

TOWN OF BELMONT
PLANNING BOARD

MEETING MINUTES
February 28, 2012

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TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA.

MAY 9 2 15 PM '12

7:00 p.m. Meeting called to order.

Attendance: Sami Baghdady, Chair; Michael Battista, Charles Clark, Karl Haglund, Andres Rojas; Jeffrey Wheeler, Staff

Absent: Joseph DeStefano

Michael Battista reported that the Capital Budget Committee will meet with the IT and School Departments on March 2nd.

Charles Clark reported that the Housing Trust is continuing its search for affordable development opportunities.

7:05 p.m. Cushing Village: Peer Review Consultant Scope of Services

Mr. Baghdady gave a very brief explanation of peer review consulting services, stating that the Town had a right to hire its own consultant to review the proposed application and that the applicant would pay for these services. He asked if the Board felt that two weeks was an appropriate length of time for the consultants to review the scope of services and to submit a proposal. The Board members agreed that it seemed to be a sufficient amount of time.

Andres Rojas suggested a number of consultants that he felt should be considered for peer review, as he believed that they were qualified in both range and scope. He provided a list of consultants for the Board to review.

Karl Haglund stated that the Board should ensure that it has a consultant who can provide three dimensional images, similar to the images created for potential development on South Pleasant Street. Andres Rojas added that the consultant should be able to interact with the community.

7:15 p.m. Public Hearing Continued: Cushing Village Application

Sami Baghdady reported that Joseph DeStefano recused himself from all discussions and decisions regarding the Cushing Village application and that Karl Haglund (Associate Member) will sit as a full member of the Planning Board to review the application. Charles Clark stated that he disclosed to the Selectmen a possible conflict of interest and that they found a conflict did not exist.

Mr. Starr gave a brief history of the Cushing Village project. He stated that he first came before the Board in 2009, returned in 2010 with another version, and is now before the Board with the third version of the proposal. Mr. Starr explained that with each successive proposal the square footage and mass of each building have been reduced and that a significant amount of architectural character has been added to the proposed buildings as well.

Mr. Starr explained that the development would consist of three buildings, each named as a nod

to Belmont's history: the Winslow (named after Winslow Homer who summered in Belmont), the Pomona (based on the agricultural symbol contained within the Town's seal), and the Hyland (the former site of the Highland Market and topographically the high point in the development). On the ground floor of each building would include boutiques and other retail space, a restaurant, and a Starbucks. In addition to bringing life and vitality to Cushing Square, Mr. Starr stated that the development would generate significant municipal revenue, almost \$600,000 per year and that the project will be energy efficient.

Peter Quinn, architect for the development, reported the following:

- The proposed Cushing Village will be on two acres extending from Belmont Street, down Common Street and around the corner onto Trapelo Road.
- There will be a total of 277 parking spaces, comprised of both at grade and underground parking.
- Pedestrian access will be provided around each building.
- Each building will be landscaped, with plantings and planter beds throughout.
- 156 bicycle parking spaces will be provided throughout the development.
- The development will contain one and two bedroom apartments; many will have balconies.
- Each building will have its own entry.
- Each building will have access to the underground parking lot, where parking will be provided for the residents of the development.
- Each building will be rich in architectural detail. The Winslow building's exterior will be finished in brick on the first story with shingles above and will contain traditional windows and a metal roof. The Ponoma building will have a rustic stone base, a clock tower, and recessed balconies. The Hyland building will have a "hillside village" feel, with balconies, stone detailing, a trellis, decorative cornices, and a cut stone entry archway.
- The traffic patterns will be minimally impacted.
- All buildings are less than 48 feet tall and are four stories or less.
- An estimated \$1.25 million in one-time fees will be generated for the Town (\$400,000 building permit fee and \$850,000 to purchase the Municipal Parking Lot).
- Numerous jobs would be generated, both construction and permanent.
- The development team will also initiate an interactive outreach program to include a website (www.Cushingvillage.com), a virtual model, a Twitter presence, and a blog.

Karl Haglund stated that he would like the presentation to accurately reflect that the FAR is a "maximum" number, and not an "allowable."

Audience Comments:

1. Douglas Koplou, 18 Oak Avenue, spoke in support of the project but expressed reservations on its design.
2. Al Smith, 11 Poplar Street, expressed concerns regarding traffic congestion.
3. Dennis Kavanaugh, 105 Lexington Street, inquired about solar panels on the south facing roof. He also commented that he felt that the clock tower was dated. He added that he

would love to see a patio/indoor court or terrace as part of the development.

4. Steve Carlini, 31 Horne Road, asked if the presentation could be made public. Mr. Starr indicated that the presentation would be put on the development's website.
5. Michael Camp, 16 Horne Road, expressed concerns regarding snow plowing and snow removal and how Horne Road would be plowed once it was closed to through traffic. Andres Rojas stated that the development will have a snow removal plan.
6. Matt Sullivan, 121 Hammond Road, favorably commented on this version of the proposal, saying it was a much better plan than previous plans. He added that he felt it would be good for the Town.

Mr. Baghdady thanked residents for their comments, and announced that at the next public hearing the Board will consider the height, bulk, density and building scale of the project.

**Moved by Charles Clark to continue the Public Hearing to March 13, 2012, at 7:00 pm.
Seconded by Michael Battista
Motion passed unanimously.**

8:30 p.m. Wellington Elementary School – Modify Design and Site Plan Approval

Mark Haley, Chair of the Wellington School Building Committee (WSBC), addressed the Board and requested an amendment to the Site Plan Approval to allow the relocation of the roof top mechanical unit known as RTU #3. Mr. Haley explained that the unit provides air and heating to the school and was installed improperly and does not meet state building requirements. He stated that to correct the problem, the unit must be moved 28 inches away from the screen wall and raised 28 inches higher.

William Lovallo, a member of the WSBC, spoke further to this issue, stating that the unit was safe and that it did not present a potentially harmful situation. He stated:

- The unit that must be moved is located near the Orchard Street entrance.
- The unit must be raised and an adaptor curve must be added to the base of the unit.
- Since the entire system must be shut down in order to fix this problem, the WSBC would like the work to take place during the April break when the kids are on vacation.
- Sentec, an acoustic consultant firm, was retained to under take an acoustic study of the roof top units and the surrounding neighborhood and to help develop solutions to the noise problems associated with the new building. Several neighbors have complained about the noise coming from the roof units, which appears to be emanating from the Orchard Street side of the building.

Sami Baghdady reported that he toured the roof of the Wellington School building, and observed gaps in the screening around the roof top units; he questioned if the noise could be traveling through these spaces. Bob Barons, the Sentec project manager who would be heading the acoustical study, stated that these gaps were one of the many factors the study would review.

Audience Comments:

1. Monica Sainsbury, 4 Colonial Terrace, asked why the unit had to be moved closer to Orchard Street and couldn't be moved in the opposite direction. She also asked what guarantee would be given that the acoustical study would solve the noise problem. Mr. Lovallo responded that the independent acoustic consultant would be working on this issue to resolve it and that every effort would be made to correct the problem.
2. John Carey, 124 Orchard Street, asked about the sound level readings. Mr. Barons responded that the study would look at a weighted reading, taking into account the ambient noise level.
3. David Gal, 44 Glendale Road, noted that any complete study has to include a baseline of early morning quiet before the noise begins.
4. Margaret Waters, 106 Orchard Street, thanked the Board for looking into the noise issue and for addressing it.
5. Ann Paulson, 90 School Street, commented that the Middle School, the Beech Street Center, and the Wellington School all have noise issues. She wondered how the Town will make sure that the noise is taken into consideration on subsequent construction projects.

A discussion ensued about the timeliness of the repairs, a further request for more information and when Mr. Lovallo could again come before the Board with additional information. Mr. Baghdady didn't want to hold up the relocation of the unit, but at the same time he wanted more information regarding the noise reduction. It was agreed that a final certificate of occupancy could not be issued until satisfactory noise reduction was achieved.

Moved by Andres Rojas to approve the relocation of the RTU #3 unit on the condition that an acoustical analysis be conducted to minimize noise, and that the WSBC submit acoustical improvements to the Board for its review and approval. Seconded by Charles Clark

Motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment: 9:40 p.m.

List of Documents Presented:

- None