

November 30, 2022

Mr. Brian Thomas, AICP - Commissioner Urban and Economic Development City of Utica 1 Kennedy Plaza Utica, New York 13502

Commissioner Thomas,

On November 18, 2022 Stewart's received correspondence directing Stewart's to obtain three area variances for the proposed Site Plan at 2632 and 2634 Genesee Street. As you are already familiar, there is a two-family residence at 2632 Genesee St and the former Raspberries Restaurant located at 2634 Genesee St. The three enumerated variances are:

- 1. Maximum length of façade (60' is the maximum),
- 2. Maximum lot width (100' is the maximum), and;
- 3. Front Yard Setback (Average)

Stewart's has attached Balancing Test narratives for each of the required variances. However, in the discussion about the granting variances which will enable the overall construction there are elements not tied specifically to the requested relief but to the overall construction of the project. These items are covered under the Balancing Test question which asks if the application will create "an undesirable change in neighborhood character or to nearby properties".

Stewart's offers the following professional guidance regarding the proposed redevelopment of the proposed Site Plan:

- FOIL response for neighbor complaints and Code Enforcement violations for the two Stewart's located at 1210 Culver Ave and 425 Court St,
- State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO): letter of No Adverse Impact dated September 30, 2022,
- Hudson Cultural: letter indicating no property involved in the project is eligible for National Register of Historic Places dated August 25, 2022,
- Letter from CPL dated October 13, 2022 indicating the project adheres to the intent of the zoning district for "site placement, scale, massing and materiality",
- Creighton Manning Engineering (CME) Traffic Improvement Study (TIS) dated August 23, 2022 and supplement dated August 29, 2022
  - This traffic study was developed with three distinct elements of the City's ordinance which regulate vehicular and heavy truck traffic along with regulating prohibitive movements on certain intersection throughout the City. These sections are: §2-16-370, §2-16-373, and §2-16-374.



The result of the CME report shows there will be no degradation in the Level of Service (LOS) for the intersection's operation, see pasted image below.

Intersection		ō	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour		
		Control	2022 Existing	2023 No-Build	2023 Build	2022 Existing	2023 No-Build	2023 Build
Genesee Street/Woodlawn Avenue		S						
Genesee Street EB	LT,TR		A (9.1)	A (9.2)	A (9.2)	A (9.1)	A (9.1)	A (9.2)
Genesee Street WB	LT,TR		A (8.7)	A (8.7)	A (8.7)	A (9.2)	A (9.2)	A (9.3)
Woodlawn Avenue NB	LTR		B (13.8)	B (13.8)	B (13.8)	B (13.8)	B (13.8)	B (13.8)
Woodlawn Avenue SB	LTR		B (14.1)	B (14.1)	B (14.1)	B (14.3)	B (14.3)	B (14.3)
	Overall		A (9.5)	A (9.5)	A' (9.6)	A (9.7)	A (9.7)	A (9.8)
Genesee Street/Site Driveway		U						
Genesee Street EB	L		*		A (8.2)			A (8.6)
Site Driveway SB	LR				B (13.8)			C (15.2)
Woodlawn Avenue/Site Driveway		U						
Woodlawn Avenue NB	L				A (7.3)			A (7.3)
Site Driveway EB	LR				A (8.8)			A (8.9)

Table 3 – Leve	I of Service Summary
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Outside the development of the above stated materials, Stewart's also offers the following:

# Conformance with the Existing Zoning

According to the Use Table provided in §2-29-125, a Gasoline/Convenience Station is permitted via Special Use Permit in the Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU) district. Located across the street at 2639 Genesee Street (SBL: 329.015-6-18) is a non-conforming Speedway which is zoned Residential Single. Stewart's position is that despite the requested area relief, a proposed conforming use has less of an overall impact on the neighborhood than a non-conforming use which is directed to achieve conformance under §2-29-62.





## **Conti Appraisal Consultation Report**

During an August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022 forum held by Councilwoman Celeste Friend, several participating neighbors questioned the impact the potential Stewart's would have on surrounding property values. Stewart's contracted with Conti Appraisal to develop a Consultation Report. In developing their report Conti utilized values surrounding the existing Stewart's within the City. And the summary of the consulting report is "the proposed Stewart's Shop will not have a negative impact on marketability or market values of the surrounding property (p.19)."

