

**Official Minutes**  
**City of Niagara Falls Planning Board**  
**05-04-22**

A regular meeting of the City of Niagara Falls Planning Board was held on Wednesday, May 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:00PM in Council Chambers, City Hall, 745 Main Street, Niagara Falls, NY.

**CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Tony Palmer  
Joseph Sarkees  
Charles MacDougall  
Timothy Polka  
Ken Nossavage

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Eric Cooper, Director of Planning  
Josh Greene, Environmental Planner  
Sarina Deacon, Planning Clerk

**BOARD MEMBERS EXCUSED:**

Joseph Giaquinto  
Joyce Williams  
Shurron Cowart  
Ryan Dallavia

**ATTENDEES:**

Scott Constanzo  
Nick Gelo

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA – FOR THIS MEETING**

A motion to approve the agenda was made by MR. NOSSAVAGE and seconded by MR. MACDOUGALL

MOTION: UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM 2022-04-20**

A motion to approve the meeting minutes was made by MR. MACDOUGALL and seconded by MR. SARKEES

MOTION: UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**ACTION ITEMS**

1. Set Public Hearing Date: Cataract Steel, applicant for Costanzos Welding, owner of property at 128 22<sup>nd</sup> street (SBL: 159.11-1-4), proposes to subdivide existing parcel into 2 parcels.

MR. COOPER stated that Wednesday, June 1<sup>st</sup> 2022 would be the date. CHAIRPERSON PALMER asked the board members if the date was satisfactory, all were in agreement.

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MR. COOPER asked Scott Constanzo if the date was satisfactory. MR. CONSTANZO said he would have an associate present at the public hearing.

A motion to set the public hearing for Wednesday, June 1<sup>st</sup> was made by MR. POLKA and seconded by MR. SARKEES

MR. SARKEES	YES
MR. MACDOUGALL	YES
MR. POLKA	YES
MR. NOSSAVAGE	YES
CHAIRPERSON PALMER	YES

MOTION: UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

2. Encroachment Request: Cooper Signs, applicant for American Legion Post #1142, owner of property 8643 Buffalo Avenue (SBL: 161.17-2-32), requests projecting sign encroachment

Nick Gelo, associate for Cooper Signs, spoke to the board. MR. GELO explained that a sign was being replaced. MR. GELO stated the sign would not alter any characteristics of the neighborhood. MR. GELO stated the new sign would be smaller and would reduce the previous encroachment by several inches.

CHAIRPERSON PALMER asked the board if they had any questions.

A motion to make a recommendation was made by MR. NOSSAVAGE and seconded by MR. POLKA.

MR. SARKEES	YES
MR. MACDOUGALL	YES
MR. POLKA	YES
MR. NOSSAVAGE	YES
CHAIRPERSON PALMER	YES

MOTION: UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

CHAIRPERSON PALMER stated he was going to originally abstain from voting because he was a past member of the American Legion Post. CHAIRPERSON PALMER voted yes due to the lack of Planning Board members present at the meeting.

MR. COOPER gave the Conditions for MR. GELO to review. MR. GELO said the Conditions were satisfactory. MR. COOPER confirmed the applicant had up to 18 months to complete the project. MR. COOPER reminded MR. GELO that the applicant still had to go to the City Council for final approval.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**PLANNING REPORT / COMMUNICATIONS**

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The following report was passed out to the Planning Board members to review...

2015	Harriet Tubman Statue	Have been working to finalize a contract with the selected artist. My understanding from the Law Department is that terms have largely been agreed to and it should be before the City Council for approval soon. Once approved the contract provides timelines for certain milestones which we'll work with the artist to meet.
2015	Hyde Park Shoreline	The City received funding from Greenway a few years back. We've worked with Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper to submit an application for greater funding to construct more water quality improvement projects. We're waiting on an official decision.
2017	Old Stone Chimney	Working with Trowbridge Wolf Michaels to update our contract to finalize design. Funding was provided by Greenway. At this point just waiting to hear back from the consultant before moving further.
2018	South End Gateway Area	Reimbursement grant provided by ESD. Working to identify the feasibility of carrying this grant forward. Reimbursement is not favorable to the City. Seeing if partnering with developers is possible. Developers seem keen on 502 Niagara St – which the City is trying to understand if it has rights to.
2018	St. Mary's Streetscape	With Developer interest and approval, the City is working with the State to update and extend the Grant. The City is going to walk around the blocks to identify areas of clear need for this funding. Waiting for Economic Development to schedule that meeting.
2018	Niagara River Greenway Connecting Trails	Waiting for DOT to finalize design.
2020	DRI – Small Project Grant Fund	Making final changes to agreement with the State. Should be finalized shortly. Then we'll have kickoff meeting and try to identify consultant assistance.
2020	DRI – Streetscape and Main Street Plaza	Contract with State is finalized. Will be holding a kickoff meeting with the Departments. Then we'll work to find the consultant to do public engagement and design.
2020	DRI – Freedom Overlook Park	Contract with State is finalized. Will be holding a kickoff meeting with the Departments. Then we'll work to find the consultant to do public engagement and design.
2020 ?	John B. Daly Blvd Extension	Engineering is working with Stantec to prepare final design drawings.
2020	LaSalle Business District Streetscape	Working with Joy Keubler to finalize design package. Then we'll bid out for construction.
2020	LWRP	Committee is basically constituted. Will be reaching out week of 5/2 to ID dates for initial meeting. After that meeting, release the RFP and ID consultant.
2021	NiCo – Brownfield Cleanup	Working with Niagara County to do environmental site assessments of priority city owned properties. LaBella is the consultant, they are working on Phase 1's right now.

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2021	Walnut and Ferry Redesign	No update since December. Will follow up for timeline and current design.
2021	Gill Creek Floodplain Study	Working with USACE to map the floodplain along Gill Creek. Should be done by years end. USACE believes there may be the possibility to remove homes from the floodplain.
2022	American Rescue Plan	While we are not involved to heavily, we are working to ID a consultant to assist with managing these projects and to provide other expertise like Architectural and Engineering.
2022	Asphalt Art	Grant funding provided by Bloomberg Foundation to NFNHA. They've identified intersection of Main and Portage as priority and are working on design. Needs to be approved by Engineering and other depts. Still waiting on design documents from them.
2022	GObike – Chasm/Monteagle	GObike identified this intersection as a priority to connect the Highland neighborhood more safely to the Gorge. They've prepared a design which will narrow the street with paint. Needs approval of City Engineer.
2022	Cannabis Local Law	In anticipation of State regulations we've been preparing drafts of how the City might regulate the Cannabis industry. We are limited based upon guidance from the State.
2022	Data Center Local law	During this moratorium on construction/approval for these facilities we've been preparing a draft ordinance. Cannot provide an update at this time, but hopefully will be prepared soon.
2022	Beech Ave Community Park	Seven proposals were been submitted in response to the RFP issued on 03/04/22. The scoring committee is currently in the process of grading the proposals. City Council will vote on the possible award in early June.

MR. COOPER stated his office was trying to fill the position of Planner Two. MR. COOPER stated that two interviews had been set up.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by MR. POLKA

The meeting was adjourned at 6:08PM.