

**TOWN OF BELMONT  
PLANNING BOARD**

**MEETING MINUTES  
November 25, 2014**

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Present: Michael Battista, Chair; Elisabeth Allison, Vice Chair; Charles Clark; Joseph DeStefano; Karl Haglund, Barbara Fiacco (Associate Member), Jeffrey Wheeler, Liaison Office of Community Development

**7:15 p.m. Meeting called to order**

**7:15 p.m. Continued Review of Cushing Village Design Modifications**

Mr. Quinn, architect for the Cushing Village development reported the following changes:

➤ Hyland Building:

- The parapet will remain and all acknowledged that the building is better with a combination of parapet and mansard.
- Installing sloped roofs and canopies around the windows.
- The roof will continue onto the projected bays which will soften the roof and cornice.
- The roof mechanicals have been reduced in size.
- The roof room will be increased approximately 200 square feet and is the only additional square footage being added.
- Mass has been reduced and small slopes have been introduced.
- Room was added to accommodate a stairwell which will not be visible from the street
- The stairway roof structures have been more articulated to reflect their shape.

➤ Winslow Building

- A three foot extension will be added to the elevator shaft.
- The stairwell will be increased in height by 6 feet.
- Approximately 400 square feet was added onto the Trapelo Road side of the roof room.

➤ Pomona

- No changes have been made to the roof.
- Small changes have been made to the windows.
- The entry to the Municipal Garage will be moved to the corner of the building.
- Adjustments have been made to the crosswalks on Trapelo Road.

➤ Wall Venting

- Reviewed to make sure that every one of them is represented in the drawings.
- They will not be installed in the side of the Mansard roof, but will come directly from the ceiling on the top floor units through to the roof.

Mr. Battista questioned whether approving these changes after approving the initial project would set a precedent. But on the other hand, he stated, that if these changes improved the project then the Board should consider them. Ms. Allison stated that she was not concerned about setting a precedent and commented that this project will revitalize Cushing Square, and that it was necessary to keep in mind the vital interests of the neighborhood. Mr. Haglund noted that the opinions of the neighborhood should be a determining factor in the decision making process, but that the Board has to determine whether these changes are an improvement. Mr. Clark felt that the Board should approve the changes, as the function of the building is improved, and the changes don't detract from the overall look of the buildings. All agreed that these issues should be moved along.

Mr. Battista outlined the major issues: mechanical venting, windows, exterior materials, entry structure, parapet, and roof structures. He asked the Board to comment on these issues

Mr. Haglund asked how the venting would occur if not through the sides of the building. Mr. Pucillo, representing the Applicant, responded that the venting would be brought up vertically through the roof. The Board agreed that the vents for plume generating equipment should go through the roof, and Mr. Battista noted that it was initially told that all venting would go through the roof. The Board acknowledged that the bath and kitchen exhausts can go through the side of the building.

Mr. Battista commented that the windows and trim on the Pomona Building facing Horne Road looked unbalanced. Mr. Clark agreed and added that correcting this will complete the façade.

Mr. Battista asked that the materials used be natural – full brick, stone and stucco. He reviewed the conditions of the Special Permit. Mr. Pucillo stated that it is the intent to use real materials.

Mr. Clark stated that the new entry structure works better since it brings activity towards the Square. Mr. Battista added that the top is a detail that added to its focus. Mr. Pucillo mentioned that separating this entry from the rest of the building was intended to improve access for the retail spaces and improve security for the residential units above.

Mr. Clark stated that the parapet is better than the railing. Both Mr. Pucillo and Mr. Quinn acknowledged that this will work better and be an overall improvement.

Mr. Haglund stated that he did not have a problem with the roof structures since they were needed in order to comply with the State Building Code. Mr. Quinn clarified that it is the intention for each building to have a roof amenity such as a meeting room and/or deck.

Comments from the audience:

1. Doug Koplow, Oak Avenue, commented that the new roof lines did not look balanced; they did not look aesthetically pleasing. He stated that he like the mansard roof better than the railing. He also added that if square footage is added to one area, then square footage should be deducted from another area.

2. Nicole Gianoukos, Belmont Street, commented that high quality materials must be used. She also stated that massing was still a huge concern. She expressed concern about what was coming out of the vents and whether the neighbors should be concerned about this.
3. Dave Kohl, Horne Road, expressed concerns about floodlights at night and noise.
4. Carolyn Bishop, Orchard Street, commented that the windows and roof look industrial.

The Board agreed that the remaining issues were the venting and the windows and that it will vote on all of the proposed changes once these issues are resolved.

(The Board took a 5 minute break and reconvened at 8:35 p.m., joined by Mr. DeStefano.)

**8:35 p.m.     Review Process for Implementing the General Residence Zoning**

Ms. Allison talked about the guidelines and protocols of defining a neighborhood, and commented that the following items should be considered in creating the guidelines:

- Consistency and harmony to the neighborhood
- Fiscal impact on the Town
- Thresholds
- Setbacks
- Parking and the need to be clearer about what “adequate” means

The Board discussed the types of homes that should be built in Belmont. Mr. DeStefano suggested letting the developers and the market make that determination.

**9:15 p.m.     Continued Public Hearing:**

**36 Merrill Avenue – 2 New Single-Family Dwellings**

The Board discussed the current methods of calculating front setbacks and agreed that the method of calculation needed to be looked at. Don Cusano, the Applicant, spoke to the importance of having specific figures in place by which to base calculations.

Mr. DeStefano suggested that the dormers be removed in order to lower the ridge line and to lose the illusion of massing. All agreed. He also wanted improvements to the entry way and to change the location of the door leading to the patio. Mr. Battista clarified that the shutters will be real wood. He asked that new plans be submitted showing all of these changes in time for the December 2 meeting. Ms. Allison commented that she would like to run the density numbers in the quantitative analysis after Mr. Cusano makes the changes.

**MOTION made by Mr. DeStefano to continue the public hearing on 36 Merrill Avenue to December 2, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. Seconded by Ms. Allison. Motion passed.**

**Adjourn: 10:00 p.m.**