

**VILLAGE OF PITTSFORD
PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

Wednesday, January 19, 2022 @ 6:30 PM

PRESENT:

Chairperson:	Justin Vlietstra
Members:	Jo Anne Shannon David Marshall Susan Lhota John Kitchura
Attorney:	Mindy Zoghlin
Recording Secretary:	Dorothea M. Ciccarelli

CALL TO ORDER -

Motion by Chairperson Vlietstra, seconded by Member Marshall, to open the workshop meeting.

Vote: Vlietstra – yes; Shannon – yes; Lhota – yes; Marshall – yes; Kitchura -yes. *Motion Carried.*

Member Vlietstra stated he attended a pre-application conference with the applicant for 64 South Main St; Member Lhota also attended. The conference discussed relevant code and application requirements and the applicant sought input as to whether any additional application materials were needed.

Board members looked at the application for 64 South Main St. An air conditioner compressor and air handler are proposed in the front yard/side yard. There is an acoustic study that analyzes the noise of the new unit.

Acoustics, appearance, landscaping, permeable surface, above ground ductwork, are matters to discuss in the meeting.

The property has an impervious surface that exceeds what is permitted by the zoning code so they are applying for an area variance in addition to site plan approval. The Building Inspector documented the impervious surface of several church properties in the Village.

Board members discussed revising the meeting schedule. Members agreed to change meetings to the first Wednesday of the month at 6:30 PM starting in February. Workshop sessions will be scheduled as needed. The PZBA will meet week one of the month, HPB will meet week three, and the Trustees will meet weeks two and four.

Motion by Chairperson Vlietstra, seconded by Member Marshall, to open the regular meeting.

Vote: Vlietstra – yes; Shannon – yes; Lhota – yes; Marshall – yes; Kitchura -yes. *Motion Carried.*

Chairperson Vlietstra questioned the Board if there were any conflicts of interest disclosure.

Member Vlietstra stated there was a pre-application conference with the applicant for 64 S. Main St. He and Member Lhota attended and discussed relevant code, application requirements, and application completeness. Minutes of that discussion have been filed with the clerk.

Member Marshall stated he lives approximately across the street from 64 South Main but he can objectively review the application.

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64 South Main Street, St. Louis Church – Site Plan Review

Present: Casey Bernhard & Sally Schrecker

Casey Bernhard presented their proposal. He shared his drawings on the screen. They are replacing an air conditioner condenser unit from 1957 and installing an exterior air handler unit with ductwork connecting to the basement. There is only a small area under the front of the church that contains a basement. The lack of a basement is a key restriction driving the design. The air handling unit is currently in the basement and is a custom design. The new air handling unit will have ductwork connecting to the basement with the ducts concealed by a knee wall. This design will save cost and work with modern equipment. Room in the basement is very constrained which led to this design.

The basement will have ductwork entering through an existing entry point in the exterior wall. This saves cost by not having to cut into the exterior wall. The current air handling equipment will be removed. With current modern equipment, the basement does not have room for the air handling equipment. The only possibility to install an air handler in the basement would be to design a custom system which is cost-prohibitive. The proposed interior layout of the basement was presented to the board that shows the ductwork and mechanical equipment.

The exterior ductwork layout was presented. It will be concealed by a 3ft high knee wall. Two ducts are proposed: one is below ground, one is above ground, and there will be a metal grate installed above the ducts. One duct is an air supply to the building, and the other is an air return to the air handler.

Other entry points for the ductwork are not viable. There is an emergency exit that needs to be maintained that prevents routing the ductwork into the side of the building. Member Marshall inquired as to whether there was a way of merging ductwork and an egress door or moving the egress door. Mr. Bernhard stated merging an egress door into ductwork is not viable. The proposed duct size at the building entry is about 5ft wide and 6ft tall and fits in the proposed location but not the egress door location. The opening already exists in the proposed location. The width of the egress door is approximately 3ft wide.

Member Marshall asked if the air ducts can be completely installed below ground. That would eliminate the need for the knee wall to conceal them. They would need to be 5-6ft underground. Mr. Bernhard stated concerns over cost, drainage, proximity to a sewer line, stormwater pipe, and a natural gas pipe.

Member Marshall also inquired about the acoustics of the above-ground ducts. Mr. Bernhard stated the above-ground ducts would have minimal contribution to noise as air velocity is being kept low in the design.

