

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
3-28-22 @ 6:00 P.M.

Board Members: Michael Bagley, Chairman
Sally Beale (ABSENT)
Monica Hazelwood-Frisby
Ifetayo Tun
Allen Queen

Staff: Philip Vannoorbeeck, Town Manager; Jennifer Daniel, Town Clerk

Also Present:

Chairman Bagley called the Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting to order.

Mr. Jake Allman thanked the Board for letting him serve with them, and advised he had to step down.

*NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
TOWN OF BLACKSTONE
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS*

The Town of Blackstone Board of Zoning Appeals shall hold a Public Hearing on March 28, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in the Blackstone Town Council Chambers, 100 W. Elm Street, Blackstone, Virginia. Town Garage, LLC is the applicant for a variance to Section 13-1.2 of the Blackstone Zoning Ordinance. The request, if granted, would permit 1.0 off street parking spaces per dwelling unit rather than the 2.0 spaces currently required. The variance request specifically applies to property known as Nottoway County Tax Map Number 50A25-1-27-1 through 6 and a portion of lots 7 through 12. This property is located at 519 Church Street and is currently zoned B-G, General Business. The Board of Zoning Appeals may approve this request following this public hearing. Any individual desiring to address the board should attend the public hearing at the above stated date and time.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said this request was for the old Town Shop property at 519 Church Street. He said there would be one bedroom apartments constructed in this building, and Town Garage, LLC is requesting a variance for parking, from 2 parking spaces to 1 per unit. He said they have asked for similar requests in the past. He said this would only apply to one bedroom apartments.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Planning Commission would meet tonight after this meeting. He said they would be considering the location of up to 30 apartments. He said the Town Shop is zoned General Business.

Mr. Kris Haase said they were planning on 27 one bedroom units.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said they could put a hotel in the building, but Mr. McCormack did not want this to be described as a hotel. He said when the Town sold the building to Mr. McCormack, there was discussion of a brewery, and that still may be in the plan.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the area on College Avenue where the water tank is being demolished, the upper part was leased to Mr. McCormack for parking for the restaurant.

Board Member Frisby asked about overflow parking. She said with one parking space, people may have company or guests staying over. Manager Vannoorbeeck said onsite, they will have to provide 27 parking spaces for 27 units, if approved.

Mr. Haase believed they had enough room for 27 parking spaces, plus parking for the restaurant, and utilize the side street for overflow parking.

Chairman Bagley opened the Public Hearing and asked if there was anyone here to speak for or against the variance request.

Ms. Kris Haase said he was here representing Mr. John David McCormack with Waukeshaw, Inc., and his property Town Garage. He said the property is now being developed on paper and includes 27 one bedroom apartments. He said there would be a small restaurant there, owner occupied, or maybe even leased.

Board Member Tun said that is a residential neighborhood and did not want to see parking on the streets in the area. She wanted to keep the residential area residential, with this project being self-contained. She said she would like to see overflow parking for the apartments. Mr. Haase said there was no intent to have on street parking, and the lot across the street would allow for large amounts of parking, if need be. He said he was the current contractor working on this.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said if there is on street parking, the Town may have to post signs. He said what is being proposed could not be rented by the night or two nights, that would be considered a hotel, and that is not what is wanted.

Chairman Bagley was concerned if the parking was granted, then they would change to something else. Mr. Haase said Mr. McCormack has always done what he said, and worked with Towns, he has a successful track record. He added this had been changing because of the numbers, but is now worked out.

Board Member Frisby said she liked 1.5 parking spaces. She said just because it is one bedroom, does not mean there won't be two adults living there, and that may include two cars.

Board Member Queen said if someone is looking to rent a place, they should be told there is only one parking space available, and will know beforehand.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said these apartments are not intended for people living in Blackstone, they are more towards FASTC. Mr. Haase replied, that is correct.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the rates would be based on per diem, not a typical monthly rent. He added, for the most part, the people renting may not have a vehicle.

