

**Belmont Historic District Commission
MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, September 7, 2021
Meeting Held Remotely via Zoom

Staff Present: Christine Zale

Commission Members Present:

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lisa Harrington, Chair | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carl Solander |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michael Chesson | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nushin Yazdi |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lauren Meier | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Seth Clarke |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carol Moyles | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stefan Ahlblad |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michael Smith | |

Community Members Present: Jack Dawley, Northland Residential

1. Meeting Called to Order; 7:00PM Lisa Harrington presiding; Seth Clarke, Minutes.

2. Design Review: McLean Zone 3

a. Northland – McLean Zone 3 Design Review and Discussion of Proposed Development

C. Solander had the following comments on the Subdistrict B design:

- New structures on historic landscape should have relationship to historic landscape as referenced in the National Historic Register form.
- It is not clear what the relationship of the proposed buildings is with the existing buildings.
- The compositional massing seems arbitrary.
- The number of different materials as rendered is very thin and discontinuous.
- Feels very contemporary and different from the existing buildings.
- Material presence on site.
- How can there be a stronger relationship of the architecture with the other buildings on campus?
- It is hard to see how they are trying to fit into this campus in relation to buildings on the hilltop.

C. Solander had the following comments on the Subdistrict A design:

- Feels more sensitive, more fitting of the pseudo-agrarian landscape, materials work better cited in the forest
- Rooflines and general architecture are better complimentary with the existing context and landscape.

Northland's presentation to the Planning Board was reviewed.

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DATE: December 22, 2021
TIME: 9:45 AM

S. Ahlblad had the following comments:

- First impression is it is a busy architecture, should not overwhelm the existing buildings of McLean.
- Design is fragmented – should be smaller houses, more discrete, melt in a little more.
- He understands that the challenge is to fit as many units onto the site as possible but brings into question what is the future of McLean.

Discussion continued to include that the architects need to show how these buildings relate to the historic landscape. No precedents were provided for the larger scale buildings. Massing already has been negotiated and it is agreed we can't ask for it to be reduced. The existing buildings have more interesting rooflines. Fiber cement panels look too contemporary; perhaps reduce the number of materials, or have one material be dominant. The HDC is not calling for a reduction in mass but needs to employ better details to break the volume down.

J. Dawley stated he was grossly insulted by most of what he has heard. Northland introduced this project in April and this is what he intends to build. If the Board chooses not to support, that is their prerogative.

J. Dawley left the meeting.

Discussion continued and included that some of the material choices and architectural expression seems foreign to general quality of the context. All were generally in favor of the idea to have the architects present to give a clearer explanation of the design and to address the mentioned concerns. This will include inviting Northland's design team to do working sessions with the HDC.

C. Solander asked if the Planning Board was expecting comments for 9.9.21 Planning Board Meeting; L. Harringtons said the PB is not expecting anything from the HDC until November.

L. Harrington stated we need to continue this discussion at the October HDC meeting and will reach out to Northland about meeting with their architects.

b. Eliot Chapel – Design Review and Discussion

C. Moyles Landscape comments:

- C.Moyles stated she drove around campus and studied the documentation. As there is an existing stone wall at Olmstead drive, one would expect that existing conditions would be extended to create uniformity. Walls, Lighting, site lighting. Existing chainlink fence can be removed. Other minor comments requesting more clarity - there is a disconnect in what is being presented to the planning board vs what is being submitted for site review.

Chapel Garage comments:

- M. Chesson stated the garage seems like an obstruction and trying to replicate it is inappropriate. M. Smith asked if there was another way of siting the garage. Pushing it to the back is not very feasible, because of the slope. S.Ahlblad asked if the design team would consider a flat roof on the garage.
- C.Moyles asked if Northland will be reviewing HDC comments. L.Harrington replied yes, and although Northland may not welcome them, the Planning Board relies on our input. C. Solander does not believe our comments are difficult to consider.

The McLean subcommittee will meet next week to organize comments in a cohesive way so as to be helpful to the Planning Board. C. Zale stated she will need bullet points by Friday 9/10 from C.Solander to post next week's Subcommittee meeting.

M. Chesson moved to adjourn. C. Moyles seconded. Meeting adjourned 9:17pm.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Harrington (re-written based on notes by Seth Clarke)