

TOWN OF BELMONT

PLANNING BOARD WORKING GROUP: 181 COMMON STREET

MEETING MINUTES

March 6, 2020

Present: From the Planning Board: Steve Pinkerton, Ed Starzec
For the Applicant: Chris Poli, Andy Rojas

Staff: Jeffrey Wheeler, Senior Planner

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DATE: April 13, 2020

TIME: 2:18 PM

1. Meeting Called to Order at 8:05 AM

Andy Rojas, representing the applicant, reviewed a chart he distributed regarding Total Livable Area (TLA). He stated that he spoke to the Assessor's Department and they indicated that the TLA excludes mechanical rooms, garages, and non-livable storage areas.

Mr. Pinkerton reviewed a comparison of TLAs in the neighborhood. He stated that the proposed additions would make the house the 5th largest in a neighborhood of 64 properties. He noted that the average TLA for the neighborhood is 2,540 square feet and the median is 2,281 square feet. Mr. Rojas questioned how the TLA compares to the lot size. He noted that there are several nonconforming lots in the neighborhood and that 181 is one of those lots. Mr. Pinkerton stated that the concern is that this is a really big house relative to the neighborhood and that the PB is trying to get to something more reasonable. He stated that there are 2 issues relative to this project: (1) reduce the size of this house; and (2) increasing 2 nonconformities: the front setback off of Orchard Street and height. He added that the PB does not like to extend nonconformities.

Mr. Rojas distributed new plans for review. He pointed out that the new plans maintain the front setback and do not increase it and therefore eliminates the need for a Special Permit for the front setback. Mr. Pinkerton noted that the PB is concerned about the 3-story appearance from Orchard Street. He added that the PB is looking for some sense of consistency with the neighborhood. Mr. Wheeler noted that the revised garage plans seems more functional than originally proposed. Mr. Rojas noted that the landscape plans need to be revised and that the new garage layout allows for part of the driveway to be returned to grass.

Mr. Poli questioned what the TLA number is that the PB is looking for. Mr. Pinkerton stated that the number needs to be in the 3,000's. Mr. Poli stated that was a big drop from the current plan. He added that the neighborhood was in full support of the proposed plan. All present looked at areas of the house that could be reduced. Mr. Poli stated that his family needs 4 bedrooms: 3 for his family and 1 for his in-laws. Mr. Wheeler suggested that the basement could be used as a guest suite since it is a walkout basement and as such has standard size windows and doors and won't feel like a typical basement. Those present continued to discuss areas of the house that could be cut. Mr. Rojas suggested removing the rear two-story addition, which reduces the size of the basement, first floor office and kitchen,

and the additional bedroom on the second floor. Others suggested other ways to reduce the size of the home as well. It was noted that these proposed cuts would reduce the size of the home to a more acceptable size.

Mr. Pinkerton explained the proposed Energy Code General Bylaws that will be on the Warrant for the 2020 Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Pinkerton and Mr. Rojas discussed how this could impact this project.

Mr. Rojas recapped the proposed changes to the plans.

All agreed to meet again during the week of March 9 in order to be able to proceed with the continued public hearing on March 17.

2. Adjourn 9:25 AM