

**TOWN OF BELMONT
PLANNING BOARD**

**MEETING MINUTES
November 1, 2016**

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Present: Elisabeth Allison, Chair; Charles Clark; Raffi Manjikian; Barbara Fiacco, Vice Chair; Joseph DeStefano and Karl Haglund

Staff: Jeffrey Wheeler, Office of Community Development Liaison

1. 7:01 p.m. Meeting Called to Order

Ms. Allison called the meeting to order and introduced the members of the PB.

2. What's Next for Cushing Village?

[Mr. DeStefano recused himself from the Cushing Village discussion.]

Ms. Allison stated that the sale of the Cushing Village properties was complete and reviewed the calendar of milestones that had been triggered as a result of the closing. She answered questions posed by the Cushing Square Neighborhood Association (CSNA) and noted that the developer must comply with all of the conditions of the Special Permit.

Doug Koplow, representing CSNA, asked if the noise testing was completed and if the PB could look into it. He asked about communication and whom to contact if there are any problems in the future. Ms. Allison stated that there are defined contacts for every condition and that entity should be contacted with any concerns. She added that the PB will discuss the milestones at its meeting on December 1, 2016.

3. Vote on General Residence District Design Guidelines

[Mr. DeStefano joined the PB at 7:11 PM]

The PB discussed minor edits to the Guidelines. Ms. Fiacco reviewed her edits. The PB discussed the landscaping requirements section and agreed that the language needs to be flexible. Mr. Manjikian suggested new language regarding dormers. The PB discussed alternative approaches to the problem of oversize dormers and agreed that these issues should be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Ms. Allison asked the PB to finalize and approve the guidelines on November 15, 2016.

4. Continued Public Hearings:

a. 60-62 Channing Road – Second Floor Deck (GR)

Alexander Stolyarov, Applicant, briefly reviewed his updated plans.

The PB asked the Applicant to install three evergreens (Arborvitae) 5'- 6' in height, one at

each corner of the deck (2) and the third at the corner of the house to soften the increased mass. .

Motion to close the public hearing made by Mr. Manjikian and seconded by Mr. Clark. Motion passed

Motion to grant the Special Permit with the condition to plant three Arborvitae made by Ms. Fiacco and seconded by Mr. Manjikian. Motion passed.

b. 132 Sycamore Street – Two Story Deck (GR)

Zhenhua Liu, Applicant, stated that upon reflection, he wanted a larger deck and if the PB agreed to an expansion to 7' X 15', he would have his architect update the plans. Mr. Clark noted that the PB spent quite a bit of time discussing the size of the deck at the last PB meeting. Mr. Liu stated that the larger deck would look perfect with the existing windows and requested the PB to reconsider the size of it. Mr. Haglund stated that the deck needs to be set in at least 12" from the rear façade of the house. Mr. Liu gave a copy of his revised plan to the PB. Mr. DeStefano stated that the deck could be slightly larger than the one that was agreed to at the last meeting. Ms. Fiacco stated that guidance was given to the Applicant for the deck to be 6' X 12'. Ms. Allison stated that the size was clearly agreed to at the last meeting. She suggested that the Applicant withdraw the application and come back with a new set of plans or accept the size of the deck at 6' X 12'. She noted that there is no assurance that a new application for a larger deck would be granted by the PB.

The Applicant requested a working group be created and that the PB conduct a site visit to his property. Mr. Clark stated that he would like to reduce the number of field visits by the PB. Mr. Haglund noted that at the Applicants request he had already made one visit to the site. Ms. Allison stated that the practice of multiple site visits by the PB would be problematic - site visits and the working group is not an option. Given the prior agreement on the size, she reiterated that the Applicant's choices: proceed with a 6' X 12' deck or withdraw his application.

Mr. Liu requested that his application be withdrawn.

Motion to accept the withdrawal of the application for 132 Sycamore Street made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. Manjikian. Motion passed.

5. Public Hearings:

a. 10 Anis Road – Two Story Addition (SR-C)

Ms. Allison briefly described the process of how the cases will be reviewed. She stated that the Applicant and their representative can make a presentation but that it should not be longer than 10 minutes. She noted that she will present statistical analysis and then the PB will discuss the "gatekeeper" questions. Mr. Clark reminded the audience that these are Special

Permits because they are outside the current zoning regulations. Ms. Fiacco reviewed public process required by the state open meeting laws. She noted that the PB is required to conduct the decision-making process in public. Ms. Allison reviewed the application submission deadline requirements.

