

**PLANNING BOARD**

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NEW BEDFORD
 2/22/21
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 CITY CLERK

CITY OF NEW BEDFORD

JONATHAN F. MITCHELL, MAYOR

NOTICE OF DECISION

Case Number: 21-02				
Request Type: Site Plan Review				
Address: 947 & 965 Church Street				
Zoning: Industrial A				
Recorded Owners: Chaffee Church Properties LLC				
Owner Address: 965 Church Street, New Bedford, MA 02745				
Applicant: Child & Family Services				
Applicant Address: 3057 Acushnet Avenue, New Bedford MA 02745				
Application Submittal Date		Public Hearing Date(s)		Decision Date
December 22, 2020		January 13, 2021, February 10, 2021		February 10, 2021
Assessor's Plot Number	Lot Number(s)	Book Number	Page Number	Certificate Number
130G	50, 65, 72	1108	90	

Case #21-02: 947 & 965 Church Street – Request by applicant for **Site Plan Review** for improvements to the parking lot and exterior and interior renovations to the building for new offices, clinical spaces, and a screened outdoor area at 947 & 965 Church Street (Map: 130G Lots: 50, 65, & 72) a 2.7± acre site in an Industrial A zoned district. Owner: Chaffee Church Properties, LLC (965 Church, Street New Bedford, MA). Applicant: Child and Family Services (3057 Acushnet Avenue, New Bedford, MA).

Action: GRANTED, WITH CONDITIONS, as described in section four (4).

A copy of this decision was filed with the City Clerk of the City of New Bedford on February 22, 2021. Any person aggrieved by this decision for Site Plan Approval has twenty (20) days to appeal the decision in accordance with the procedures set forth in Section 8 of Chapter 40A of the General Laws of Massachusetts and Section 5490B of the City of New Bedford Site Plan Review Ordinance.

2/22/2021

Date

Kathryn Duff, Chair
 City of New Bedford Planning Board

1) APPLICATION SUMMARY

Request by applicant for **Site Plan Review** for improvements to the parking lot and exterior and interior renovations to the building for new offices, clinical spaces, and a screened outdoor area at 947 & 965 Church Street (Map: 130G Lots: 50, 65, & 72) a 2.7± acre site in an Industrial A zoned district. Owner: Chaffee Church Properties, LLC (965 Church, Street New Bedford, MA). Applicant: Child and Family Services (3057 Acushnet Avenue, New Bedford, MA).

2) MATERIALS REVIEWED BY THE PLANNING BOARD

Plans Considered to be Part of the Application

The site plan submission is shown as "Site Plan: 947 & 965 Church Street New Bedford, Massachusetts" dated 11/2/2020. The applicant provided and updated version of these plans dated 1-12-2021. Plans were prepared by Zenith Consulting Engineers in Lakeville, MA, Rene L. Gagnon, PE and by Medcom Architecture Group in Bourne, MA, Gregory Siroonian, RA. The plan set consists of the following sheets:

- Sheet C Cover Sheet, with locus plan and legend
- Sheet X Existing Conditions Plan
- Sheet L Layout Plan
- Sheet G Grading and Drainage Plan
- Sheet V Landscaping Plan
- Sheet E1 Erosion Control Plan
- Sheet E2 Erosion Control Details
- Sheet D Site Details
- Sheet Ex1.1 Existing First Floor
- Sheet Ex1.2 Existing Mezzanine Floor
- Sheet Ex2.1 Existing Elevations
- Sheet A1.1 First Floor Plan
- Sheet A1.2 Mezzanine Floor Plan
- Sheet A2.1 Exterior Elevations
- Sheet Lt1.1 Site Lighting Plan

Other Documents and Supporting Materials

- ❑ Department of City Planning Staff Report dated February 4, 2021
- ❑ Site Plan Review Application, stamped on December 22, 2020
- ❑ Expand Project Narrative submitted on December 22, 2020
- ❑ November 12, 2020 Zoning Board of Appeals Decision for Case #4427
- ❑ Transportation Impact Assessment, dated January, 2021
- ❑ Department of Public Infrastructure Comment Memo, dated February 3, 2021
- ❑ Traffic Commission Comment Memo, dated February 4, 2021

3) DISCUSSION

Board members Kathryn Duff, Shayne Trimbell, Peter Cruz, Kamile Khazan, and Alexander Kalife attended the February 10, 2021 online meeting. Staff Planner Michael McCarthy and Preservation Planner Anne Louro were also present during the discussion. Board member Kamile Khazan was temporarily absent at the time of the vote due to technical difficulties.

