

**TOWN OF BELMONT  
PLANNING BOARD**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**September 16, 2014**

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**Present:** Michael Battista, Chair; Elisabeth Allison, Vice Chair; Charles Clark; Joseph DeStefano; Karl Haglund, Mr. Jeffrey Wheeler, Liaison to the Planning Board

**Absent:** Barbara Fiacco, Associate Member

**7:05 p.m. Meeting called to order**

**7:05 P.M. Continued Public Hearings**

**70B Thomas Street – Second Unit at Rear of House**

Mr. Battista reported on a conversation with Mr. Wheeler and Town Counsel, they held the opinion that the issue of shared frontage does not comply with the new By-Law, and therefore the existing property is non-conforming. As a result, the question for the Board to decide is whether or not the proposed addition, the second dwelling unit, will increase the nonconformity and be detrimental to the neighborhood. Mr. Haglund suggested the issue of non-conformity should be resolved before hearing any further presentation on alternate plans. All members agreed.

**MOTION made by Ms. Allison to continue the public hearing to October 7, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Haglund. Motion passed.**

**318 Trapelo Road – New Two-Family Dwelling**

Mr. Oteri reported on landscaping issues and answered other questions about his proposed two-family dwelling. He reported:

- The townhouses will be a combined area of 2,750 square feet with a garage in the middle.
- There will be a front setback of 13 feet.
- There will be dogwoods, hydrangeas, hostas, day lilies and smaller plants.
- The property will have an open view of Pequotsette Park.
- There will be a 6 foot fence between the property and the abutting V.F.W. building.

Mr. DeStefano inquired about the fencing material. Mr. Oteri responded that the material had not been selected, but PVC will likely be used.

Mr. Haglund suggested conditioning the Special Permit that the existing trees be replaced by the developer in the event they are damaged during construction. Mr. Oteri responded that measures would be taken to prevent damage, and that trees near the construction will be wrapped with 2x4's, and he agreed to replace any trees damaged due to construction.

Ms. Allison stated that systematic measures should be taken to define the neighborhood and collect information for every residence in the neighborhood in order to make accurate

comparisons between the proposed structure and the existing buildings. She argued that this would give the Board a real measure of whether the proposed construction is consistent with the neighborhood in which it is being built. She was additionally concerned about the pressure on the town's infrastructure and schools that this construction would create. She stated that it shouldn't be up to the developer to define the neighborhood, and strongly felt that better information was needed to determine the consistency with the neighborhood. Mr. Haglund agreed and noted that the Board should take additional time to analyze the new By-Law and that developers must be patient.

Comments from the Audience:

Mark D'Andrea, 97 Waverley Street, asked if there would be adequate parking in the driveway, and was told by Mr. Oteri that each unit had parking for two cars outside in the driveway and one in the garage.

**MOTION made by Mr. DeStefano to close the public hearing. Seconded by Ms. Allison. Motion passed.**

**8:05 p.m. Public Hearings**

### **13 Birch Street – New Two-Family Dwelling**

Ms. Allison read the Notice of Public Hearing. Mr. DeStefano stated that he wanted it on record that he had a professional relationship with the Applicant's land surveyor, Mr. Rober.

Mr. Rober provided an overview of the application. He stated that the proposal is to replace the existing three car garage at 13 Birch Street with a new two-family house. He reported:

- The neighborhood consists mainly of two-family homes.
- The lot is 5,000 square feet with proposed lot coverage of 30 percent.
- Each unit will have 1,500 square feet on the first and second floor, and a reduced amount on the third floor, and each unit will have 3 bedrooms.
- The setbacks will be as follows - front: 20 feet; side: 11 ½ feet; rear: 20.1 feet.
- Mechanicals will be screened and on the roof of the second floor.
- There will be fencing along the side and rear yard.

Ms. Allison asked the Board a question for consideration and discussion; she asked why they should consider an application that does not meet the requirements of the By-Law? Mr. Clark stated that the addition of a two-family home in the neighborhood would just add to the congestion. He commented that a single-family home would be nice. Ms. Allison agreed and added that a two-family would add to the density of the neighborhood. Mr. Rober responded that there will be a driveway on the side of the house and there are only 5 homes on the street. Mr. DeStefano commented that the plans looked out of balance and proportion, and that he would like the two-family home to look more like a single family home.