The Board discussed the exterior condenser and air handler acoustics and alternatives. Mr. Bernhard stated the location of equipment is where it must be located and there are few options. Moving it further from the street/sidewalk is not practical. Potential changes to orientation were explored but would not be an improvement.

The acoustic study was discussed and reviewed. Mr. Bernhard stated the condenser unit has four variable speed fans and the acoustic study was based on full speed operation at 90F outside and sunny. The unit will be operating at a lower capacity much of the time so actual sound levels may be better than stated in the acoustic study. In the evening or other off-peak times, it may be running only

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one or two of the four fans and they may be running at half speed. During the day when it is in full speed operation, the road has heavy traffic that will be much louder than the condenser unit. The average sound level of the existing condenser unit is 58dBA at the sidewalk, the proposed one is 61dBA at the sidewalk which is an increase of 3dB and is noticeable to the human ear but it would most likely not be objectionable. Board members expressed concern that proposed sound levels are even higher at some higher frequencies. Will this make some type of particularly offensive shrill sound even if average sound levels are potentially reasonable?

Burying the ductwork was further discussed. Sally Schrecker stated drainage is problematic in the front yard and the current design accommodates drainage. Completely burying ductwork and digging deeper would make it likely to collect water.

Attorney Zoghlin stated there are a few factors that the board is required to consider in connection with the area variance application. The Board has to consider whether the Church can achieve the benefits of this proposal by some other feasible method. Without information on how much more it would cost to mitigate some of the raised concerns, it would be difficult for the Board makes a finding in the Church's favor with respect to this criteria. The Board will have to make a finding as to whether the proposal will have an adverse impact on the conditions in the neighborhood, particularly with respect to noise. Casey is an engineer with expertise in mechanical engineering issues but not acoustic engineering issues. If acoustical issues are of concern to the Board, it may make sense for the acoustical engineer to come in and answer some of the questions the Board has raised.

The Building Inspector stated his findings on impervious surface coverage of the Church. This Church has the least impervious surface of all Churches in the Village. The average is 73.2% impervious surface coverage and this property is well below that now. The impervious surface is only increasing by 0.3% or 0.6% but it is still well below every other church in the Village.

Motion by Chairperson Vlietstra, seconded by Member Marshall, to open the public hearing for both applications.

Vote: Vlietstra – yes; Lhota – yes; Shannon – yes; Marshall – yes; Kitchura -yes. *Motion Carried.*

No comments were received.

The Board discussed the construction of the ductwork and drainage with the applicant. There is one above-ground duct, one underground duct. Concrete is under the ductwork and it will collect water in a drain that will connect to the stormwater system. Does it make sense to have a base of gravel that will allow water to drain on the property? Mr. Bernhard stated he is concerned that this could cause issues with groundwater.

Sally Schrecker presented the landscaping plan. There is an approved landscaping plan from 2001 which is what you see today. Arborvitae are used to hide the existing condenser unit and this works well. We will replace the arborvitae in kind. Some different species are added for variety. Existing landscaping will be removed to install the new mechanical equipment units and the screening wall. The existing arborvitae are 20 years old. They are installed in a staggered zigzag fashion so you can't see between them. This planning pattern will increase the screening impact when they are small.

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The new equipment will be 6ft high and the existing equipment is about 4.5ft. The wall ends at the condenser unit. Vegetation is used to screen the air handler and condenser unit, not a wall or fence. The equipment would be visible initially until plants grow. A wall/fence of that height is less desirable than plants for screening. The short brick wall that screens the ductwork would match the church and blend into the background.

The Board stated they are interested in more information: are there any possible alternatives to the current design, additional sound and acoustics information, the feasibility of completely burying of the duct work, weather pervious gravel is a possibility under the ductwork as opposed to cement. The general concept of landscaping is reasonable, but the board would like to see more accurate drawings of the proposed landscaping plan.

Motion by Chairperson Vlietstra, seconded by Member Marshall, to leave public hearing open and continue discussions on February 2, 2022 @ 6:30PM.

Vote: Vlietstra – yes; Lhota – yes; Shannon – yes; Marshall – yes; Kitchura -yes. *Motion Carried.*

Motion by Chairperson Vlietstra, seconded by Member Marshall to adjourn the PZBA meeting.

Vote: Vlietstra – yes; Lhota – yes; Shannon – yes; Marshall – yes; Kitchura -yes. *Motion Carried.*

Dorothea M. Ciccarelli, Recording Secretary