

Members Present:

Richard Maggi – Vice Chair

Gary Geiger – Clerk

Vincenzo Ronghi – Alternate

Members Absent:

Aldo Mancini – Alternate

Doreen Prouty – Chairperson

Mr. Maggi opened the meeting at 6:08 PM:

A. 6:30 PM – Public Hearing – Variance – 57 High Street – Calabrese – Case #1981

Mr. Maggi opened this public hearing by reading the legal notice, explaining the procedures of the hearing and introducing the members of the Board. Sitting on this case were Vice Chair Richard Maggi, Clerk Gary Geiger and Alternate Vincenzo Ronghi.

Applicant Charles Calabrese was in attendance to present an application for a variance to allow of the construction of a duplex. Mr. Calabrese explained the lot is short on frontage and square footage, but the duplex will conform to all side yards and setbacks. The driveway will go around the side of the duplex to the rear of the property to allow for a lawn in the front. Mr. Calabrese provided the Board with over 50 signatures from nearby abutters that are in favor of the proposed duplex. Mr. Maggi informed the applicant that an incorrect address of 27 High Street was on each signed page. The Board was unable to accept the signatures with an incorrect address, and advised Mr. Calabrese he could submit new signatures with a correct address. Mr. Calabrese presented the Board with pictures of the current condition of the interior of the existing single family home. Mr. Maggi informed the applicant that the property has been vacant for more than two years, which is the time limit for reconstruction. Mr. Calabrese informed the Board that they allowed the owner of the property next door at 61 & 63 High Street to build a duplex, which has greater nonconformities than his lot. Mr. Calabrese was advised the owner of 61 & 63 High Street applied for a special permit, not a variance. Mr. Maggi discussed the three criteria the applicant would need to meet in order to receive a variance. Mr. Calabrese asked if he could also apply for a special permit; Mr. Maggi advised that he should seek counsel and could continue the public hearing to provide the applicant that opportunity.

Mr. Maggi continued the public hearing to June 10th at 7:45 PM.

Mr. Geiger asked about the old store that is on the property. Mr. Calabrese explained that he made an agreement with the Town to leave the store as it is and would build where the existing home is. Mr. Calabrese explained that he has no intention to improve the condition of the store.

Mr. Maggi opened the hearing to the public.

Stephen Buynicki, 22 Holland Drive, stated he is in favor of the petition. Mr. Buynicki owns property on Ottawa Street, has seen what Mr. Calabrese has done for the North End of Agawam,

and stated Mr. Calabrese does quality work.

David Chapman, 72 Cooley Street, is opposed to the granting of this petition. Mr. Chapman is a direct abutter, and is concerned about the neighborhood being rebuilt with duplexes that are too large for the lot size. Mr. Chapman stated the character of the neighborhood is being ruined.

David Cecchi, 29 Albert Street, Chair of the Historical Commission. Mr. Cecchi stated he submitted a document to the ZBA regarding the historic significance of the store, garage, and single family home. Mr. Cecchi explained the store is approximately 120 years old, and is one of the oldest structures in North Agawam. It has been determined by the Massachusetts Historical Commission to be eligible individually for the National Register of Historic Places. Mr. Cecchi also explained the local inventory is currently being updated to include all three structures on the property at 57 & 59 High Street as being historically significant. Mr. Cecchi is against the demolition of the three structures.

Mr. Maggi stated the Agawam Historical Commission provided a letter in regards to this case on May 7, 2019.

Mr. Calabrese stated he was advised by the Law Department that only the store was on the historical inventory. Mr. Cecchi answered the single family home and garage are currently on a draft update form, which is covered under the Demolition Delay Ordinance. Mr. Calabrese said he was never notified of this updated. Mr. Cecchi explained that a grant was received in August of 2018 to start the update of the local inventory. Mr. Cecchi had attempted to contact the realtor of 57 & 59 High Street to advise of the update. Mr. Calabrese said he had agreed with Mr. Cecchi to keep the store and garage; however, the house is in such disrepair that it cannot be rebuilt. Mr. Ronghi asked Mr. Calabrese to look into who will be the owner of the store if a new home is built on the property, and if there is a certain amount of frontage that is allocated to that store.

No one else spoke for or against.

Mr. Maggi advised Mr. Calabrese to consult with his own counsel, and continued this public hearing to June 10, 2019 at 7:45 PM.

B. Public Hearing Cont. – Chapter 40B – Wayfinders, Inc. – 586 Mill St. – Case #1978

Mr. Maggi reopened the public hearing. The applicant requested to continue the public hearing due to a ZBA voting member being unable to attend this evening's meeting.

Motion made by Mr. Maggi and seconded by Mr. Geiger to continue the public hearing to Monday, June 10, 2019 at 5:00 PM.

VOTE 3-0

C. Approval of Minutes

1. April 22, 2019

Mr. Maggi would like to table the approval of minutes to provide the Chair an opportunity to

weigh in on them.

Motion made by Mr. Geiger and seconded by Mr. Maggi to table approval of the April 22, 2019 minutes to the next meeting.

VOTE 3-0

D. Discussion of any topics that the Chair did no reasonably anticipate – None

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM

Submitted by Amanda Boissonneault