# **Criminal Statistics**

At the above referenced meeting on August 9<sup>th</sup>, neighbors raised concern about the potential criminal element surrounding the proposed Stewart's. Stewart's utilized Crime Data from neighborhoodscout.com which is an independent source for the real estate community that utilizes objective assessment of property and violent crime for addresses throughout the United States.

As you can see by the pasted map below, the proposed location has a similar likelihood for crime as Stewart's Culver Avenue location.





#### **Balancing Test 1**



1. Whether an undesirable change will be produced in the character of the neighborhood or a detriment to nearby properties will be created by the granting of an area variance.

The Stewart's building is consistent with the character and color of nearby homes. The structure resembles a house of moderate scale and represents a reduction of the current overall site development. The enclosed Stewart's building is proposed at 3,975 square feet while the canopy is proposed 1,800 square feet, reducing the overall built environment by 969 square feet; or reduction of 14%. The proposal also increases the Greenspace from 6,197 to 17,749 square feet.

2. Whether the benefit sought by the applicant can be achieved by some method, feasible for the applicant to pursue, other than an area variance.

Stewart's achieves it's 3,975 square foot building with a façade of seventy-five (75) feet and depth of fifty-three (53) feet. For Stewart's to achieve the sixty-foot (60) maximum dimension requirement and Stewart's to keep the same footprint building, the building would have to be reoriented to run north and south and this would extend the building approximately thirteen (13) feet to the north. 2632 is included in the NMU district but the property immediately to the north is zoned residential and the residential zone continues to the north thereafter.

The pasted images below show the impact of reorienting the building so the façade length is compliant but the impact can be seen in the red highlighted area.







Highlighted Change If Building were Reoriented

Highlight of Zoning Map Surrounding Project

3. Whether the requested area variance is substantial.

The variance is not substantial in that only 15 additional feet are proposed (relief of 25%).

4. Whether the proposed variance will have an adverse effect or impact on the physical or environmental conditions in the neighborhood or district.

The overall proposed redevelopment of this location is going to be a site that increases greenspace to the adjacent homes and the variance minimizes the impact to the housing on Woodlawn Avenue West.

5. Whether the alleged difficulty was self-created, which consideration shall be relevant to the decision of the board of appeals but shall not necessarily preclude the granting of the area variance.

The alleged difficulty was not self-created as Stewart's is a contract vendee and has not purchased the property which is contingent to government approvals.

This variance must be considered with the average setback variance that is also being contemplated. Orienting the building in this capacity provides a less impactful orientation than what would have been considered if the building setback and façade length were different.



#### **Balancing Test 2**

§2-29-156 NMU (4)(B) Maximum Lot Width Provided: 171.6 Feet Requested Relief: 71.6 Feet



1. Whether an undesirable change will be produced in the character of the neighborhood or a detriment to nearby properties will be created by the granting of an area variance.

The proposed project would not be altered by dimensional elements of the tax maps, and this elements would not have an impact on the built environment.

2. Whether the benefit sought by the applicant can be achieved by some method, feasible for the applicant to pursue, other than an area variance.

The City of Utica Engineering Department has a history of requiring single users to contain their building on one property. This is to prevent buildings from crossing lot lines, particularly if the property is subject to subdivision and potential sale. For that reason, Stewart's seeks to have a larger lot width than is allowed.

3. Whether the requested area variance is substantial.

The requested relief is substantial from the perspective of measurement but there will be no substantial impacts due to merger of lots and/or having additional frontage than is anticipated in the Zoning Law. In addition, Stewart's seeks this approval to better comply with the City's established practices.

4. Whether the proposed variance will have an adverse effect or impact on the physical or environmental conditions in the neighborhood or district.

The variance will not have an adverse effect as it will not influence the built environment.

5. Whether the alleged difficulty was self-created, which consideration shall be relevant to the decision of the board of appeals, but shall not necessarily preclude the granting of the area variance.

The difficulty was not self-created as the properties involved in the proposed transaction exceed the dimensional requirements of the district and compliance places Stewart's in conflict with established practices of the City.

