

**TOWN OF BELMONT
PLANNING BOARD**

MEETING MINUTES

April 26, 2016

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA

2016 MAY 25 AM 9:08

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

Staff: Mr. Jeffrey Wheeler, Office of Community Development

7:00 p.m. Meeting called to order

1. Discussion on Modular Classrooms at Chenery Middle School

Gerry Boyle, Director of Facilities, reported on the need to begin using modular units at the Chenery Middle School in order to address the space needs caused by an increase in enrollments. He stated that the modular units will be temporarily installed on the tennis courts roughly an 8,000 square foot area and they will be installed behind screening. He added that the modular units will arrive on November 1 and will be operational by December 1 and that they are expected to be there for at least 5 years. The modular units will accommodate 150 students with 25 per class. Mr. DeStefano questioned how the exterior of the units will be finished. Mr. Boyle responded that finishes will be determined after the bids are received. Noting that the HVAC units will be on the roof, Ms. Allison expressed concerns regarding the noise levels, and urged Mr. Boyle to let bidders know that meeting the levels dictated by the noise By-Laws is of utmost importance to the Town. Ms. Allison also stated that it wasn't clear which section of the By-Law applied to these units. All agreed to consult with George Hall to get a clearer understanding of what process to follow.

2. Public Hearings:

a. 9 Westlund Road – New Home on a Non-Conforming Lot

Ms. Fiacco read the public hearing notice. The architect, Norman Kherlop, reviewed the plans. He stressed that the existing house is quite small and that expanding it is the fate of all ranches. Mr. Mahdavi, the Applicant, stated that he will build a quality home.

Ms. Allison reported on the quartile analysis for the property. She stated that of the 57 structures in the neighborhood, the total living area and FAR of this property will be the largest or the next largest in it. She added that the property is on one of the smallest lots in the neighborhood and will be one of the largest structures.

Mr. DeStefano commented that the roof seemed very complicated and that it needed more balance. He mentioned that the neighborhood consists of simple homes and urged the architect to simplify the roof scheme. Ms. Fiacco expressed concern about creep in the neighborhood; she noted that if this was allowed, more would follow.

Comments from the Audience

1. Anthony Bronte, Westlund Road, stated that his primary concern was that the house be well designed, not necessarily about its size. He spoke in favor of the home.

2. Anne Marie Lambert, Town Meeting Member, encouraged the use of permeable pavers in order to reduce stormwater runoff.

Ms. Allison polled the Board and noted if a vote on the application was taken this evening that the application would likely be denied. Ms. Allison urged the Applicant to work with town staff and to come back to the Board with a revised plan that better reflected the Board's guidelines, including the need for a smaller structure with a design more consistent with the character of the neighborhood.

MOTION made by Ms. Fiacco to continue the public hearing to May 17, 2016, in the Board of Selectman's Meeting Room. Seconded by Mr. Manjikian. Motion passed.

b. 48 Middlecot Street – Second Floor and Rear Additions on a Nonconforming Structure

Ms. Fiacco read the public hearing notice. The Applicants, Mr. and Mrs. Harutyunian, reviewed the proposed plans. They noted that this first floor was only increasing by 180 square feet.

Ms. Allison reported on the quartile analysis. She noted that there were 65 homes in the neighborhood and that this would be the second largest home in it with the highest FAR. She added that the house was in the top 25 percent for number of bedrooms and in terms of mass, it was the second densest home in the neighborhood. Mr. Clark noted that this proposal doubled the size of the existing home. Ms. Fiacco noted that the comments from the last public hearing apply to this one as well. Mr. DeStefano mentioned the need to simplify the design of the house.

Comments from the Audience:

1. Vincent Beaudoin, 53 Middlecot Street, asked questions regarding the construction process. He also questioned the impact of the house on the water table.
2. Jim Garver, 30 Cowdin Street, an abutter, submitted photographs to the Board. He stated that he felt that this house would infringe on his privacy, and spoke strongly against it. He added that this house would change the integrity of the neighborhood.
3. William Osterhaus, 35 Cowdin Street, stated that this proposal would change the feel of the neighborhood. He read a statement from Virginia Williams, 12 Cowdin Street, who could not attend. She stated that she opposed the application because of the rear addition and concerns that the second floor would block the sun light. She felt the home should stay within the guidelines of the Zoning By-Laws.
4. Mr. Bernazani, 33 Hurley Street, expressed concern about the loss of sun light and opposed the addition at the rear of the house.
5. Virginia Fuller, 29 Hurley Street, felt that the house would block out the sun light and that it was too large for the neighborhood. She stated that she cares deeply about the neighborhood and that this proposal will change the symmetry of it.
6. Anne Beaudoin, 53 Middlecot Street, stated that this house was too big for the

neighborhood and too large for the lot.