Ms. Haase said their first short stay stays full, it has been very successful, which is why they are building Blackstone II. He said they were pushing for the 1-1 parking because they have historic data that it will work, it will keep the cost down and could keep the land open for another possible renovation or new development later.

Board Member Tun said her concern was with Blackstone overall, are we going to have parking overflow into the streets and neighborhoods. She said she did not want people coming to their homes and others are parked there. Mr. Haase believed that would come with site plan approval.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said they are requesting the same parking regulations as a hotel, but this will not be a hotel.

Mr. Haase said the apartments they are building are small, like efficiencies.

A member from the audience asked about handicap parking. Manager Vannoorbeeck said that would be included in the site plan, and there are a certain number that have to be provided.

Chairman Bagley closed the Public Hearing.

Board Member Frisby made a motion to approve the parking request for 1.5 spaces. The motion was seconded by Board Member Tun.

Mr. Tom Watkins asked if the 1.5 parking spaces were on site. Manager Vannoorbeeck replied yes.

Mr. Haase asked the Board if they realized how big the overflow parking area was, it is very large.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said when the rezoning was done for the property off of College Avenue, a 50' setback was established.

Mr. Haase said they chose 27 apartments because the math has been done, and they know it will work, plus parking for the brewery and overflow parking would be across the street.

Board Member Frisby asked what the maximum number of parking spaces could be on site with the units. Mr. Haase replied, about 45 parking spaces, so with the 1-1 if gives everybody a place to park, then 10-12 parking spaces for the brewery, then across the street it could park 60 vehicles if that is what is needed, and would be done on a site plan.

Board Member Frisby explained, if they are only expecting one person parking, then there is extra parking for the units, and the 1.5 would work. She said with these units being built for FASTC, they either have no car or one car. She said with the 1.5 parking spaces, the Board's request would be met, and there would still be parking for the brewery.

Clerk Daniel asked if the parking spaces would be designated for the units. Mr. Haase replied, it could absolutely be like that. Board Member Frisby said they if they were not designated, then people could park there.

Mr. Haase said if they didn't have the parking lot across the street, they would not be here tonight.

Chairman Bagley said it was still eating at him about the parking. Manager Vannoorbeeck said they definitively had to have the parking on site. He said when Council approved selling this property, there was a lease agreement for a restaurant to use the property across the street.

Board Member Frisby said these are being built for FASTC, but their consideration has to be for this area. She said if somebody does live here, and can afford the apartment, why should they be denied.

VOTE:

Chairman Bagley:	Aye
Board Member Queen:	Aye
Board Member Tun:	Aye
Board Member Hazelwood-Frisby:	Aye
Board Member Beale:	Absent

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Town has applied and received a \$450,000.00 Grant to build Workforce Housing. He said the Commonwealth Regional Council offered this grant and Habitat for Humanity received \$1 Million. He said this grant money would be used to build and sell homes.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said there are three properties in the Town's inventory. He said Southside Outreach owns a piece of property at the intersection of Hurt and Broad Street, and the Town works closely with them. He asked the Board if they would consider splitting the lot in half, to accommodate two houses. He said lots are supposed to be 10,000 square feet, and by splitting these lots they would be roughly 7,600 square feet each.

Board Member Frisby asked if this would set a precedent. Manager Vannoorbeeck replied yes.

A member from the audience asked if these homes would be income based. Manager Vannoorbeeck replied yes, but they do not have to be impoverished to qualify.

Board Member Queen believed this was a good idea.

Clerk Daniel asked if one house would face Hurt Street and the other would face Broad Street. Manager Vannoorbeeck replied yes.

There being no additional business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

Michael L. Bagley CHAIRMAN
OF THE BLACKSTONE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

August 28, 2023 APPROVED AND ADOPTED

Jennifer S Daniel TOWN CLERK
OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA