

TOWN OF BELMONT

PLANNING BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

May 19, 2020

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: July 15, 2020

TIME: 3:02 PM

Present: Steve Pinkerton, Chair; Matt Lowrie, Thayer Donham, Ed Starzec; Renee Guo

Absent: Karl Haglund

Staff: Jeffrey Wheeler, Senior Planner

1. Meeting Called to Order at 7:00 PM

2. Continued Public Hearings:

a. 32 Frost Road – SR-C – Two-Story Addition at the rear of home

Mr. Pinkerton noted that there was an outstanding TLA number discrepancy and, as a result, the public hearing was continued. He noted that Ms. Miller, Architect, and he were able to resolve the TLA number discrepancy and come to an agreement.

Mr. Pinkerton noted that a plan for a large tree for screening the left side of the house would need to be included with the final submittal.

MOTION to close the public hearing was made by Mr. Pinkerton and seconded by Mr. Lowrie. Motion passed.

MOTION to grant the Special Permit, subject to submission of a revised landscape plan approved by Mr. Wheeler, was made by Mr. Pinkerton and seconded by Ms. Donham. Motion passed.

b. Zoning Amendment Public Hearing McLean Zone 3 Overlay District Amendment

Mr. Pinkerton noted that this would be a working session and as a result, it would be a discussion of the draft By-Law among the PB with input from Jack Dawley, the developer. The meeting would be open for public comments at the end. He reviewed the results of the demographic study and noted that the findings of it were that the impact of the proposed development in terms of taxes would result in a net benefit to the Town.

Mr. Pinkerton noted that Mr. Wheeler had compiled all of the comments from the PB and they were incorporated into the draft By-Law and he added that the task for this meeting was to work out the big picture issues, not the small details. Mr. Wheeler shared the latest version of the document on the screen. He reviewed the PB comments and noted that there were three comments that were related to the overall document:

1. How should the formatting be set up? Should it be consistent with the rest of the By Law? The PB agreed that the document would need to be consistent with the rest of the Zoning By-Law.
2. Review the usage of “shall” versus “may”. All agreed that the By-Law needs to be clear on what is a requirement versus a guideline.
3. Determine what happens to the underlying By-Law if this is adopted? Mr. Pinkerton noted that this was an overlay to the existing By-Law and the underlying By-Law was going to remain in place as a back-up in case something falls through. He added that the existing By-Law may eventually be taken away, but for the time being it needed to stay in place.

The following By-Law comments and questions were reviewed by the PB:

- Come to a final resolution on age-restricted units vs. non age-restricted units. Mr. Pinkerton noted that this would need to be resolved soon.
- Discuss the best way to define owner occupancy of age-restricted units. The PB agreed that owner occupancy was expected.
- Determine whether in the age-restricted units a child could stay. The PB attempted to make revised the language to define “dependent,” but agreed to revisit it later
- Determine whether a shuttle bus can pass between zones, which is currently prohibited by the existing Zoning By-Law. The PB agreed to allow shuttle bus access between zones provided that the properties owners allowed this as well.
- Reuse of the existing chapel. The PB noted that the MOU requires preservation of the chapel and therefore the language in the By-Law was adjusted accordingly.
- Review the performance standards and dimension regulations: should the living area be restricted, should there be some smaller units? The text was revised accordingly and the PB requested feedback from Mr. Dawley.
- Determine whether setbacks apply within subdistricts or to the district as a whole.
- Determine appropriate height limitations and to consider defining height to the peak of the building rather than the midpoint. The PB agreed that this should be consistent with the rest of By-Law, but decided to further discuss this at a later time.
- Determine appropriate fence height regulations. The PB decided to leave the fence height at four feet; Mr. Dawley agreed with this.
- Determine whether square foot limitations work in Subdistrict B, or are more revision required. Mr. Pinkerton suggested waiting until the traffic and demographic studies were presented to determine the exact language.

- Determine if Height limitation definitions need to be revised to include HVAC, antennas, and other rooftop equipment. The height discussion will be continued at a later time after the PB has had a chance to check in with Mr. Dawley.
- Review the Energy Committee comments. Mr. Wheeler noted that these comments need to be edited. The PB discussed putting the comments in the Design Standards. Under the solar provisions, Ms. Donham expressed a concern about preferring northside roofs, since it could require that equipment be installed along the street. The PB agreed to look at this again at a later date.
- Review the Affordable Housing section of the By-Law. The PB agreed that the language regarding housing mix still needed to be tweaked.
- Review with the Fire Department whether emergency vehicles need access to an underground parking garage when the fire trucks will have direct at-grade access to all sides of the buildings.
- Review whether the By-Law should require a crane or balloon to be placed on site to represent the height of the buildings. The PB wondered whether anything would be provided to Town Meeting. The PB agreed that a photo simulation may be satisfactory.
- Review how the LEED certification (from the Energy Committee comments) would fit into the By-Law. The PB agreed that they need to meet with Energy Committee to discuss this requirements.

Mr. Pinkerton stated that the chat comments from the meeting would be saved and reviewed at a later time. He opened the meeting to public comment.

Comments from the audience:

1. Rachel Heller, Affordable Housing Trust, noted that there were a lot of housing needs in Town and by age restricting only the portion that was planned for the home ownership units would leave all of the rentals open to seniors and everybody who needs to find affordable housing in Town.

Mr. Pinkerton noted that the PB is trying to maximize affordable housing opportunities, minimize traffic impacts, rationalize the costs and the revenue and come up with the best balance possible. There is still a lot of information needed to make the best decisions.

2. Tracy Marquis, Energy Committee, agreed that much of the Energy Committee comments could be part of the performance standards. She noted that the retaining wall height of ten feet was fine but was concerned with the perceived height of it. Mr. Wheeler noted that the retaining wall materials needed to be considered.

MOTION to continue to June 2, 2020 was made by Mr. Pinkerton and seconded by Ms. Donham. Motion passed.

3. Meeting Adjourn 9:30 PM