TOWN OF BELMONT
PLANNING BOARD

MEETING MINUTES
February 23, 2016

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Present: Elisabeth Allison, Chair; Barbara Fiacco, Vice Chair; Charles Clark; Joseph DeStefano; Karl Haglund; Raffi Manjikian

Staff: Jeffrey Wheeler, Office of Community Development

7:00 p.m. Meeting called to order

1. **Continued Public Hearing:**

16-01, 23 Poplar Street – Special Permit to Alter Nonconforming Structure

Ms. Allison briefly reviewed the supplemental information. Mr. Haglund stated that he was satisfied with the landscape plan. Ms. Fiacco stated that she found the sightline drawing helpful. Mr. DeStefano clarified that the plans for siding the finished building ensured architectural consistency, e.g., that if wood shingles are found under the vinyl siding when it is removed then wood shingles will be used on the entire house. Tom Timko, architect, reported that shingles were underneath the vinyl siding and that they would be used to side the entire building.

Mr. Wheeler distributed a draft of conditions. Ms. Fiacco requested that wood shutters be replaced at the front of the house. Mr. DeStefano requested that the siding on the addition be consistent with the existing home. The Applicant agreed to these conditions.

MOTION made by Mr. Manjikian to close the public hearing. Seconded by Ms. Fiacco. Motion passed

MOTION made by Ms. Fiacco to grant the Special Permit for 23 Poplar Street with conditions attached. Seconded by Mr. DeStefano. Motion was unanimously approved.

2. **Update on Cushing Village**

Ms. Allison reported on her and Ms. Fiacco's meeting with the Board of Selectmen on February 22. She stated that there was a productive discussion on the Cushing Village project that ensured that the BOS and the Planning Board would remain aligned. She added that she and Ms. Fiacco will meet with the Selectmen on March 14 to further discuss this matter. She added that there may be a joint meeting with the Selectmen, though this has yet to be arranged.

3. **Public Hearing on Proposed Zoning Amendments for Single Residence C Zoning Districts**

Ms. Fiacco read the public hearing notice.

Ms. Allison reviewed the process and added that the final amendments are due by March 11, 2016, in order to get them on the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting.

Mr. Wheeler reviewed questions from the Building Department. First, the Board agreed that the regulations limiting the location on the installation of outdoor mechanical equipment shall apply to all new installations other than routine replacements. Second, the Special Permit will link to Section 6D as applicable. Third, the Board did not feel comfortable agreeing to a reasonable size for a dwelling instead relying on the lot coverage requirement to control the size of the dwelling. Finally, the Board agreed to change the text for front setback in order to have the front setback 'be' the average of the front setbacks of the abutting buildings. Steven Pinkerton, representing the citizens group that put together the moratorium, agreed with these responses and thanked the Board for their work.

Mr. Wheeler gave a PowerPoint presentation on the proposed amendments. The Board agreed that panoramic views of new buildings would be helpful in depicting their impact on the neighborhoods. Mr. Pinkerton offered suggestions for improvements to the presentation. He suggested breaking up the information on the slides so there would not be a lot of dense material on one slide. He also felt that the presentation should demonstrate that going through the Special Permit process will not create any more work for the home owner since most of these properties are nonconforming and as such would have to go through this process anyway.

Comments from the audience:

1. Arthur Haratunian, developer from Watertown, questioned the allowed height and threshold for expanding nonconforming dwellings. He argued that they do not work together since adding a second story to a one story dwelling will increase the area of the building more than 30%. Mr. DeStefano responded that this was the intent of the By-law, to require a Special Permit so that the addition enhances the neighborhood.

2. Asmael Madhavi, Hough Road, stated that he expected a grace period so that projects would not have to adhere immediately to the proposed By-laws. He added that an addition on a small house will be small if the property owner does not want to exceed the 30% threshold. Mr. DeStefano stated that the Board is not trying to deter people from developing in Town, but to encourage development that fits into the neighborhood.

MOTION made by Ms. Fiacco to continue the public hearing to March 2, 2016. Seconded by Mr. Manjikian. Motion passed

4. Discuss Charge of Sub-Committee to Review AirBNB Regulations

Mr. Manjikian reviewed the draft charge with the Board. The Board agreed that the charge was appropriately drafted. Mr. Manjikian stated that the next step was to go to the Board of Selectmen to recruit volunteers for the Committee and to reach out to the community at large.

5. Updates on Residences at Acorn Park

Ms. Allison noted that Acorn Park is 40B development and as such did not come before the Planning Board. She reported that the first round of applications for the affordable housing were due yesterday. She distributed the current schedule for move in dates for each building, noting that there would be additional demands on Town services, particularly in the schools.

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

Ms. Allison relayed a report from the Historic District Commission re 582 Pleasant Street. The Commission has not yet received an application for a hearing.

Glen Herosian, 585 Pleasant Street, stated that he represents a group of citizens who are concerned about the antenna that Verizon plans to install in the Plymouth Congregational Church. He reported that a number of abutters were not notified of the hearing and asked that the Board to re-open it. He suggested that a significant number of neighbors did not have sufficient time to review the plans. Ms. Allison replied that per the Open Meeting Laws of the State of Massachusetts, this discussion was out of order since it is not an item on the Board's agenda. She noted that the neighborhood group had written to the Board of Selectmen not the Planning Board.

Mr. Manjikian reported that the Capitol Budget Committee will be discussing the use of modular classrooms by the School Department to accommodate the increase in student enrollment.

7. Preview of Future Agenda Items

Ms. Allison reported that a discussion will take place at the Board's next meeting on defining neighborhoods and the Board will consider finalizing the revised process guidelines for the GR Zoning Districts. She added that the Board will also begin the discussion of design guidelines for the GR Districts and noted that drafting guidelines may require several meetings and input from various stakeholders.

8. Review and Approval of Minutes

MOTION to accept the minutes of February 2, 2016 subject to changes by Vice Chair Barbara Fiacco is made by Raffi Manjikian and seconded by all. Motion passed.

Adjourn: 8:35 p.m.