Ms. Fiacco read the public hearing notice.

Mr. William Murthy, Applicant, explained his proposed plans. He stated that he would like to build an addition above his garage to add a bedroom for his twin sons and rebuild the garage as a two-car garage. Mr. Murthy explained that his house is a mirror image of 16 Anis Road. He stated that his car would not fit in the garage if he was to reduce the size of the garage to meet the setback requirements.

Ms. Allison presented the statistical analysis and reviewed the existing and proposed conditions for TLA and FAR. She noted that this proposal would clearly increase the density of the neighborhood.

Mr. Manjikian asked about the basement and how it will be used. Mr. Murthy's Architect, Nicolas Preston, explained how the garage will be rebuilt and how the basement will be used. Mr. DeStefano stated that he liked the design of the house, but that the garage should not increase the existing nonconformity of the side setback. Ms. Allison redirected the PB and asked it to look at the broader picture of how the house fits into the neighborhood and to consider density and mass.

Ms. Allison asked about plumbing in the basement and noted that the bulkhead doors will be replaced with a direct exit. She commented that the addition of direct exit and plumbing makes it easier to create living space in the basement. She stated that the proposed renovations placed it in the top 25% of the neighborhood and noted that this was a significant increase to the mass of the neighborhood. Mr. Clark stated that this is a neighborhood of small houses. Mr. DeStefano stated that the additions do not overpower the neighborhood, but noted that he was not comfortable increasing the nonconforming setbacks.

Comments from the audience:

1. Stephen Pinkerton, 139 Dalton Road, stated that there have been about a dozen expansions like this one in this neighborhood. In every case, the ZBA has said that they need to push the addition to the back. He suggested pushing the garage back two feet. He noted that to describe the proposed plans as identical to 16 Anis Road was not correct in light of the rear addition since it is at the back of it. He added that massing is an issue and should be looked at just like other cases.

The PB agreed to form a working group to work on some of these issues. Mr. DeStefano and Mr. Haglund agreed to be the working group.

Motion to continue the public hearing on 10 Anis Road to November 15, 2016 made by Mr. DeStefano and seconded by Mr. Clark. Motion passed.

b. 60 Hull Street – Two Dormers (GR)

Ms. Fiacco read the public hearing notice.

Mr. Montenegro, the Applicant, stated that he and his wife work from home and they need more space for their offices and growing family. The Applicant's architect, Adam Glassman, presented the proposed architectural plans to create additional living space in the attic.

Ms. Allison reviewed that the quartile analysis and noted that the proposed renovations make the house one of the largest in the neighborhood on one of the smallest lots. Mr. Clark noted that it is a high-density neighborhood and that this would increase it. Ms. Fiacco asked for clarity on the number of bedrooms. Mr. Wheeler explained the calculation. Board members noted that the plans included a number of spaces that could easily be converted into bedrooms.

The PB discussed some of the issues with the dormer and possible changes.

Comments from the audience:

1. Debbie Deutsch, 56 Hull Street, spoke in support of the application. She stated that she would like to attract resident owners versus renters in the neighborhood as the homes are generally better taken care of when owner occupied.
2. John Occhino, 18 Hull Street, spoke in support of the application.
3. Linhong Sun, Neighbor, 66 Hull Street, stated that she was there to learn more about the project.

Ms. Allison noted that plans for Hull Street, as well as any application under consideration by the PB, were available on the Town's website.

Motion to continue the public hearing on 60 Hull Street to November 15, 2016 made by Ms. Fiacco and seconded by Mr. Manjikian. Motion passed.

c. 54 Sycamore Street – Three Level Deck (GR)

This hearing was continued to November 15, 2016 at the request of the Applicant.

6. Neighborhood Determinations, Updates on Potential Cases, and Preview Agenda

These discussions were deferred to the November 15, 2016 meeting.

7. 47 Payson Road – Third Floor Deck (GR)

Motion to accept the withdrawal of the application for 47 Payson Road made by Mr.

Clark and seconded by Mr. Manjikian. Motion passed.

8. Review and approval of minutes

Motion to accept the October 18, 2016 meeting minutes made by Ms. Fiacco and seconded by Mr. Manjikian. Motion passed.

Adjourn 9:32 PM