#### **Balancing Test 3**

No picture available

§2-29-156 NMU (5)(A) Front Yard Setback Required: Average

1. Whether an undesirable change will be produced in the character of the neighborhood or a detriment to nearby properties will be created by the granting of an area variance.

In an altered orientation where the average setback along the street achieved, the gas canopy would be placed further into the backyards of the adjoining properties which are residentially zoned. There are three pasted images below which show the orientation with gas to the north of the store and the associated



lighting impact with the canopy placement. It is important to note that (2-29-185(d))(1) a six-foot fence is required but the proposed canopy is fourteen and a half (14' 6") feet in height.

A problematic element of this orientation eliminates the proposed Genesee Street driveway. This would require all traffic to utilize Woodlawn Avenue West which has been a reiterated concern of the surrounding neighborhood. The common practice for proposed driveway location is for the driveway to be located as distant from an intersection as possible.



2. Whether the benefit sought by the applicant can be achieved by some method, feasible for the applicant to pursue, other than an area variance.

There are no feasible alternatives as an alternative conflict with proper planning principles. Pursuant to above referenced diagrams, alternative layouts would be more problematic for the adjoining neighborhood than what is currently proposed.

3. Whether the requested area variance is substantial.

There is no specific dimensional relief requested and therefore Stewart's cannot determine substantiality. The aerial imagery above shows the layout in comparison to surrounding properties, none of which have an orientation closer to Genesee Street.





Aerial Imagery of Proposed Location with Existing Highlighted

4. Whether the proposed variance will have an adverse effect or impact on the physical or environmental conditions in the neighborhood or district.

According to provided layouts, the most adverse condition would be achieving the average setback and placing gas to the north.

5. Whether the alleged difficulty was self-created, which consideration shall be relevant to the decision of the board of appeals but shall not necessarily preclude the granting of the area variance.

The alleged difficulty was not self-created as Stewart's is a contract vendee and the alternatives are more problematic.

Stewart's looks forward to the next opportunity to appear before the ZBA to discuss the proposal and the required relief. Should there be any questions or if you need any additional material, please don't hesitate to reach me at (518) 581-1201 ext 4435.

Respectfully submitted,

JUCK

Charles "Chuck" Marshall Stewart's Shops Corp.





# CITY OF UTICA, NEW YORK ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS APPLICATION

# AREA VARIANCE

It is the responsibility of the applicant to complete this form in its entirety, including all required attachments, and as precisely as possible. Failure to submit a complete application may result in a delay in being placed on a Zoning Board of Appeals agenda or a delayed decision from the Zoning Board.

PROPERTY ADDRESS: 2632 and 2634 Genesee Street

COUNTY TAX MAP IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 329.11-5-61 and 62

# **APPLICANT INFORMATION**

NAME	Stewart's Shops Corp.	ADDRESS	P.O. Box 4	35	
PHONE	(518)581-1201 ext 4435		Saratoga S	Springs, New Yo	ork 12866
			City	State	ZIP
FAX	(518)581-1209	E-MAIL	cmarshall(	@stewartsshop	s.com

**OWNER INFORMATION** (complete <u>only</u> if applicant is not the owner of the property)

NAME 2634 G	enesee St - JVCAJ Corp and Jeffrey Lamand enesee St - Vincent Carfagno	ia ADDRES	S				
2634 G PHONE 2632 G	enesee St - Joe Hobika, Jr. Esq. (315)724-16 enesee St - Ryan Miosek, Esq. (607)282-44	600 47			, 		
			Ci	ty	State	ZIP	
FAX		E-MAIL				., Esq joejr@hobik Esq rmiosek@mi	
	IIP OF APPLICANT TO PROPER	RTY:	Ъ	CONTD			
	CONTRACT PURCHASER ARCHITECT/ENGINEER			CONTR			
	OFFICE	USE ON	LY				
RECEIVED BY:		DATE/	ΓIME R	ECEIVED	:		_
FEE AMOUNT:		CHECK	J/MON	EY ORDE	R #:		_
ZONING:		_ FEE TR	ANSM	ITTAL DA	TE:		_
AGENDA DATE:		DEADI	.INE D.	ATE:		1	_

# BRIEF HISTORY OF PROPERTY (historic use of buildings, length of ownership, etc.)

#### **DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION** *(include specific variance in terms of type & distance)*

Stewart's seeks a variance to raze the existing Raspberries at 2634 Genesee Street along with the residence <u>at 2632 Genesee Street</u>. After receiving necessary approvals, Stewart's proposes to construct a wood frame structure that will be covered in Hardie Board (concrete clap board) with a stone veneer.

