

**TOWN OF BELMONT
PLANNING BOARD**

MEETING MINUTES

August 2, 2016

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2016 SEP -8 AM 11: 50

Present: Elisabeth Allison, Chair; Charles Clark; Barbara Fiacco, Vice Chair (arrived at 7:29 p.m.); Joseph DeStefano; Raffi Manjikian

Absent: Karl Haglund

Staff: Jeffrey Wheeler, Office of Community Development Liaison

1. Meeting Called to Order

7:02 p.m. Meeting called to order by Chair Allison.

Ms. Allison introduced the Planning Board (PB) members and then turned to the evening's agenda. She noted the agenda items will be taken up slightly out of order. She then noted which members would recuse themselves from specific agenda items.

2. Preview Agenda for September 6, 2016

Ms. Allison distributed a handout entitled "*Initial Discussion with Building Inspector*" which listed potential topics that will be discussed at the Board's September 6 meeting. She added that the agenda may include topics that are not covered this evening, as well as an update pertaining to Cushing Village.

Regarding the three topics listed on the handout, Ms. Allison stated that she would merely like to address *how* these topics (e.g., major versus minor criteria for what should come back to the PB, coordination of SP conditions with early inspection, process for assurance on "as built" vs. "as permitted" re: conditions) will be explored at the September 6 meeting. Other ideas concerning the September 6 meeting can be brought to Mr. Wheeler's attention. The PB briefly discussed issues relating to process.

3. Review of Draft Memo re: Changes in Project Proceeding under Special Permit

(Memo to be discussed with the Building Inspector at September 6 meeting.)

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

Ms. Allison noted that the PB may need to select another liaison to the Community Preservation Act Committee. Ms. Allison suggested Mr. Haglund be the new liaison, given his experience with playgrounds and parks. The PB agreed with this suggestion.

Mr. Wheeler had no other updates at this time.

5. Reschedule September 20 Meeting to Avoid Election Day Conflict (Minuteman)

Ms. Allison suggested that the meeting scheduled for September 20 be rescheduled because the Minuteman Election will be held that day. She reviewed topics likely to be addressed at this

meeting and suggested moving the date to September 21. This date is tentative.

6. Review and Approval of Minutes

Three sets of Minutes were distributed. PB members reviewed the sets.

**MOTION made by Mr. Manjikian to approve the submitted sets of minutes.
Seconded by Mr. DeStefano. The motion passed.**

7. Continued Public Hearings

a. 42 Pine Street – Second floor addition on nonconforming structure

Ms. Allison provided some guidance to the applicants who were expected to present at the meeting. She noted that what has been done in the past may not apply, because in some cases, the rules have changed. Also, she provided some information on how the Board looks at Special Permits – noting that more weight is placed on how the space might plausibly be used. Houses in Belmont last a long time; therefore the PB will take the long-view perspective.

The applicants, Mr. Rohit Rana and Mrs. Poonam Rana, noted that there was a concern with the second floor. (The architect was not present.) Mr. Rana spoke of the need to add a driveway to increase parking availability for a two-family home. He noted that the basement's potential for use as dwelling space is limited by a sewer line and water issues.

Planning Board members asked questions of the applicants. Mr. DeStefano expressed design concerns and stated that he will present those concerns to the architect when he is present. He noted that the roof-line design is concerning. Mr. Manjikian agreed that there are several design concerns.

Ms. Allison reiterated the Board's concern with which the proposed structure could be used as a multi-family residence. She raised the possibility of recording the one-family restriction should be recorded with the deed? She also suggested imposing a limit on the number of utility meters that can be installed. She said she wasn't sure if this was even possible. She noted that Mr. Clancy would need to give input (perhaps during the inspection process) as to whether such a condition was being met.

Mr. Clark wondered if these suggestions go beyond the zoning restrictions, which would make them difficult to remove down the road. Ms. Allison replied that the first step would be to ask Town Counsel to opine on both. She noted that the PB clearly has the right to control density. A brief discussion ensued concerning the impact of density on a neighborhood.

