

**CITY OF ESSEX JUNCTION  
DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
FEBRUARY 20, 2025  
FINAL – APPROVED MARCH 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2025**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** John Alden, Chair; Maggie Massey, Vice-Chair; Luke Brockmeier; Cristin Gildea; Dylan Zwicky

**ADMINISTRATION:** Michael Giguere, City Planner

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Michael Alvanos, Bethany Clark, Diane Clemens, Kris McEwing, Tim Mack

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Alden called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Mr. Giguere noted that this is a hybrid meeting, and that staff are present at 6 Lincoln Street to ensure public participation. While efforts will be made to accommodate remote public participants, in-person participation is the only legally mandated form of public participation. If there are technical difficulties the meeting may be paused and resumed on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025. All votes that are not unanimous will be done via roll call.

**2. ADDITIONS OR AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA**

None.

**3. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**

None.

**4. MINUTES**

**a. Regular Meeting – November 21, 2024**

**JOHN ALDEN made a motion, seconded by DYLAN ZWICKY, to approve the minutes of November 21, 2024, with changes. Motion passed 5-0.**

**Changes:**

-Mr. Giguere said that, in November, an applicant requested to have both conceptual and final site plan approval. The intention of the board was to continue the public hearing, however the public hearing was closed. Staff has re-warned the public hearing for final approval in December. The minutes must reflect what was spoken. Other corrections to this draft were made on December 19, 2024.

**b. Regular Meeting- December 19, 2024**

**DYLAN ZWICKY made a motion, seconded by MAGGIE MASSEY, to approve the minutes of December 19, 2024, with changes. Motion passed 5-0.**

**Changes:**

-On page two, the spelling of Mr. Sevcik’s name is to be corrected.

-On page four, Mr. Greg is to be changed to read to Mr. Dixon.

-On page four, a grammatical correction is to be made to Dylan Zwicky’s motion moving the word “by” in front of “John Alden”.

**5. PUBLIC MEETING**

**a. Conceptual site plan to add three dwelling units to an existing three-story mixed-use building with two dwelling units and commercial space at 34 Park Street in the Village Center District by Park Street Ventures, LLC, owner**

Mr. Alden swore in all individuals who intended to speak during this meeting under the following oath: “I hereby swear that the evidence I give in the cause under consideration shall be the whole truth, nothing but the truth so help me God or under the pains and penalties of perjury.”

Mr. Alvanos, of JRMA Design Studio, Mr. McEwing and Mr. Mack of Park Street Ventures, presented. Mr. Alvanos said that this is an existing building where three additional residential units will be added to the upper level. These include a studio, lofted one-bedroom and a one-bedroom apartment. The applicant would like to only do interior renovations. Two new windows will be on the building’s exterior. Mr. Alden said that this is the former lumber building, above East Coast Printing. He said that it is likely a historic building. He said that this is a good chance to add housing in this neighborhood. Ms. Gildea asked if there is any tenant parking. The applicant stated that there is sufficient parking and Mr. Giguere said that there is no parking requirements in the Village Center District. Mr. Alden suggested including parking management in the site plan in the future. Mr. Brockmeier said the mannequin at Karen’s Kloset helps to slow down drivers and that he would like to see how this building can help to make the area more walkable. Ms. Gildea expressed safety concerns about living above a printing business regarding odor and noise. She also expressed concern about the mitigation of the hardware store storage that was previously in the space. Mr. Alden said that this is outside the scope of the DRB. This application will also be subject to the Vermont Energy Code.

Mr. Alden asked staff if adding additional residential units will require a full site upgrade. Mr. Giguere said that the LDC will require landscaping and lighting plans as well as temporary bike parking. He said that this is an opportunity for development to contribute to public betterment, but also questioned the applicability of some requirements, such as the street tree requirement. The DRB would be responsible for determining the applicability of the LDC requirements in this case. Mr. Alden said that the most that he could see was some type of pro-rated requirement based on the size of the change in use. He said that improvements are possible for the pedestrian experience in this area, prorated with the size of the space that is changed in use. Mr. Mack said that he agrees on some level with the bike parking and said that a lighting plan can be developed with existing lighting. Mr. Alden said that the current building is fully operational and that he would only be interested in what affects the new apartments. He said that staff may have a lighting plan on file. Mr. Alden said that all elements are not required to be in place for a conceptual application. He said that the DRB is more concerned with the exterior plans than interior, as this is their jurisdiction. Waivers for bike parking were discussed, and it was determined that there is a waiver for less than six units. Mr. Brockmeier said that the bike parking may be used by people at other buildings, which would serve to promote this building as well.

Mr. Alden requested public comment. Ms. Clemens said that it would be good for this building to come to code since they are updating and have sufficient bike parking for the entire building. She asked where the snow removal for the building would be and noted that snow piles can make parking difficult. She suggested that the Planning Commission discuss retrofits in the future. She suggested that the DRB require some greenery in the front of the building. Mr. Alden said that the streetscape has just been done with the Crescent Connector and said that if this was not done then than he does not see a need to do so.

Mr. Alden said that it is important to know if this site currently meets regulatory requirements prior to making any decisions.

**MAGGIE MASSEY made a motion, seconded by DYLAN ZWICKY, to close the public meeting. Motion passed 5-0.**

**6. OTHER DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD ITEMS**

Mr. Giguere said that the Land Development Code updates have been warned by the City Council for a public hearing next week. Mr. Alden asked if a joint meeting would be scheduled with the Planning Commission, and said that he would like to see one set up.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

**DYLAN ZWICKY made a motion, seconded by LUKE BROCKMEIER, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 5-0 at 7:36 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Darby Mayville