Case #21-02 was heard as part of old business, as it was continued from the January 13, 2021 meeting.

After opening the meeting, Chair Duff asked if anyone was present to speak on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Greg Siroonian of Medcom Architecture Group introduced himself and Ms. Anne Sampaio and Mr. James Mazur of Child

& Family Services. Mr. Siroonian shared the proposed floor plan and described interior renovations planned for the building at 965 Church Street. Ms. Sampaio described the types of behavioral health programming that would be offered at the new facility by Child & Family Services, which would include a 12-bed Community Based Acute Treatment (CBAT) unit for children who are not in need of an in-patient treatment, a Community Crisis Stabilization (CSS) unit for adults referred from the Emergency Services program who are not in need of in-patient treatment, Crisis Center/Emergency Services program for the evaluation of adults who are in crisis, and a counseling center for regular appointments. Ms. Sampaio noted that both the CBAT and CSS units would have outdoor activity areas.

Mr. Siroonian added that the Crisis Center would have its own entrance on the south side of the building, and the counseling center would have an entrance on the front of the building on Church Street.

Mr. Siroonian then introduced Mr. Jamie Bissonnette of Zenith Consulting Engineers. Mr. Bissonnette presented the civil engineering plans, describing the proposed site layout and construction process for the exterior renovations, which include landscape improvements and the creation of a new parking area to add 131 spaces.

Chair Duff asked Mr. Bissonnette about the plans for landscaping around the building at 947 Church Street. Mr. Mazur said that a lawn would be added to the north and west sides of the lot surrounding the building up to the existing chain link fence. Mr. Bissonnette confirmed that all existing pavement in this area would be removed.

Board Member Trimbell asked why the applicant proposed to add parallel parking spaces along the edge of the lot on Chaffee Street. Mr. Mazur said that these spaces would allow community-based staff to conveniently access the building. Mr. Bissonnette added that the goal was to get 130 parking spaces on site.

Chair Duff asked for more details about the exterior building improvements proposed. Mr. Siroonian described the plans for repairing existing metal siding, adding new windows and doors, and adding new vertical metal paneling to the rear of the building. He added that the doors for the CBAT unit are would be "sally ports" which include an alarmed double door for each entrance vestibule.

Chair Duff asked about the STC rating on the exterior wall and Mr. Siroonian confirmed it was 54.

Chair Duff asked about the plan for fire egress from the children's section of the facility. Mr. Siroonian noted the door to the outside activity on the north side of the building would act as an emergency exit. Mr. Mazur added that the windows in the children's area would be operational could offer additional egress points.

Chair Duff asked what material would be used for fencing for the outdoor activity areas. Mr. Siroonian said that a vinyl fence would be used and that the type of fencing would have no ledges or footholds to prevent climbing.

Chair Duff asked about the location of bike racks and public transportation access to the site. Mr. Bissonnette responded that bike racks would be placed at the northeast corner of the building and on the southside by the ambulance entrance. Mr. Mazur responded that there is a bus stop on the corner of Chaffee and Church Street, and Ms. Sampaio noted that under 10 percent of their clients use public transportation.

Chair Duff asked Mr. Bissonnette to describe the perimeter improvements being made to the site. Mr. Bissonnette detailed the landscape improvements and sidewalks being added to the site. He also discussed the comments made by DPI in the memo regarding the use of green space on site for stormwater drainage. Mr. Bissonnette added that the dumpster on site would be screened behind a chain link fence with vinyl slats and the dumpster would be emptied by a front-loading trash truck.

Chair Duff asked about the location of mechanical systems on site. Mr. Siroonian responded that most of the equipment would be inside the building in the mezzanine, but that condensers would be outside on the north side of the building. Mr. Bissonnette added that a backup generator would be there as well. Chair Duff commented that this area would have to be screened and the applicant team confirmed that it would be.

Chair Duff commented that there was no walkway or sidewalk along Chaffee Street. Mr. Bissonnette responded that the layout plans left ample room along Chaffee Street should the city want to add a sidewalk in the future and that the walkway in front of the building extends back to the parking area on Chaffee Street to provide access.

Board member Cruz asked why curbing wasn't extended behind the building along Chaffee Street and Tarkiln Hill Place. Mr. Bissonnette responded that this was done to balance costs and to add improvements to the areas that most needed them. Mr. Mazur added that the walkway along the building funnels pedestrians to Church Street, where public transportation stops and bike lanes are.

Board member Cruz asked why the parking spaces had been reduced to 8 and 8.5 feet from the City standard of 9 feet wide. Mr. Bissonnette responded that this was done because the site is not going to have commercial spaces so there will not be people loading products in or out of their car and that the width of 8.5 feet should be adequate and comply with ADA requirements. Chair Duff commented that children would be brought to the site. After discussion, Mr. Bissonnette agreed that the parking spaces in the east parking area and adjacent to the south side of the building would be to the City's standards.

Board member Cruz asked for clarification about roof drainage system and Mr. Bissonnette provided details.

Board member Cruz asked for details about erosion control during construction. Mr. Bissonnette said that due to the size of the project, they are required to perform weekly erosion control inspections and could adjust the methods being used if a problem arose. Mr. Bissonnette confirmed that no hay bales would be used.

Board member Trimbell asked for more details about the style and capacity of the bike racks on site. Mr. Bissonnette said that each rack would accommodate five bikes and that racks would be metal hoop-style racks.

Chair Duff read into the record an opposition letter from John Sulyma Electric Inc. of 1203 Chaffee Street, which detailed concerns related to emergency vehicle access, traffic, noise, and light generated by the facility. Mr. Siroonian responded to the comments saying that a traffic study had been conducted and it demonstrated no adverse impacts. Mr. Mazur and Mr. Bissonnette confirmed that there was adequate space for fire trucks access the site from front to back.

Board member Khazan asked for clarification regarding hours of access for patients staying at the facility. Ms. Sampaio responded that once people are admitted, they are there until discharge and there is no coming and going.

Chair Duff opened the meeting to comments from members of the public in attendance. Ms. Kirsten Bendiksen of Reidar's Gear and Marine Supply asked for confirmation the ambulances would not be coming to the facility at full speed with lights and sirens on. Mr. Siroonian confirmed that they would not.

Attorney John Markey spoke on behalf of Maria and Jack Silvia of Interstate Rental, an abutting neighbor. Mr. Markey expressed concern that the noise generated by industrial abutters would be detrimental to the patients in the facility and that adding 130 parking spaces would indeed increase traffic.

Ms. Sampaio responded that much of the parking on site was for staff, and that their shifts were staggered, so there will not be one time where traffic is related to a shift change. She added that appointments for the counseling center were staggered and would be busiest throughout the afternoon.

Chair Duff asked the applicant to describe why they selected this site. Mr. Mazur responded that it the size and location near Route 140 provided criteria they were looking for in a new location. Mr. Mazur and Ms. Sampaio also noted that at their current locations in the city, Child & Family Services coexists with other businesses and residential neighbors without issue.

Maria Silvia of 1259 Chaffee Street commented that she was concerned that surrounding industrial neighbors created an environment that was not suitable for children in crisis. Mr. Mazur responded that the recent ZBA decision conditioned that Child & Family Services acknowledge that it is voluntarily coming into an environment that involves large machinery and heavy truck traffic.

Mr. John Sulyma of 1203 Chaffee Street asked why the applicant was choosing to consolidate their operations during the pandemic. Ms. Sampaio said that their current buildings were not utilized at the same time, so combining operations would be a more efficient use of their resources. Ms. Sampaio added that Child & Family Services had adapted to the pandemic and began to use telehealth technology for counseling.

Mr. Sulyma commented that the bus stop serving this location was across Church Street from the facility, requiring any visitors to cross Church Street and Chaffee Street. Board member Trimbell responded that the bus stop served a route that traveled north and that the stop couldn't be moved. Chair Duff noted that moving bus stops was out of the purview of the Planning Board.