Ms. Allison noted that the landscaping plan will need to be reviewed at some point. Mrs. Rana stated that the landscaping will not be altered significantly. Mr. DeStefano stated that what is currently there (for landscaping) is unlikely to survive the construction. A working group (consisting of two PB members) will meet to discuss design and landscaping.

**MOTION made by Mr. Clark to continue the public hearing to September 6.
Seconded by Ms. Manjikian. Motion passed.**

b. Request to Amend Special Permit – 122 Waverley Street, Lot B3 (a/k/a 120 Waverley Street)

Mr. Manjikian recused himself from this agenda item. Ms. Fiacco read the Public Hearing notice.

The applicant, Mr. Bob Calnan, requested that the PB amend the original plan. He noted the changes put forth in the amended SP.

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

The PB then discussed the amended Special Permit application. Mr. DeStefano stated that these changes are for convenience and won't increase density. He stated that he has no issues with the proposed changes. Ms. Fiacco added that adding a half bath in a basement is an issue that will be reviewed by the PB on a case-by-case basis. Ms. Allison agreed and suggested that this be explicitly reviewed early on in the process.

MOTION made by Mr. DeStefano to approve the amended Special Permit. Seconded by Ms. Fiacco. Motion passed.

c. 132 Sycamore Street – Two-Story Deck

Mr. Zhenhuo Li, the applicant, spoke to the deck and landscaping issues raised by Mr. Wheeler. Mr. DeStefano noted that the drawing does not have enough detail on it. He cited examples (posts, railings, roof pitch, etc.) of areas that will require more detailed information. Mr. Li agreed to obtain more detailed information from the architect.

Ms. Allison suggested that the landscape plan may need more detail as well, as it appears to not be drawn to scale. The architect may need to take another look at the landscape plan. She added that both lot coverage and open space calculations will need further evaluation, given the density of the area. Privacy for the neighbors is a concern, she added. Mr. Li spoke to the neighbor feedback. He expressed concern about the expense of consulting further with the architect, but agreed to follow up.

MOTION made by Ms. Fiacco to continue the public hearing to September 6. Seconded by Mr. Manjikian. Motion passed.

d. 35-37 Chandler Street – Three-Story Deck

Mr. DeStefano recused himself from this agenda item. He did not return to the meeting.

Ms. Mingli Ye, the applicant, stated that additional plan details, including a landscape plan, have been submitted to the PB. Mr. Manjikian asked a question about the pre-poured concrete for the deck. Mr. Wheeler stated that the building inspector will need to approve this design. He explained that this application involves the expansion of the first and third floors as well as the three-story deck.

Mr. Clark stated that this plan looks like a three-family house. Ms. Allison agreed that the stairway suggests a three-family house. Ms. Ye stated that she wished to replicate the three-tier deck of her neighbor's home. Mr. Clark reminded her that the rules may have changed since the neighbor did his/her deck. He added that if the existing deck was being replaced, it would not require the PB's permission.

There was agreement that the three decks would add substantial mass to the neighborhood. Mr. Manjikian stated that more details are needed on the plan. Mr. Clark suggested that the PB decide on the three-deck issue, before requesting additional plan details.

Ms. Ye explained that the decks would improve the access to viewing the sky given the huge trees in the back and side yard.

Ms. Allison explained the Special Permit process, e.g., in order to move forward, the plan must receive a "super majority" approval from the PB. She suggested that the applicant might want to consider withdrawing the application and submitting a revised plan. If the vote on this plan is negative, she explained, another plan cannot be submitted for two years.

The PB discussed issues relating to this request. An alternative plan was explored, whereby there will be no deck on the third floor. HVAC units were discussed. Ms. Allison suggested that a new application be submitted whereby there is no third floor deck (the present application can be amended.)

**MOTION made by Mr. Manjikian to continue the public hearing to September 6.
Seconded by Ms. Fiacco. Motion passed.**

Adjourn: 8:50 p.m.