

**TOWN OF BELMONT  
PLANNING BOARD**

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BELMONT, MA

**MEETING MINUTES  
October 27, 2015**

2015 DEC 16 PM 2: 21

Present: Michael Battista, Chair; Elisabeth Allison, Vice Chair; Joseph DeStefano; Karl Haglund; Raffi Manjikian (associate member)

Absent: Barbara Fiacco

Staff: Jeffrey Wheeler, Office of Community Development

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

**1. Discussion on Shaw Gardens and Hittinger Farms Overlay District**

Ms. Allison and Mr. DeStefano reviewed potential changes to the Single Residence C Zoning Districts, including:

- There will be an adjustment in height to control midpoint and ridge heights.
- Setbacks will be increased to 12 feet.
- There will also be changes in respect to the definition of grade.
- There will be provisions for locating HVAC and other mechanicals.
- Nonconforming protections will be eliminated.

Ms. Battista suggested meeting with the Moratorium group before the public forum. Mr. Wheeler confirmed that the public forum will be on November 17 at 7:00 pm.

Steve Pinkerton, Precinct 7, co-sponsor of the Moratorium, expressed concern about the lack of landscaping and the removal of the existing trees on properties with new homes. He also noted the sheerness of these new structures, their big box appearance, and their lack of character. Mr. Battista noted that the Special Permit process will help alleviate these issues.

**2. Updates on Potential Cases and Planning Board Projects, and Committee Reports**

The Board discussed meeting dates for December and all agreed to meet on December 1 and 15.

**3. Public Hearing**

**15-12 - 54 White Street, Design and Site Plan Review/Special Permit**

Mr. DeStefano recused himself from this public hearing since he owns commercial property directly across the street from the subject property.

Levi Tobias, architect for Ed Hovsepian, owner of 54 White Street, reviewed the application and plans. He noted that the plans are supposed to invoke the illusion of a single-family home. To achieve this, he stated that the 2 family will be gabled in the front with a 90 degree roof line that will help to break up the massing. He also noted the materials and finishes for the building.

Ms. Allison reported on the quantitative analysis of the neighborhood and reported:

- This lot is the largest in the neighborhood
- This proposed home will be the largest in the neighborhood in terms of total living area.
- The FAR is slightly below the median.
- The number of bedrooms is slightly below the median.

Ms. Allison noted that this property is similar to 318 Trapelo Road in terms of its metrics. Mr. Manjikian felt that the house looked “blocky” and uninteresting. Mr. Haglund commented that trees should be 3 1/2 to 4 inches in caliper. He noted that it will be a challenge to landscape the front yard because of the 2 front doors, garage door and driveway. Mr. Battista agreed that the house lacked character. He noted that a car parked in the front space would protrude almost to the sidewalk. He further conditioned that the materials used for the home be real clapboard and real wood shutters, also that the office space not become a bedroom. He suggested detaching the garage will help to make the building look smaller. The Board briefly discussed landscaping the front yard and removing the garage.

Comments from the audience:

1. Jan Cruise, Grant Avenue, felt that the driveway is too close to the abutting neighbor, and that the house was too blocky. She also felt that a rat control plan was in order.
2. Eric Powell, 50 White Street, expressed stormwater concerns and asked if there would be drainage in the driveway. Ed Hovsepian, the owner, reported that all the roof drains have been engineered to handle the water.
3. Paul Marzocchi, 19 Waverley Terrace, felt that the length of the driveway was too long since it could accommodate 8-10 cars. Mr. Haglund reported that proposed porous pavement must be vacuumed each year to retain its effectiveness.
4. Judith Ananian Sarno, Waverly Terrace, objected to the number of bedrooms and that the house was too dense.

Mr. Battista summarized the requested revisions, including increasing the calipers of the trees to 3 1/2 to 4 inches, eliminate the garage on the right unit and replace it with a detached garage, use wood shutters and wood clapboard, and identify columns and corner boards will be used.

**MOTION made by Ms. Allison to continue the public hearing to November 17, 2015 at 8:00 am in the Board of Selectman’s Meeting Room. Seconded by Mr. Manjikian. Motion passed.**

**Adjourn: 8:50 p.m.**