Comments from the Audience:

1. Jean Kowlaski, 261 Orchard Street, spoke in opposition to the project. She felt that this new construction would have a negative impact on the neighborhood and on the resale value of her home. She is also concerned about the loss of open space and shade onto her home. Mr. Rober responded that her house abuts the property and that shading was not an issue as they are on the north side. He further stated that this property is not in the Residential C District and he shouldn't have to conform to her zone.
2. Gail Stafford, 8 Cherry Street, felt that the lot was too small and that the proposed house was too big. She was also concerned that they were tearing down the fence between her home and theirs.
3. Christine Valenti, 10 Cherry Street, expressed concerns about snow removal, congestion, and the difficulty of parking when there is snow around. She is also concerned about the loss of green space and the impact this will have on the value of her property. She added that with a single-family home you only get one curb cut.
4. Steve Tomczyk, 47 Hamilton Road, felt that in order for the new By-Law to be meaningful, the Board should adhere to the spirit of it. Mr. Battista responded that the new By-Law did allow for an applicant to ask for a Special Permit.
5. Christine Valenti, 10 Cherry Street, added that with a single-family home you only get one curb cut.
6. John Comeau, owner of the property and lives as 285 Waverley Street, stated that anything built on this property would be an improvement over what is currently there. He also said that the new buyer would have to maximize lot coverage.
7. Jeff Patrician, 255 Orchard Street, asked that his name be removed from the list of support for the proposed project.
8. John Comeau, owner of the property and lives as 285 Waverley Street, argued that the neighborhood opposition stems from the fact that the neighborhood does not want to see change and likes the 'back yard' that this creates for the street.
9. Christine Valenti, 10 Cherry Street, again stated that she opposed the two-family.
10. Mark Stafford, 8 Cherry Street, stated that he wants to see reasonable development on the site and that the size and scale of the proposed two-family is too big.
11. Judith Ananian Sarno, Waverley Terrace, questioned where the HVAC would be located.

**MOTION made by Ms. Allison to close the public hearing. Seconded by Mr. Clark.  
Motion passed.**

## **22 Waverley Street – Second Unit at the Rear of the House**

Ms. Allison read the Notice of Public Hearing.

Danielle Green, spoke on behalf of her parents, John and Debbie Green. The Applicants proposed attaching a single-family home to the rear of the existing single-family home. Ms. Green read a statement outlining why they were proposing to do so, and other logistics of the new development. She noted that the proposed unit will carry existing architectural details throughout the new unit. She added that the existing home has approximately 2,500 square feet, the proposed unit would be 2,300 square foot, for a total of roughly 5,000 square feet.

Mr. DeStefano stated he was not opposed to this, but strongly urged the applicants to speak with the Historic District Commission in order to keep in character with the existing historic home and to complement it. Ms. Allison also expressed concerns about preserving the historic character of the neighborhood and noted that the lot was being built to the absolute legal limit. Mr. Battista concurred and added that this application was exactly what the new by-law is trying to prevent, attaching two single-family houses together. He stated that goal was to preserve the front portion of the building; however, the design must become a true two-family.

Comments from the Audience:

1. John and Theresa O'Connor, 35 Oakley Road, own the property at 28-30 Waverly Street and are direct abutters, stated that this proposal went against the spirit of the new By-Law. They expressed concern that the homes are only 13 feet apart and felt they were too close to have a new construction there. They read a list of more concerns.
2. Gerard Hovsepian, 24 Chandler Street, was concerned that this construction would change the character of the neighborhood. He also stated that the proposed construction does not comply with the by-law and that this project was encroaching on the abutter.
3. Nick LaFauci, owns 32 Waverly Street, felt that the rights of the owners are being taken away and stated his support for the application.
4. Bet Lee, Grant Avenue, stated concerns of storm water management; light shining on her property; displacement of rats, and provisions for dealing with these concerns. She also inquired about adequate landscaping and trees to act as a noise buffer.
5. Mark D'Andrea, 97 Waverley Street, spoke in support of the project and applauded the owners for not tearing down their historic home. He urged the Planning Board to work with the Greens on this project.

**MOTION made by Ms. Allison to continue the public hearing to October 21, 2014, in the Board of Selectmen's Meeting Room. Seconded by Mr. DeStefano. Motion passed.**

**Adjourn: 9:40 pm**