7. Elizabeth Bishop, 18 Cowdin Street, submitted pictures to the Board and stated that she opposes the application because is it not a good trend for the neighborhood.
8. Joe Magno, 11 Cowdin Street, spoke in opposition to the proposal. He expressed concern about creep in the neighborhood and that this project encourages similar projects in the future.
9. Susan Olson, 29 Cowdin Street, spoke in opposition and stated that was also concerned about neighborhood creep.

Ms. Allison polled the Board and noted if a vote on the application was taken this evening that the application would likely be denied. She urged the Applicant to work with town staff and to come back to the Board with a revised plan that better reflected the Board's guidelines, including the need for a smaller structure with a design more consistent with the character of the neighborhood.

MOTION made by Mr. DeStefano to continue the public hearing to May 17, 2016, in the Board of Selectman's Meeting Room. Seconded by Mr. Manjikian. Motion passed.

c. 25 Somerset Street – Historic Barn Conversion

Ms. Allison summarized the transcript of the Town Meeting at which this by-law was approved. She disclosed that she opposed this zoning by-law when it was presented to Town Meeting although she did not believe this limited her ability to hear this case fairly. Mr. DeSefano disclosed that he was the previous owner of 25 Somerset Street.

Ms. Fiacco read the public hearing notice. Patrick Ahearn, architect for the property owner reviewed the building plans. He stated that an art studio will be on the first floor and a gym on the second and noted that a slop sink will be installed for the art studio but that cooking facilities will not. He mentioned that after working with the neighborhood, the Historic District Commission supported the architectural changes and the use of the barn. He noted that a window at the rear would be changed to half round window and that a door on the side of the barn would be changed to a window. Mr. DeStefano stated that he appreciative the sensitivity used to renovate the barn. Ms. Fiacco agreed and stated that she was impressed with the plans. Mr. Manjikian stated that he appreciated the Applicant working with the neighbors.

Comments from the Audience:

1. Mary Power, Clifton Street, expressed concerns about the rear elevation since it was not within the purview of the Historic District Commission's review. She stated that she was not concerned about the use, but about the rear egress and windows and the potential impacts created by them. She requested that the door and exterior light be removed.
2. Sarah Sos, Clifton Street, stated that she supported the residential use of the barn and the concerns of the neighborhood. She reiterated that concern about lighting and

stated that anything could be done would be greatly appreciated.

Mr. DeStefano stated that the nature of the rear door will not be that significant. He recommended that a row of Arbor Vitae be planted along the rear property line abutting Ms. Power's property in order to block the light from barn. Mr. Ahearn stated that the building code requires a light at an egress door. Mr. DeStefano suggested limiting the wattage of the light bulb (25 watts) and installing a motion detector light.

MOTION made by Ms. Fiacco to close the Public Hearing. Seconded by Mr. Manjikian. Motion passed.

The Board agreed to incorporate the Board's standard conditions and the planting of the Arbor Vitae and limiting the rear exterior light as mentioned above.

MOTION made by Mr. DeStefano to grant the Special Permit to convert the historic barn into additional living space subject to conditions. Seconded by Mr. Clark. Motion passed.

3. Review Questions and Comments on SR-C Amendments

4. Prepare for Town Meeting

Ms. Allison suggested deferring discussion on these two items to the Board's next meeting.

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

Mr. Wheeler reported that an application for 55 Concord Avenue was submitted to the Board.

6. Preview Agenda for May 3

Ms. Allison commented that an application to modify the Design and Site Plan Approval previously granted to Verizon to install wireless cellular antennae at the Plymouth Congregational Church was submitted. She added that Mr. DeStefano and Ms. Fiacco will recuse themselves from the public hearing.

Ms. Allison also noted that the developers for 122 Waverley Street may attend in order to discuss their development and that the Permanent Building Committee will be present to discuss the process for reviewing the high school plans.

7. Review and Approval of Minutes

The Board did not take action on this item.

Adjourn: 9:25 p.m.