

TOWN OF BELMONT
PLANNING BOARD

MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 9, 2012

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7:15 p.m. Meeting called to order

Attendance: Sami Baghdady, Chair; Michael Battista, Vice Chair; Elizabeth Allison, Charles Clark; Karl Haglund, Associate Member; Andres Rojas, Board of Selectmen Liaison to the Planning Board; Jeffrey Wheeler, Staff

Absent: Joseph DeStefano

7:15 p.m. Public Hearing: 307 Trapelo Road, Special Permit for Free-Standing Sign

Mr. Baghdady read the notice of the Public Hearing to consider the application of TD Bank for a Special Permit for a free-standing sign. Mr. Baghdady explained that the public hearing on the Special Permit will be consolidated with the Design and Site Plan Review hearing, which was continued until October 23, 2012.

Moved by Ms. Allison to continue the Public Hearing to October 23, 2012 at 7:00 pm.

Seconded by Mr. Battista.

Motion passes.

7:20 p.m. Public Hearing Continued: Cushing Village Application

Mark Donahue, attorney representing the Applicant, stated that plans for the Winslow Building are ready for the Board's review, and that the financial impact analysis report has been submitted. Peter Quinn, Architect for the project, gave the presentation. Mr. Quinn stated that the design of the Winslow Building had been revised in response to the Board's comments, and highlighted several of the changes:

- The building will be three stories;
- 10,000 square feet on the first floor will be for commercial use;
- 22,500 square feet will be for residential use;
- There will be 20-22 residential units;
- The ramp behind the building leading to the garage was removed, thereby creating an approximately 35 foot wide public plaza for tables and seating;
- The width of the sidewalk along Trapelo Road has been increased, which will allow benches, plantings, and gathering spaces along the street;
- A roof deck for use by the residents will be screened by a trellis and parapet;
- The front entrance will have a "front porch" feel and will be nicely detailed with wood and brick and the building will have lots of texture and detailing to retain a sense of craftsmanship;
- The building will have a bold and elegant cornice with stained shingles to avoid flatness of the building and to create a sense of hierarchy;
- The residential units will have Juliette balconies;

- Transoms above the windows will contribute to the nice detailing and pull the whole building together and will play on the vertical elements of the building;
- The first story windows create an interesting streetscape and continue around the entire building; and
- The compressors will be screened accordingly.

Mr. Baghdady inquired as to the height of the Winslow Building to the top of the parapet. Mr. Quinn responded that it is a little over 38 feet, and on Williston Road, the height is about 27 feet. He proceeded to show various views of the building from Williston Road, from Trapelo Road, and from the sidewalk level. Mr. Battista asked why the Trapelo Road elevation view of the building did not have a canopy, to which Mr. Quinn responded that the façade was recessed and didn't need one.

Mr. Heiken addressed the Board and said this presentation was an improvement compared to the presentation given this past July. However, he would like to see the following addressed:

- The pedestrian space to be covered;
- The arcade to be deeper;
- Step-back on the third floor; and
- Balconies for the third floor units.

He thought that overall the developers were moving in the right direction, but had concerns over the placement of the signage.

Mr. Rojas made the following comments:

- He suggested eliminating parking spaces along Williston Road to make room for trees around the public entrance, and to add trees to the public space/special events plaza since that area contained only pavement and not any green space;
- He recommended that the step-back on the Trapelo Road side be greater;
- He felt that the Trapelo Road side of the façade felt a little flat;
- He felt that the Juliette balconies were a little “un-Belmont” like;
- He felt that the building should have more definition; and
- He noted that centrality and proportion have been added to the building.

He commended the work of the developers for incorporating the earlier suggestions of the Planning Board.

Mr. Baghdady asked how high the roof-top mechanical units would be. Mr. Quinn responded they were 3 to 4 feet tall. Mr. Baghdady commented that the Board took the issue of noise very seriously, and it would not enough to simply conclude that the noise level is in compliance with the Noise By-Law. Mr. Quinn responded that the noise of the roof units would hardly be noticeable, and that they will be screened. Mr. Baghdady confirmed that there would be no roof units on the parapet part of the roof.

Mr. Rojas stated that the site plan must clearly show all the dumpsters, transformers, etc. There should be no “surprises,” as they may result in delays in the permitting process.

Mr. Baghdady commented that the plans will be posted on the website, and a future public hearing will be held for the public's comments.

Mr. Donahue noted the following about the Economic Analysis:

- The total assessed value of the property is \$6.642 million, and generates \$89,000 in real estate taxes;
- The Cushing Village hard construction costs are projected to be \$30 million;
- There will be a ripple effect in the economic development throughout Cushing Square;
- The revenues were derived by using the property at 125 Trapelo as the base comparable;
- The analysis estimated that \$35,000 would be generated from local receipts such as fees, licenses and fines;
- The expense side of the development is largely driven by education with a cost per student of \$10,025;
- The study estimates that 12 school age children will live in the building; and
- Total gross tax revenue of the development will be about \$634,000, and the net revenue will be about \$300,000.

Mr. Baghdady encouraged the members not to react to the numbers until they have fully read the report. Mr. Clark asked who conducted the analysis. Mr. Donahue responded that Mr. Starr had assembled the information from references. Mr. Clark noted that the report was referencing reports and studies that were not publically available and asked for copies of them. He noted that in order to judge the reliability of the data, it was necessary to see the reports. Mr. Baghdady asked Mr. Starr what his assumption was on the number of affordable housing units. Mr. Starr responded that about 12 units would be for affordable housing.

Mr. Donahue stated that they hope to send the Traffic and Parking Analysis to the Board soon, and to discuss it at the October 23rd meeting and have a follow up discussion on the Economic Analysis.

**Moved by Mr. Battista to continue the Public Hearing to October 23, 2012 at 7:00 pm.
Seconded by Mr. Haglund.
Motion passes.**

The Board took a short recess.

8:35 p.m. Proposed Religious and Municipal Building Preservation By-Law

Mr. Baghdady distributed a preliminary outline of considerations for a by-law which would help to preserve landmark religious and municipal buildings. He reviewed the outline, and asked the Board to be prepared at a later meeting to provide their thoughts and comments. Mr. Wheeler stated that some communities have flexible by-laws that allow commercial use of the buildings even though the underlying zoning might not allow it.

Mr. Rojas felt that the by-law needed to be very specific about the extent of preservation and renovation that would be required. Ms. Alison felt that a discussion with the Historic District Commission was necessary, and that it was also necessary to spell out clearly what the By-Law

seeks to accomplish. Mr. Wheeler stated that "historic" in this case means historic to Belmont, and that he was starting to compile a list of historic buildings in Belmont that this by-law would protect. Mr. Rojas added that probably only a few buildings in Belmont would qualify.

8:50 p.m. Committee Updates

Mr. Baghdady reported that the Belmont Housing Trust is drafting an amendment to the Inclusionary Housing By-Law. Mr. Baghdady announced that Mr. DeStefano will represent the Board on the Inclusionary Housing working group. Mr. Rojas stated that the Board of Selectmen agreed that a member of the Planning Board should sit on the Inclusionary Housing By-Law working group and that it should be composed of members from the Housing Trust and Planning Board.

Moved by Mr. Battista to approve the June 26, 2012, minutes of the Planning Board.

Seconded by Mr. Baghdady.

Motion passed.

Moved by Mr. Clark to approve the July 10, 2012, minutes of the Planning Board.

Seconded by Mr. Battista.

Motion passed.

Adjournment: 8:55 p.m.