

TOWN OF BELMONT

PLANNING BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

July 6, 2021

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA

DATE: September 1, 2021

TIME: 2:34 PM

Present: Steve Pinkerton, Chair; Ed Starzec; Thayer Donham; Matt Lowrie; Karl Haglund

Absent: Renee Guo

Staff: Robert Hummel, Senior Planner, Offices of Community Development
Ara Yogurtian, Assistant Director, Offices of Community Development

1. Meeting Called to Order at 7:00 PM

Mr. Pinkerton called the meeting to order and introduced Planning Board members. He reviewed a summary of the items that were on the agenda. The meeting was held remotely via video conference webinar.

2. Continued cases:

a. CASE NO. 21-07, Design and Site Plan Review

661 Pleasant Street (SRA) – Belmont Woman's Club, Wendy J. Murphy, President

Mr. Pinkerton noted that the plan had been approved with conditions by the Historic District Commission. There were several Planning Board conditions for the applicant to address and the applicant has submitted materials that satisfy most of them. Mr. Pinkerton reviewed the list of changes and described how each of the issues had been addressed. He also reviewed the BWC's Club Proposed Parking Plan.

Mr. Lowrie noted that the HDC would like to know where the location of the handicap access would be before it was approved, the concept of the garden path regrading may not be consistent with the conservation restriction. The Belmont Land Trust was not to sign off of the specific design but on the idea of regrading in that area. After consultation with Town Counsel, he felt like the Land Trust could okay this in principal, but the Land Trust should approve this for handicap accessibility.

Mr. Yogurtian noted that if they have less than 14 spaces were they not required to have a handicap space. Their total proposed was 11 spaces.

Mr. Lowrie noted that the Belmont Land Trust needed to say yes in terms of having handicap parking signs and everything else given that the building is not handicap accessible.

Ms. Donham noted that there were other locations to put a handicap ramp and with a good architect they could do all kinds of things. Approving this could be solved in a bunch of ways.

Mr. Lowrie noted that the HDC approval was conditioned on there being a path. He also noted that the parking for the Town employees and the Police Department raised some concerns. The parking plan needed to be revised.

Mr. Rojas stated that Neil Winston with the Land Trust had provided a memo and noted that they approved the concept.

Mr. Pinkerton screen shared Mr. Winston's memo.

Mr. Rojas explained that the BWC wanted an ADA parking spot even though it wasn't required. The grading would be checked before a Certificate of Occupancy could be issued. The HDC was behind this plan and the Land Trust was offering no objection.

Mr. Haglund noted that he believed that they did not need these parking spaces (it would not solve their problems) and that they were very far away from having an acceptable parking plan. There were 13 spaces and they should only use 11 of the spaces and that should be included in the parking plan.

Mr. Lowrie noted that there could be restrictions on signage and it could move into the direction of consistent with historic uses.

Mr. Lowrie noted some concerns about approving without having approved the permissible uses or signage. He was concerned about other commercial uses that haven't been approved yet.

MOTION to continue to July 20, 2021 was made was made by Mr. Pinkerton and seconded by Mr. Lowrie. Motion passed. Vote was unanimous.

b. CASE NO. 21-08, Design and Site Plan Review

115 Mill Street – Northland Residential Corporation, Mr. John C. Dawley

Mr. Dawley, Northland Residential Corporation, came before the Board to present the revised Design and Site plan for the McLean property. He introduced his team: Alan Auckeman - Ryan Associates, Ed Bradford – TAT, architecture team. He shared his screen and reviewed the Zone 2 and Zone 3 Townhome Comparison & Subdistrict B Architecture. The image gave a sense of scale and massing showing a complete overview of the site.

Ed Bradford – TAT, architecture team, reviewed the site plan. He described the details of the analysis and reviewed the following:

- The analysis was done on building 11 in Zone 2 and building 8 in Zone 3 that the comparative analysis was done as per the Board's request from the last meeting.
- The elevation, height and massing and footprint of building 11 and compared it to proposed building 8. He noted that the proposed design had a smaller massing and scale

than building 11.

- The proposed Gross Floor Area calculations and compared Zone 2 unit and using the same calculation methodology and excluded the unfinished area. He added that the units in the Woodlands were quite a bit larger.
- The cross section for unit 7.1 and noted that the building was less than 30 feet to the top of the roof. The scale, height and massing as proposed was complimentary as one experiences it from Olmsted.
- Subdistrict B site plan was reviewed.
- The floor plans and building heights for Buildings 100 and 200 were reviewed.
- The proposed Cladding Materials Board and window types for Buildings 100 and 200.

Mr. Dawley walked the Board through the density and the separation of buildings and noted that it felt very similar to the existing buildings in the surrounding Woodlands neighborhood.

Mr. Pinkerton asked for the retaining wall to be softened.

Alan Auckeman - Ryan Associates, mentioned that the wall was necessary to preserve the existing trees, to create some distance and manage grade separation, create distance and a sense of place.

Mr. Pinkerton noted that he received public comments noting that the building looked like an office building. Mr. Dawley said that he didn't agree with the characterization of the "office building". He can look at that and maybe do some softening.

Mr. Lowrie asked for more information regarding the glass walkway later. He questioned the layout of the buildings with the townhouses below them. He was curious about how the height compares to Freedom Commons. He was worried about Olmsted Drive and the ability to handle the capacity and wanted to discuss this at the future traffic meeting.

Mr. Starzec asked for more information of the connector between building 101 and 102.

Mr. Haglund would like more time to think over the cladding materials.

Mr. Pinkerton noted that he was happy with this in terms of breaking the building up into three buildings, he loved the idea of taking a floor off and spreading it out a little bit so you are not faced with a massive wall. He would like to also look at the different heights as compared to what could have been there before.

Mr. Dawley asked for the architectural peer review report so they could move on. How do they get that consultant engaged soon.

Mr. Yogurtian noted that the peer reviewer will be available after next week.

Mr. Pinkerton noted that they would move onto civil engineering next.

MOTION to continue to July 20, 2021 was made by Mr. Pinkerton and seconded by Mr. Lowrie. Motion passed.

The vote was unanimous (Ms. Donham was listening in to the meeting on TV and could not vote).

3. Review and Approve Draft Planning Board Meeting Minutes for June 1, 2021 and June 22, 2021.

Planning Board approved with minor amendments the June 1, 2021 meeting minutes and the vote was unanimous.

Planning Board approved with minor amendments the June 22, 2021 meeting minutes and the vote was unanimous.

[Ms. Donham had lost internet connection due to bad weather but was able to watch the entire meeting live on TV]

4. Updates on Cases and Planning Board Projects, and Committee Reports

Mr. Pinkerton noted that “Section 2-1 Classes” at the end of the list needed to be added to the By-Law “McLean District Zone 3 Overlay”

5. Adjourn 10:14 PM

The Planning Board’s next scheduled meeting will be held on Thursday, July 20, 2021