

**TOWN OF BELMONT  
PLANNING BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
March 2, 2016, 8:00 a.m.**

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Present: Elisabeth Allison, Chair; Joseph DeStefano; Karl Haglund

Absent: Charles Clark, Barbara Fiacco, Raffi Manjikian

Staff: Jeffrey Wheeler, Office of Community Development

**8:00 a.m. Meeting called to order**

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

Mr. Wheeler clarified some of the language in the proposed amendments, inviting comments and any changes the Board might have. He spoke to the circumstances under which an applicant would have to apply for a Special Permit and meet with the Planning Board or the Zoning Board of Appeals. The Board discussed various edits to clarify the intent of the amendments. The Board agreed the proposed amendment regarding the location of outdoor equipment should apply to any new system regardless of whether a Special Permit was required; existing systems could be replaced without complying with the new by-law as long as the system was the same size and in the same location.

**MOTION made by Mr. DeStefano to continue the public hearing to March 15, 2016.  
Seconded by Mr. Haglund. Motion passed**

**2. Review Changes to the General Residence Special Permit review process**

Ms. Allison briefly reviewed the proposed changes to the Special Permit review process. She requested that these be approved by the Board and incorporated into the application process documents. The Board discussed how to calculate allowed height. All agreed that the height will be "the average of the two abutting houses and adding 15 feet," and "in no case should the height exceed the maximum allowable height of 37 feet." Discussion also ensued regarding total living area (TLA) and what to do if the applicant's number differs from the Assessor's. The Board agreed to finalize how to deal with this difference at a subsequent meeting. The Board agreed that Staff will institute all of the proposed changes, except for the TLA, and will make the corresponding changes in the various process documents immediately.

**3. Discussion on Defining Neighborhoods in context of reviewing GR applications**

Ms. Allison reviewed the history of how the Board defined neighborhoods. She introduced Jim Gammill, Warrant Committee member, software developer, and Town volunteer. Mr. Gammill presented his study of existing town wide databases and their potential uses for defining Belmont neighborhoods. He distributed a geo-spatial map of Assessors' defined neighborhoods in Belmont to the Board, as an example of what the databases can map.

The Board discussed the map, and how it would be useful in helping to define neighborhoods.

Ms. Allison noted that there are many things to look at, it depends on the information that the Board finds helpful when defining a neighborhood. Mr. DeStefano suggested adding a zoning layer and uses to see how these overlap with the existing databases. Mr. Haglund agreed that it would be useful to see the total numbers of single-family and two-family homes in a neighborhood. Mr. Gammill agreed to add zoning and uses to the map and that he would present them at a future meeting.

The Board reviewed neighborhoods for 3 potential cases, 55 Concord Avenue, 48 Middlecot Street, and 9 Westlund Road, and defined them accordingly. Mr. Wheeler noted that, consistent with the Board's general approach, he urged the developer of 55 Concord Avenue to maintain the use of the property as a single-family home and not convert it into a two-family. He also noted that the other two potential cases came to the Board as a result of the proposed Single Residence C Zoning District zoning amendments.

#### **4. Discussion on Architectural Design Guidelines for General Residence Districts**

The Board agreed that the proposed draft changes would provide a useful starting point for discussion. Mr. DeStefano suggested adding wording to include larger soffits and corner boards. It was agreed that the discussion should be continued at to a meeting at which public contributions would be solicited.

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

Noting to report.

#### **6. Preview agenda for March 15**

Items to be discussed will include defining neighborhoods, reviewing the architectural design guidelines, and finalizing the proposed zoning amendments.

#### **7. Review and Approval of Minutes**

**MOTION made by Ms. Allison to accept the minutes of February 23, 2016. Seconded by Mr. DeStefano. Motion passed.**

**Adjourn: 9:20 am**