The Hardie Board color is Cobble Stone. The roof is constructed of asphalt shingles manufactured by Owens Corning described as True Definition Duration Shingles in Estate Grey. The stone veneer is manufactured by Provia in the Terra-Cut style and Flintridge scheme.

All site lighting will be done via downlit LED fixtures where the canopy and soffit mounted fixtures will be constructed flush mounted to the surface. The proposed yard lights on the side of the property adjacent to the residentially zoned parcels will be backlit with individual bulbs.

## **VARIANCE STANDARDS** (§ 2-29-67(d)(1))

Applications for area variances must be based on some extraordinary topographic condition or other physical condition inherent in the parcel (for example: exceptional narrowness, shallowness, shape or area). This condition must prohibit or unreasonably restrict the use of the land and/or building. One example of a special condition: A utility right-of-way cutting through the rear half of several properties within a larger neighborhood limiting the buildable area of those properties, thereby requiring variances for rear and side yard setbacks for those particular property owners to construct new garages or sheds.

Describe topographic condition or other physical condition of the property and the manner by which this condition restricts use: There are currently two lots that will be combined for the proposed Stewart's location. The existing residence is a

There are currently two lots that will be combined for the proposed Stewart's location. The existing residence is a two-story house with aluminum siding and asphalt shingled roof, and it sits on a lot that is \_\_'x\_\_'. The Raspberries building is on a \_\_\_'x\_\_' lot, has a brick veneer, some of which has been painted yellow to match the color of the structure itself, the majority of which is constructed of an EIFS material.

Based on review of the height/bulk requirements within the Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU) district, Stewarts is seeking the following variances:

1)Maximum length of facade (60' is the maximum) be approved at 72' (a relief of 20%) 2)Maximum lot width (100' is the maximum) be extended up to 180' to accommodate the combination of the two lots 3)Front yard setback (average) be adjusted per proposed building plans (See Attached Narrative)

Describe how the requested variance will not alter the character of the larger neighborhood or impact adjacent properties:

Stewart's building is consistent with the character of nearby homes. It resembles a house of moderate scale and represents a reduction of the current overall site development. In addition to reducing the built environment, Stewart's is proposing a reduction in the amount of impervious surface on the site and an increase in the amount of greenspace. The height of the proposed Stewart's building is 23'9" which is less than the neighboring residential properties and similar to the existing Raspberries building. Both of the existing shops in the City are 23'2". Landscaping will be consistent with the rest of the neighborhood.

Rendered images of in-situ buildings are attached to the application.

# **APPLICATION ATTACHMENTS**

To ensure appropriate and timely review of the application, please provide the following additional documentation in support of the application. Failure to provide all of the applicable materials listed below may result in a delay in scheduling the application for review by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

- $\boxtimes$ \$75.00 application fee (check or money order only payable to City of Utica)
- X Detailed site plan (see sample on following page)
- X Photographs of existing conditions

# APPLICANT/OWNER AFFIRMATION

I, THE UNDERSIGNED, DO HEREBY AFFIRM THAT THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS APPLICATION IS TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND I FURTHER UNDERSTAND THAT INTENTIONALLY PROVIDING FALSE OR MISLEADING INFORMATION IS GROUNDS FOR IMMEDIATE DENIAL OF MY APPLICATION.

FURTHERMORE, I UNDERSTAND THAT I (OR A DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE) MUST BE PRESENT AT THE MEETING TO REPRESENT THE APPLICATION AND RESPOND TO ANY QUESTIONS FROM THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEMBERS.