4) DECISION

Board Member Trimbell made the motion, seconded by Mr. Cruz to approve **Case #21-02: 947 & 965 Church Street – Request by applicant for **Site Plan Review** for improvements to the parking lot and exterior and interior renovations to the building for new offices, clinical spaces, and a screened outdoor area at 947 & 965 Church Street (Map: 130G Lots: 50, 65, & 72) a 2.7± acre site in an Industrial A zoned district. Owner: Chaffee Church Properties, LLC (965 Church, Street New Bedford, MA). Applicant: Child and Family Services (3057 Acushnet Avenue, New Bedford, MA).**

Specific conditions:

1. The width of parking spaces in the east and south parking areas adjacent to the building and all ADA spaces shall be increased to 9 feet.
2. Ambulances will be directed to enter the site at the rear entrance, off Tarkiln Hill Place.
3. Light poles in the center of the parking area shall be protected from vehicular accidents.
4. The applicant shall review the February 3, 2021 memo from the Department of Public Infrastructure and obtain all required permits and sign offs requested before commencing construction.
5. Stormwater runoff mitigations and self-contained stormwater measures shall be incorporated into the design, as recommended by the Department of Public Infrastructure memo dated February 3, 2021. Revised stormwater management and drainage plans must be approved by Department of Public Infrastructure prior to the start of construction.
6. Trees shall be planted within the grass ribbon area of sidewalk layout on Church Street, Tarkiln Hill Place, and Chaffee Street in accordance with the specifications outlined in the February 3, 2021 memo from the Department of Public Infrastructure.

7. "No parking" signs shall be installed on Chaffee Street for 100 feet easterly from Tarkiln Hill Place, and on Tarkiln Hill Place for 50 feet southerly from Chaffe Street. The applicant must submit a petition to the Traffic Commission before installing these signs.
8. The applicant shall coordinate with the Department of Public Infrastructure to ensure that revised plans for driveway entrances conform to City construction standards.
9. The applicant must contact the Department of Public Infrastructure's Engineering Division to verify the legal address that corresponds to the door being used for the main entrance prior to using or advertising the current address.
10. All site lighting shall be dimmed from one hour after sunset to one hour prior to sunrise.

General conditions:

11. The project shall be completed according to the plans, notes, reports, and specifications submitted for consideration and final approval by the Planning Board.
12. The applicant shall abide by all conditions outlined in the previous decision issued by the Zoning Board of Appeals in case #4427.
13. The project shall be undertaken in a manner consistent with the Department of Public Infrastructure memo dated February 3, 2021 and the Traffic Commission memo dated February 2, 2021.
14. The applicant shall submit a final plan set to the Department of Public Infrastructure, which reflects all revisions made prior to the start of construction and/or the issuance of any permits.
15. The applicant shall submit final plan revisions to the Department of City Planning in the following formats: one (1) -11" x 17" Plan Set and one (1) CD or USB with Plan Set in PDF format and shall ensure that these same plans are properly submitted to the Department of Inspectional Services.
16. The applicant shall ensure a copy of the Notice of Decision bearing the certification of the city of New Bedford City Clerk, signifying no appeal has been made against the project's approval, be recorded at the Registry of Deeds.
17. The applicant shall ensure that a copy of the recorded decision be provided for the Department of City Planning Case file folder.
18. The applicant shall present any proposed modification from the approved plans for consideration to the Director of City Planning for determination as to whether the modified plan must return before this Board for further review.
19. The rights authorized by the granted approval must be exercised by issuance of a Building Permit by the Department of Inspectional Services and acted upon within one year from the date the decision was granted, or they will lapse.
20. The developer and site contractor must schedule a pre-construction meeting with the Department of Public Infrastructure's Assistant City Engineer prior to the start of construction.


The motion being properly made and seconded, the Chair called for a roll call vote which was taken and unanimously approved four (4) to zero (0).

Board Chair Duff – Yes
Board Member Trimbell – Yes

Board Member Kalife – Yes
Board Member Cruz – Yes

Filed with the City Clerk on:

2/22/2021



Date

Kathryn Duff, Chair
City of New Bedford Planning Board