

Bakery to expand operation to provide sit-down café

Plan passes despite neighbors opposition to parking issues

By Sam Bari

Pizza and pastry lovers will soon be able to enjoy their baked goods on the spot at the Village Hearth Bakery at the corner of Watson Avenue and North Main Road. A development plan to expand the bakery received a unanimous nod of approval from the Zoning Board of Review at its July 22 meeting.

Board member Richard Boren read the motion to grant a change in use for the bakery from a customary home occupation to a commercial restaurant use with 35 seats maximum. Relief for the plan included a waiver of the required 20,000 sq. feet to 7,000 sq. feet, parking relief for eight spaces and a closing time of 8 p.m.

Until recently, bakers Doriana Carella and Andrea Colognese lived on the premises and had a mixed-use permit. The former house portion of the building will be used for restaurant seating, according to the plan. The food offerings would stay the same. "We want to give people the option to sit down," Carella said.

Colognese explained that the house footprint and structure would remain the same, with changes to the door and windows, opening up onto a deck. Parking spaces presently in front of the bakery would be eliminated, with landscaping in their place.

"Cars backing up is a problem," he said.

Boren asked about pizza night and parking. "I realize it's one day, but there could be as many as 15 cars in an hour."

Carella explained that delivery would be offered, so the pressure for parking would be lightened.

Zoning official Fred Brown said he spoke with the town planner about parking and the proposed infrastructure changes. Lisa Bryer told him the number of curb cuts on the property would be limited.

The Planning Commission would not endorse a plan that would provide parallel parking, he added.

The owner of the house across the street from the bakery stood up to oppose the project. Richard Goularte said he worried about losing tenants due to possible parking problems and noise.

Donald Hunt of Grinnell Street asked how a 20,000 sq. foot minimum requirement could be reduced to 7,000 sq. feet. "That's not my issue, that's the town's issue. Address it," he said.

Roger Lavalley of Luther Street said he had nothing against free enterprise, but was more concerned about the town of Jamestown and the maximization of property. "It's just one more cut for Jamestown. It will deteriorate," he said. "That area is so congested. No one has talked about school children."

A number of other residents spoke in support and praise of the expansion plan.



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Photo by Andrea von Hohenleiten

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