CMr Mall Signature (Applicant)

12	1/22	
	DATE	

## IF APPLICANT IS NOT THE OWNER OF RECORD FOR SUBJECT PARCEL:

I, THE UNDERSIGNED, HEREBY AFFIRM THAT I AM THE OWNER OF RECORD FOR THE SUBJECT PARCEL AT THE TIME OF APPLICATION. FURTHERMORE, I AM FAMILIAR WITH THE REQUEST BY THE APPLICANT AND AUTHORIZE SAID APPLICANT TO REPRESENT THE INTEREST OF THE OWNER(S) IN FURTHERANCE OF THE REOUEST.

Signature (Owner)

DATE

Regular meetings of the Zoning Board of Appeals are generally held on the second Tuesday of every month. The meetings are held at 5:00 PM in the Common Council chambers on the first floor of City Hall. Applicants will receive a reminder notice in the mail approximately one (1) week prior to the meeting.

Pursuant to Section 2-29-108(3)(a) of the City of Utica Zoning Ordinance, property owners within a 200' radius will be notified of the intent of the applicant and given an opportunity to speak either for or against the application.

# Short Environmental Assessment Form Part 1 - Project Information

#### Instructions for Completing

Part 1 – Project Information. The applicant or project sponsor is responsible for the completion of Part 1. Responses become part of the application for approval or funding, are subject to public review, and may be subject to further verification. Complete Part 1 based on information currently available. If additional research or investigation would be needed to fully respond to any item, please answer as thoroughly as possible based on current information.

Complete all items in Part 1. You may also provide any additional information which you believe will be needed by or useful to the lead agency; attach additional pages as necessary to supplement any item.

#### Part 1 – Project and Sponsor Information

Stewart's Shops Corp.

Name of Action or Project:

Stewart's Shops Genesee St

Project Location (describe, and attach a location map):

2632 and 2634 Genesee St

Brief Description of Proposed Action:

Stewart's is proposing to raze the existing residential property at 2632 Genesee Street along with the existing Raspberries Restaurant at 2634 Genesee St for the development of a new Stewart's Shop (convenience store) along with a canopy for self-service gasoline filling. The proposed Stewart's store will be 3,975 square-feet and will be a wood framed construction that will be covered in Hardi board (concrete clapboard) and a stone veneer. All lighting throughout the site will be downlit LED fixtures that will be flush mounted to the soffit or canopy. Yard lights will be also be downlit LED and in specific instances, the bulbs will be backshielded to only allow light to cast forward.

Name of Applicant or Sponsor:	Telephone: (518) 581-1201 ext 4435
Stewart's Shops Corp.	E-Mail: cmarshall@stewartsshops.com

Address:

P.O. Box 435

City/PO: State: Zip Co				
Saratoga Springs New York 12866				
1. Does the proposed action only involve the legislative adoption of a plan, local law, ordinance, NO YE administrative rule, or regulation?				
If Yes, attach a narrative description of the intent of the proposed action and the environmental resources that may be affected in the municipality and proceed to Part 2. If no, continue to question 2.				
2. Does the proposed action require a permit, approval or funding from any other	er government Agency?	NO	YES	
If Yes, list agency(s) name and permit or approval:				
3. a. Total acreage of the site of the proposed action? 1.13 acres				
b. Total acreage to be physically disturbed? 0.73 acres				
c. Total acreage (project site and any contiguous properties) owned or controlled by the applicant or project sponsor?				
4. Check all land uses that occur on, are adjoining or near the proposed action:				
5. 🗹 Urban 🔲 Rural (non-agriculture) 🛛 Industrial 🗹 Commercial 🗔 Residential (suburban)				
Forest Agriculture Aquatic Other(Specify):				
Parkland				

