



SARATOGA COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

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CHAIRMAN

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July 7, 2016

Susan Barden, Senior Planner
Saratoga Springs Zoning Board of Appeals
City Hall 474 Broadway
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

RE: SCPB Referral Review#16-84-Area Variance-Gottman

Variances (min. lot width from 60' to 20', min. lot size, side yard setbacks to "0") to effect the consolidation of three tax parcels/lots and construction of residential subdivision to construct 22 single family lots within five 4-unit townhouses and one 2-unit townhouse.

NYS Route 50 (Ballston Avenue) & Finley Street across from Price Chopper

Received from the City of Saratoga Springs Zoning Board of Appeals on April 25, 2016.

Reviewed by the Saratoga County Planning Board on May 19, 2016.

Decision: No Significant Countywide or Intercommunity Impact

Comment:

While the Saratoga County Planning Board recognized there to be no direct impact related to county issues through the issuance of the requested variances, members did make note of a few points it believed to be of more import to the local zoning board of appeals for its consideration:

1. While not part of the considerations under the balancing test, there is a general question to be asked and answered: what is the applicant's overall rationale for the variances being requested? It is not the direct purpose of a granted variance to make the use of a property more profitable. Minimum lot size in UR-2 zoning allows for 6,600 s.f. building lots as compared to lots of 1,702 s.f. being proposed through the variances (with the possibility of 5.7 units vs. 22 d.u. under UR-2 zoning).
2. It is quite evident that the immediate area around the subject land is a mix of uses, yet primarily of residential character predominated by UR-2 s.f. homes along Union Street, Spa Circle, and Lincoln Avenue. Immediate to the area is a large shopping plaza across Ballston Avenue and small office conversions from residential use. A determination should consider if the type of housing sought by the applicant (and the requested density) matches the neighborhood/district character.
3. The benefit sought by the applicant could be achieved without going to the zba for area variances, but it appears unlikely that the path of a zone change before the city council is being considered. The latter route would require a period of

waiting for the proposed changes identified in the Comp Plan (for a mix of commercial and residential uses for the subject area) and the UDO.

Before the proposed development plan goes forward to the city planning board (if the variances are granted) it may be advantageous for there to be a discussion between boards of the potential impact of the variances as noted above and on traffic (internal street movement and access to main roads) and stormwater management.



Michael Valentine, Senior Planner
Authorized Agent for Saratoga County

DISCLAIMER: Recommendations made by the Saratoga County Planning Board on referrals and subdivisions are based upon the receipt and review of a “full statement of such proposed action” provided directly to SCPB by the municipal referring agency as stated under General Municipal Law section 239. A determination of action is rendered by the SCPB based upon the completeness and accuracy of information presented by its staff. The SCPB cannot be accountable for a decision rendered through incomplete or inaccurate information received as part of the complete statement.