

**TOWN OF BELMONT
PLANNING BOARD**

**MEETING MINUTES
September 2, 2014**

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Present: Michael Battista, Chair; Elisabeth Allison, Vice Chair; Charles Clark; Joseph DeStefano; Karl Haglund, Barbara Fiacco (Associate Member); Jeffrey Wheeler, Office of Community Development

7:05 p.m. Meeting called to order

7:05 p.m. Public Hearing: 70B Thomas Street – Second Unit at Rear of House – Special Permit: Use and Design Site Plan Review

Mr. Battista commented that he visited the site and met with the applicant to get a better understanding of the property in question and what was being asked. He reported that the lot had been grandfathered in. He wondered if this might be a case for the Zoning Board of Appeals and if it actually met the minimum requirements of the new General Residence Zoning By-Law. All members stated that Town Counsel should weigh in with his opinion as to whether the applicants can build a second house on their property.

Ms. Rodin, co-applicant and owner of 70B Thomas Street, gave a history of their ownership of the home, and stated that she and her husband purchased the home in 1982. She added that they raised two children there, and made several home improvements during their tenancy. She noted that several neighbors were concerned with noise generated by the construction of the new home, but she does not think that noise will be an issue.

Mr. Rodin, co-applicant and owner of 70B Thomas Street, gave a brief presentation about the design concept and reported the following:

- The designs reflect compatibility with the neighborhood
- The footprint of the new building is 26 x 33 feet, and it will be 1,700 to 2,000 square feet.
- The houses will be staggered and the new construction will be connected to the existing home, but will appear as a free standing, single family home.
- The front door faces the street.
- All front and side setbacks are met.
- The new construction will access Clark Lane and rise 2 ½ stories and be the same height as the existing house.
- The applicants are very concerned about the view corridors of the neighborhood and submitted a map indicating how these may be affected by the new unit.
- The ridge line of the new building will be the same as the existing house.
- The applicants feel that the new construction's orientation is a better perception for the neighbors, but if the neighbors wish, it can be turned 90 degrees to further open the view corridor.
- He hopes for ongoing communication and dialogue from the neighbors and the Board.
- The driveway will be shared.
- Tenants will be notified that they cannot park in the driveway. Parking will be accessed through Clark Lane.

- The driveway will not have asphalt, but a nice material that will allow for water drainage.
- The siting of the unit was proposed to replicate the fabric of the neighborhood.

Comments from the Audience:

1. Andrew Bram, attorney for the owners of 70A Thomas Street, reported that the new construction will block the views of the neighbors and will impact density by 25 percent. He questioned whether or not the By-law had been approved by the Attorney General and was actually in effect or not, but Mr. Wheeler confirmed that it indeed was in effect.
2. Daniel Guetler and Claudia Friedman, 70A Thomas Street, spoke in opposition of the applicant's request. They argued that the new home will obstruct light and make their home extremely dark, and if they sacrifice the trees in order to get light, they will be sacrificing their privacy. They also felt that this was two separate homes, which seemed to go against the new zoning by-laws. They also expressed concern about the number of school aged children that would occupy the new unit and the impacts associated with the construction of the new unit.
3. Vincent Stanton, Royal road, pointed out that the CPAC identified Clark Lane as a potential route for a community path. He made 3 observations:
 - a. The lot can be subdivided
 - b. Prohibiting use of the driveway seemed inappropriate since this was a question of frontage
 - c. The property abuts the Belmont Housing Authority so they should be consulted as well.
4. Nancy Snyder, 43 Thomas Street, noted her support of the plans, but did express some concerns about density and the frontage of the new home. She was confused about what was really being built.
5. Sonja Como, Timothy Lamont and Margaret Atwood, 66 and 68 Thomas Street spoke together and expressed their support for the abutters at 70A Thomas Street. They agreed that the new construction will encroach on all four sides of their property. They also expressed safety concerns and adequate access of emergency vehicles; and parking concerns. They hoped that the Fire Department would provide an opinion on the safety of construction an additional unit in this location. They also questioned who was responsible for maintaining the easement. Finally, they mentioned that this proposed unit, the 6th home bordering this easement creates a substantial alteration and raises significant concerns.
6. Martha Maguire, 70 Thomas Street, questioned what the address for the new unit would be.
7. Karen Parmet, 86 Clark Street, noted that the neighborhood homes were "ridiculously"

close. She stated that this was a single-family proposal not a two-family. She expressed concerns about sewer and water issues.

8. Bill Rubin, 41-43 Pearson Road, expressed concern about building density and sewerage. He stated that he does not want the area over built.
9. Andrew Bram, attorney for the owners of 70A Thomas Street, questioned whether Section 4.3.1 and 4.3.4 applied to this application and argued that this application does not conform to the by-law.

MOTION made by Ms. Allison to continue the public hearing on 70B Thomas Street to September 16, at 7:00 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Clark. The motion unanimously passed.

**8:45 p.m. Public Hearing: 318 Trapelo road – New Two-Family Dwelling.
Special Permit: se and Design and Site Plan Review**

Ed Oteri, Applicant, reported the following:

- He is proposing to build 2 townhouses in the lot next to the VFW on Trapelo Road.
- They held a neighborhood meeting to gather input.
- The homes will be nicely detailed with nice landscaping and metal roofs on the front and rear porches.
- The 13' front setback opens up the rear yard.
- They are proposing to keep as many of the existing trees as possible.

Mr. Haglund asked for clarity about the proposed landscaping. He felt strongly that the landscaping and streetscape have an urban feel, and he did not feel that dense trees such as arborvitae should be used. He added that bigger trees should be planted along the front of the house. The Board concurred with these comments. The Applicant replied that the landscaping was proposed in order to provide privacy for the occupants. Mr. Haglund stated that there is no way to screen out the bus stop and that Trapelo Road is a city street. He added that privacy can be provided at the rear of the property.

Ms. Allison expressed concern about the size and scale of the proposed structure relative to that of the neighborhood. Mr. DeStefano stated that this looks like two separate units and noted that one had to build to today's marketplace and not the box car style that everyone deplores. Mr. Battista commented that the scale fits the size of the lot, but balancing that with the neighborhood is the issue. Ms. Allison stated that she would be more comfortable if the units were smaller.

Comments from the Audience:

1. Judith Ananian Sarno, Waverly Terrace, felt that the design should be scaled back a bit. She objected to the size, scale and mass of the proposed building. She suggested reducing the size of the units.

MOTION made by Ms. Allison to continue the public hearing regarding 318 Trapelo Road to September 16, 7:00 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Haglund. Motion unanimously passed.

9:20 p.m. The Woodlands at Belmont Hill – Zone 2; Request to Reduce Road Surety Bond Amount

MOTION made by Mr. Clark to reduce the surety bond amount. Seconded by Ms. Allison. Motion unanimously passed.

9:25 p.m. Approval of Minutes

MOTION made by Mr. Clark to approve 12 sets of minutes. Seconded by Ms. Allison. Motion unanimously passed.

Adjourn: 9:30 pm