

TOWN OF BELMONT  
PLANNING BOARD

MEETING MINUTES  
April 17, 2012

RECEIVED  
TOWN CLERK  
BELMONT, MA.

JUL 13 9 14 AM '12

**8:40 a.m.** Meeting called to order.

Attendance: Sami Baghdady, Chair; Michael Battista, Charles Clark, Joseph DeStefano (left at 9:10), Karl Haglund (arrived at 8:50); Andres Rojas, Liaison to the Board of Selectmen; Jeffrey Wheeler, Staff

**8:40 a.m. Public Hearing: Solar Energy Systems Zoning By-Law Amendment**

Michael Battista read the public hearing notice. Mr. Battista reviewed the proposed By-Law and presented a Power Point presentation. Chris McVay spoke on behalf of the Belmont Energy Committee and stated that the Committee voted to support the By-Law.

**Moved by Joseph DeStefano to close the public hearing. Seconded by Michael Battista Motion passed unanimously.**

**Moved by Joseph DeStefano to recommend adoption of the Solar Energy Systems Zoning By-Law Amendment to the May, 2012 Special Town Meeting. Seconded by Michael Battista.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

Andres Rojas, on behalf of the Board of Selectmen, commended the Planning Board and Energy Committee for working together. Mr. Baghdady also commended Mr. Battista and Mr. Colton for their work as well.

**9:10 a.m. Public Hearing Continued: Cushing Village Application**

Sami Baghdady briefly reviewed the peer review consultant selection process and introduced Steve Heikin of ICON Architecture, who proceeded to introduce the rest of his team.

Mark Donahue, the Applicant's attorney, stated that the Applicant's presentation will focus on the Winslow and the Pomona Buildings. He reviewed what was presented and mentioned that the applicant is not prepared to discuss the Hyland Building since it needs further refinement.

Peter Quinn presented a power point presentation. Mr. Quinn compared what was allowed by-right to what is currently proposed in order to show if the proposed buildings adequately address step backs.

Mr. Quinn stated that the height of the gable ends of the Winslow Building will be reduced and the geometrics of the flat roof will be fixed as well. He mentioned that the step backs opposite the residential area will be increased and compared this to the original plans.

Sami Baghdady inquired if the footprint will be increased as a result of these changes. Mr. Quinn responded that the footprint will be decreased.

Mr. Quinn presented sections at a 45° angle for the Winslow and Pomona Buildings to show that the increase in step backs reduces the shadows and light impacts on the abutting neighborhood. He compared what would be allowed by-right to what is currently proposed. He also reviewed shadow studies for both buildings.

Mr. Baghdady clarified that there is no underlying by-right construction allowed on the municipal parking lot since it is not within the business district. Mr. Quinn agreed, and clarified he was assuming the construction was permitted by-right to help illustrate his point.

Eric Rhodin reviewed the problems previously pointed out with the Hyland Building: at 5 stories the building is too tall, not sufficient stepping from the abutting residential areas, and aesthetics. To resolve these problems, Mr. Rhodin showed revised Belmont and Common Street elevations with greater step backs from residences, removal of the top floor, and varied elevations. He discussed the design further and stated that the base of the building will be stone with a 2-story building in stucco or stone above that and that due the significant slope the building will be 3 or 4 stories depending on where you are on the site.

Mr. Battista inquired whether the new design brings the building closer to Belmont Street. Mr. Rhodin replied that the building is actually further from away from Belmont Street.

Mr. Baghdady wondered whether the foot print of the building changed. Mr. Rhodin stated that the foot print would be the same since the building will have a more efficient layout.

Mr. Rhodin continued his presentation noting that the grill work will be applied to the face of the parking garage in order to give it a sense of openness. He further explained that the entrance to the garage was changed in order to help queuing onto Common Street. He added that he would like to introduce certain features to the building to improve its appearance, such as a gambrel roof, which reflects the S.S. Pearce Building. He concluded that he is still working on the layout of the building.

Karl Haglund asked for clarification on the parking garage. Mr. Rhodin explained that half of the garage will be below grade and at Horne Road it will be above grade. He added that the abutting landscape path will comply with the ADA.

Mr. Quinn showed sections of the building from Belmont Street and Horne Road and showed the increased setbacks and briefly reviewed the shadow studies since the massing is not complete.

Mr. Rojas questioned what percent of the building's foot print is the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor. Mr. Clark emphasized that the Board needs to know the percent in order to give a sense of step back relative to the rest of the building. Mr. Donahue stated that the team did not fully understand the question and will submit an answer ahead of the next meeting.

Karl Haglund stated that comparing the proposed development to the by-right development is very helpful. He requested to see a by-right site plan and for the Applicant to be cognizant of what is seen from the sidewalk. Mr. Donahue stated that this will assume Local Business I zoning and will include the parking lot. Mr. Quinn stated that he tried to carry the cornice across the building to improve the elevation.

Mr. Battista requested clarification on the setback of the Hyland Building on Belmont Street. Mr. Quinn stated that the original design was skewed so the building was closer than currently proposed.

Mr. Donahue stated that the team will submit the following before the next meeting:

1. A written analysis of the difference between the current proposal and the original one;
2. Percent of the 4<sup>th</sup> floor;
3. Comparisons of the current elevations to what is allowed by-right; and,
4. A site plan highlighting the open-space.

Mr. Donahue asked for feedback on the changes that have been proposed thus far. Mr. Clark stated that he was encouraged to see the development team working to respond to the Board's comments. He acknowledged that re-thinking of the Hyland Building will require further discussions. He also stated that he was encouraged by the initial discussions with the Peer Review Team and stated that they will be quite helpful in the review process.

Mr. Baghdady stated that the additional information was quite helpful and that he anxiously awaits comments from the Peer Review consultant.

Mr. Rojas reminded the team to show roof top mechanicals at some point.

Mr. Haglund stated the he was not prepared to say the building meets the zoning By-Law. Mr. Donahue agreed but was trying to find out if the changes proposed for the Winslow and Pomona buildings were responsive to the Board's concerns.

Mr. Baghdady reiterated that the 4<sup>th</sup> story was supposed to be an added incentive if the developer provided under ground parking, not allowed across each building. He stated that the size and detail of the buildings should be pedestrian oriented and that the Board needs the Peer Review consultants to help determine how the buildings fit the character of the Square. He did acknowledge that the design is getting better and going in the right direction. He expressed concern about the intensity of the use of the buildings and simply moving the massing to lower levels. Mr. Rojas stated that the Board needs to hear from the Peer Review consultant with regard to how the buildings fit with the entire By-Law.

**Moved by Charles Clark to continue the public hearing to May 8, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.**

**Seconded by Michael Battista**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**10:10 a.m. Committee Updates**

Mr. Baghdady stated that there were no Committee updates.

**Adjournment: 10:10 a.m.**