5.		Is the proposed action,	NO	YES	N/A
5.		a. A permitted use under the zoning regulations?			
		b. Consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan?			
6.		Is the proposed action consistent with the predominant character of the existing built or natural landscape	?	NO	YES
0.		Is the proposed action consistent with the predominant character of the character of the character of the	-		~
7.		Is the site of the proposed action located in, or does it adjoin, a state listed Critical Environmental Area?		NO	YES
If	Y	es, identify:		V	
		·			
8.		a. Will the proposed action result in a substantial increase in traffic above present levels?		NO	YES
					~
		c. Are any pedestrian accommodations or bicycle routes available on or near the site of the proposed action?			~
9.		Does the proposed action meet or exceed the state energy code requirements?		NO	YES
Ift	h	ne proposed action will exceed requirements, describe design features and technologies:			
Mee	ets	s but does not exceed			V
10		Will the proposed action connect to an existing public/private water supply?		NO	YES
	•				
		If No, describe method for providing potable water:			V
<u> </u>					
11		Will the proposed action connect to existing wastewater utilities?		NO	YES
		If No, describe method for providing wastewater treatment:			
					~
12		a. Does the project site contain, or is it substantially contiguous to, a building, archaeological site, or dist ich is listed on the National or State Register of Historic Places, or that has been determined by the	rict	NO	YES
Co	n	nmissioner of the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to be eligible for listing on the	ıe	~	
Sta	ato	te Register of Historic Places?			
		b. Is the project site, or any portion of it, located in or adjacent to an area designated as sensitive for		~	
arc	ch	b. Is the project site, or any portion of it, located in or adjacent to an area designated as sensitive for haeological sites on the NY State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) archaeological site inventory?			
13	•	a. Does any portion of the site of the proposed action, or lands adjoining the proposed action, contain		NO	YES
		wetlands or other waterbodies regulated by a federal, state or local agency?		~	
		b. Would the proposed action physically alter, or encroach into, any existing wetland or waterbody?			
If	Y	(es, identify the wetland or waterbody and extent of alterations in square feet or acres:	2		
				2.1.2	

14. Identify the typical habitat types that occur on, or are likely to be found on the project site. Check all that apply:		
Shoreline 🔲 Forest 🗌 Agricultural/grasslands 🔲 Early mid-successional		
Wetland Urban Suburban		
15. Does the site of the proposed action contain any species of animal, or associated habitats, listed by the State or Federal government as threatened or endangered?	NO	YES
	V	
16. Is the project site located in the 100-year flood plan?	NO	YES
	~	
17. Will the proposed action create storm water discharge, either from point or non-point sources?	NO	YES
If Yes,		V
a. Will storm water discharges flow to adjacent properties?	~	
b. Will storm water discharges be directed to established conveyance systems (runoff and storm drains)? If Yes, briefly describe:	A the Apple 11	
The site currently lacks any on-site stormwater control which is proposed to be introduced. After on-site control, the site might drain to established conveyance within Genesee St.	n 4 - 19 -	
<ul><li>18. Does the proposed action include construction or other activities that would result in the impoundment of water or other liquids (e.g., retention pond, waste lagoon, dam)?</li><li>If Yes, explain the purpose and size of the impoundment:</li></ul>	NO	YES
<ul><li>19. Has the site of the proposed action or an adjoining property been the location of an active or closed solid waste management facility?</li><li>If Yes, describe:</li></ul>	- NO	YES
	~	
20.Has the site of the proposed action or an adjoining property been the subject of remediation (ongoing or completed) for hazardous waste?	NO	YES
If Yes, describe:		
Neither parcels of the subject property are included and we believe the NYSDEC database reference is for: V00418 - Cupola and Son Automotive, Inc located at 2814 Genesee St	Ld	
I CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION PROVIDED ABOVE IS TRUE AND ACCURATE TO THE BE MY KNOWLEDGE	ST OF	
Applicant/sponsor/name: Stewart's Shaps Corp Date: 8/24/27		
Signature: Charles Masshall) Title: SVR4 Real Este	te R	<u>.</u>

PRINT FORM

# EAF Mapper Summary Report

#### Thursday, August 18, 2022 9:55 PM



Part 1 / Question 7 [Critical Environmental Area]	No
Part 1 / Question 12a [National or State Register of Historic Places or State Eligible Sites]	No
Part 1 / Question 12b [Archeological Sites]	No
Part 1 / Question 13a [Wetlands or Other Regulated Waterbodies]	No
Part 1 / Question 15 [Threatened or Endangered Animal]	Νο
Part 1 / Question 16 [100 Year Flood Plain]	No
Part 1 / Question 20 [Remediation Site]	Yes

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