giving a*  
181 *presentation for developing a Taco Bell establishment at 2301 North Triphammer Road (Parcel #*  
182 *46.1-5-4.3) formerly occupied by Pizza Hut.*

183 Matt Napierala introduced himself and will be working with Mike McCracken if/when the project  
184 moves forward.

185

186 McCracken described the proposed Taco Bell facility as a 2,650 square foot, 40 seat building with  
187 possible outdoor seating. At this time there are 33 proposed parking spaces but, understands that  
188 number may be too many because the number of drive-through customers has increased to an  
189 approximate 85/15 ratio since Covid-19.

190

191 McCracken also stated that elevation and the distance from the main road are a couple of challenges.  
192 McCracken continued to describe the aesthetics of the Southwestern style building. The outdoor  
193 seating can be accessed from both inside and via a sidewalk outside.

194

195 The existing Pizza Hut building would be removed if this project were to be approved.

196

197 Napierala noted that one of the biggest issues with this parcel is being able to get the proper signage  
198 for the facility and whether the sizing necessary would be allowed.

199

200 Scott stated that Village Code allows for 25 square foot of signage in that District and if the case  
201 arose that a larger sign was needed, a variance could be applied for.

202

203 There was some discussion about using the allowed signs already in place on Route 13.

204

205 The Planning Board discussed the visibility of the existing site from Route 13 and possible  
206 landscaping layouts.

207

208 Schleelein would like to know if the lane between the rows of parking spaces could be narrowed, or  
209 if they could also reduce the number of parking spots there. She thought either remedy could reduce  
210 the amount of impervious surface.

211

212 McCracken stated that they employ many local students. McCracken has a concern about walkability  
213 because of the location of the parcel. The Planning Board pointed out that a bus stop is nearby and  
214 that the Cayuga Mall has neighboring multi-unit apartments.

215

216 Cross said that Taco Bell is very efficient when it comes to traffic in and out. Even though Cross  
217 does not see an issue with the increased traffic at the Triphammer stop signal, he recommends some  
218 type of engineering survey to take a look at the area.

219

220 Schleelein pointed out that the Triphammer intersection is difficult for pedestrians.

221

222 Cross continued by describing the current stormwater flow and how it relates to the existing lot.  
223 Most of the Cayuga Mall parking lot stormwater flow is in the direction of the existing Pizza Hut  
224 which drains under North Triphammer Road and eventually to the Shops at Ithaca where the Village  
225 has cited numerous flooding events. Cross also stated that the Northwest corner of that site will tend  
226 to pool up stormwater during a heavy rain. This pooling causes an issue with a sewer manhole which,  
227 on some occasions, will end up under water causing unnecessary volume to the sewer infrastructure.  
228 Cross was curious about the possible future 2<sup>nd</sup> building on that site.

229

230 Napierala stated that he is more than willing to work with Cross once site elevations are proposed.

231

232 Scott calculated the required parking spaces to be 26 but, reminded the Planning Board that they can  
233 reduce that number up to 25%.

234

### 235 **Trustee Report**

236 Baker gave a Trustee Report on the March 4<sup>th</sup> Board of Trustee meeting. Video can be seen on  
237 YouTube.

238

239 French and Baker reviewed the reactions of the Board of Trustees on the proposed Solar Law.

240

241 Baker and Schleelein introduced the possibility of having a joint meeting with the Board of Trustees  
242 once or twice a year.

243

### 244 **Other Business**

245 Baker discussed his meeting with Schleelein about possible changes to the Tree Law.

246 Some of the topics were:

- 247 1) Required Units
- 248 2) Commercial v. Residential
- 249 3) Keeping shrubs as Units

250 4) Variety of Species

251

252 There was some discussion about vacant properties and what the Village could do to encourage  
253 occupancy.

254

255 Scott reviewed upcoming events.

256

257 **Adjournment**

258

259 Schleelein moved to adjourn at 9:18. Seconded by Capogrossi.

260 Ayes: Baker, Capogrossi, Fournier, McCauley and Schleelein.

261 Nays: None

262

263 Minutes taken by: Michael Scott, CEO