

**TOWN OF BELMONT
PLANNING BOARD**

MEETING MINUTES

June 2, 2015

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2015 SEP 22 PM 2:58

Present: Michael Battista, Chair; Elisabeth Allison, Vice Chair; Joseph DeStefano, Jeffrey Wheeler, Office of Community Development

Absent Karl Haglund, Barbara Fiacco (Associate Member)

7:00 p.m. Meeting called to order

7:00 p.m. Continued Public Hearing

➤ **15-03 31 Oxford Avenue – Construct Second Floor and Rear Additions**

The Board reviewed the revised plans and discussed access into the basement. The architect clarified that the new entrance to the bulkhead will be through the existing bulkhead, which will be removed and made into a doorway. Ms. Allison expressed her concern that the basement had the potential to become another dwelling unit. The Board discussed potential conditions for the Special Permit and requested additional information be submitted, such as a plan for the second floor without the overhang over the easement, detailed plans for the basement entry, and a landscape plan indicating HVAC location and a reduction in driveway width.

MOTION made by Ms. Allison to continue the public hearing on 31 Oxford Avenue to June 16, 2015, in the Board of Selectman's room. Seconded by Mr. DeStefano. Motion passed.

7:35 p.m. Discussion on Reviewing Additions to Nonconforming Structures

Ms. Allison stated that the Board needed to discuss how it was going to examine additions to nonconforming structures especially when they pose significant changes to the density of the surrounding neighborhood density. She suggested that a certain size trigger full review under Section 6D of Zoning By-Laws. She requested that three things need to be done: 1. a comparison chart to show existing versus proposed; 2. a neighborhood analysis to determine median and mean; and 3. submission of a landscape plan. She argued that the analysis moves a house above the median, then it should be viewed as new construction under Section 6D. All agreed. Mr. DeStefano noted the importance of comparing the proposed structure to the old structure and to ensure it doesn't overpower the existing neighborhood. He emphasized that it is important to maintain a harmonious neighborhood. The Board discussed the percentage increase in the size of a house that would trigger the process.

7:55 p.m. Special Permit Public Hearing

➤ **15-04 56 Thomas Street – Construct Rear Addition**

Dolan Reynolds, Applicant, reviewed his application and explained that he wanted to expand his living space on the first floor and add a bedroom and office on the second. He stated that the additional would be about 1,000 square feet. He reported that the basement would be exercise equipment and storage, not living space, and that he could make the roof sloped instead of flat.

He submitted plans showing a flat roof because he felt it would decrease the density of the proposed addition.

Mr. DeStefano asked the Applicant to rethink the pitch of the roof and roofing materials to asphalt. He suggested that the roof should be sloped to match the existing house.

Ms. Allison stated that the addition was large enough that the Board should review it as though it were a new house. She asked the Board to think about how it would react if other structures on Thomas Street came before with them with similarly sized structures. She added that the Board has to look at the neighborhood analysis.

MOTION made Ms. Allison to continue the public hearing on 56 Thomas Street to June 16, 2015. Seconded by Mr. DeStefano. Motion passed.

8:30 p.m. Next Steps for Citizens Petition Zoning Amendment

The Board discussed the next steps for implementing the moratorium. All agreed that controlling height will accomplish much of what is needed to insure that new construction is in keeping with the surrounding neighborhood. The Board agreed that it needed to look at data to see the full impact of the proposal. Discussion occurred about looking at other dimensional regulations.

Mr. Battista requested that the Board meet with the petitioners in July.

8:55 p.m. Review and Approve Landscape Plans for 36 Merrill Avenue

Mr. Cusano, the developer for the property, reviewed the landscape plan and showed the Board pictures of the changes he has made to the property. He explained why various changes to the landscaping were made. Mr. DeStefano stated the Board's desire for larger trees. The Board discussed other changes that it wanted to see as well, including screening of the HVAC units. Ms. Allison recommended that the trees that were not planted be offered to neighbors. She also suggested setting up an escrow account to remedy the landscape problems.

MOTION made by Ms. Allison to approve the landscape plan for 36 Merrill Road subject to the following conditions: planting of additional HVAC screening and creating an escrow account in the amount of \$5,000 to insure completion of the landscape plan satisfactory to the Board. Seconded by Mr. DeStefano. Motion passed.

MOTION made by Ms. Allison to approve the landscape plan for 17 Hamilton Road subject to the following conditions: planting of additional HVAC screening and creating an escrow account in the amount of \$5,000 to insure completion of the landscape plan satisfactory to the Board. Seconded by Mr. DeStefano. Motion passed.

Adjourn: 10:00 p.m.