

TOWN OF BELMONT
PLANNING BOARD

MEETING MINUTES
MAY 2, 2017

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2017 MAY 25 AM 11:28

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

Staff: Jeffrey Wheeler, Senior Planner; Spencer Gober, Staff Planner

1. Meeting Called to Order at 7:00 PM

2. Continued Public Hearings:

- a. 55 Day School Lane (Belmont Day School) – Design and Site Plan Review for gymnasium building ('the Barn') and site improvements.

[Ms. Allison recused herself from the meeting at 7:03 PM]

Ms. Fiacco explained the process of Site Plan Review and the limits of the Dover Amendment. She noted that there were many letters received from the residents and that they have been reviewed by the PB.

Kelly Cardoza, representing the Belmont Day School (BDS), reviewed changes that BDS made in relation to comments received. She explained that there would be a Transportation Demand Plan implemented to educate staff and families on traffic concerns and ways to mitigate the number of trips to the BDS property. She noted that the future traffic conditions would be improved on the property and that queuing will not occur on Day School Lane, as a result, Day School Lane residents could expect to see less traffic on their road. She displayed a photo simulation of the proposed driveway entrance off of Concord Avenue. She noted that the 20' width of the driveway meets fire code and is necessary to provide safe emergency access to the school.

Mr. Wheeler distributed a packet of letters from residents that were received after the PB's packets were delivered.

Comments from the Audience:

- 1) Dick Madden, 535 Pleasant Street, questioned how the school will benefit by increasing its enrollment. Brendan Largay, Head of BDS, responded that the increase in the school and the barn adds more opportunities for more classes of varying concepts.
- 2) Joseph Noone, attorney representing several abutters, requested that the PB ask the applicant to do a peer review of the traffic. Robert Vanasse, Traffic Engineer, reviewed several reasons why the traffic study was deficient and needed further review. Kathy Bailey, representing BDS, noted that off-site traffic requirements that are not related to

the school are outside the PB's purview. She asked the PB to seriously consider whether the peer review is necessary.

- 3) Kathy Fullerton, 99 Clark Street, stated that she supported the proposal and noted that the Barn would provide better academic space and the driveway would improve traffic flow.
- 4) Kerri Baugh, Fairmont Street, stated that she has children at BDS and was there when the tree fell across Day School Lane and wondered what would have happened if there was an emergency. She stated that she is very concerned about having just one access road and she supported the proposed driveway.
- 5) Danielle Lemack, 30 Fairmont Street, stated that she has children at the BDS and that the "barn" is an amazing opportunity and that it will be benefit to the Town. She added that the second driveway will keep the children safer.
- 6) Michelle Wilson, 1053 Concord Avenue, noted that she walks on Concord Avenue and that she does not support another driveway as it is dangerous for walkers, pedestrians, walkers and cyclists. She added that she supports the barn.
- 7) Lia Meisinger, 531 Concord Avenue, stated that she supports the driveway and noted that the cars speeding on Concord Avenue is the issue and not the drivers accessing BDS.
- 8) Chip Shaw, Pinehurst Road, stated that the driveway is a roadway and not a driveway. He added that there were drainage issues on his property because of BDS and noted that BDS has not been good neighbors.
- 9) Sue Pew, Wellington Lane, stated that she recently purchased a plot at the cemetery and that the serenity will be lessened as a result of the driveway.
- 10) Ellen O Brien Cushman, Chair of the Cemetery Commission, stated that she was most interested in stormwater management. Ms. Cardoza noted that the stormwater management requirements have been met.
- 11) Matthew Stephenson, 2 Warwick Road, stated that he had two children at BDS and that the expansion is important to the academic, social, artistic, and athletic opportunities. He added that it is important to support education and to focus on the beneficial aspects of the project as it is in the spirit of the Dover Amendment.

Mr. Manjikian asked the Applicant to address the stormwater issues. Frank Holmes, stormwater engineer, stated that the proposed driveway is designed to pitch onto the school's property away from the cemetery. Mr. Wheeler noted that Ara Yogurtian, Assistant Director of Community Development, will review the stormwater management plan and at the time of occupancy BDS will have to submit an operation and maintenance plan.

Ms. Fiacco asked the Applicant to review the fire regulations and the status of the conversation with the Fire Department. Ms. Cardoza stated that she spoke with Captain Pizzi and the code requires that the driveway be twenty feet wide. Ms. Fiacco noted that the Fire Chief has offered to write a formal written report.

Mr. DeStefano asked the Applicant to describe the construction of the driveway. Mr. Holmes explained the proposed construction for the drive. Mr. DeStefano asked the Applicant how they plan to maintain the serenity of the cemetery while a service is occurring. Mr. Largay explained that there would be communication between the Cemetery Commission and BDS Director of Operations. Mr. Clark asked the Board to consider whether they want another intersection on Concord Avenue or just an emergency access road.

Mr. Manjikian asked about screening around the light poles and how it will preserve the character of that area. He noted that he was looking forward to Mr. Haglund's review of the landscape plan.

Ms. Fiacco noted her concerns about whether the traffic study notes how the drivers "will behave" and drive in a specific direction on the property and how traffic will be managed on-site. Ms. Cardoza stated that the school's policies will be included in the instructions given to parents and that the school will be the enforcer on the private driveway.

Ms. Fiacco stated that the PB will talk with Town Counsel about the peer review and follow up with the Fire Department on the requirements of an access road. She asked Mr. Wheeler to explain whether the PB has the authority to seek a third party review. Mr. Wheeler noted that the PB more detail was needed on snow removal, relocating the dumpster, and enforcement on the new driveway.

MOTION to continue to May 23, 2017 was made by Mr. DeStefano and seconded by Mr. Manjikian. Motion passed.

b. 395 Concord Avenue (National Armenian Studies and Research Library) – Design and Site Plan Review to construct 3rd story addition to waive parking requirements.

[Ms. Allison rejoined the PB and Mr. DeStefano recused himself from the public hearing.]

Ms. Allison noted that this is a Dover Amendment case

Mr. Krafian, representing the applicant, reviewed outstanding issues: number of activities, traffic impact, parking issues, parking directional signage, fire code requirements, planters, and heights of the adjacent buildings. He presented a slide show that responded to these issues. Key points covered included ; the visitor and program expectations and noted the number of attendees expected at meetings; the parking and traffic and noted that nothing will

change as the number of events will remain the same; that signs would be installed to direct people to overflow parking at the church across the street, a description of interaction with parking for the Powers Music School; the proposed plantings, the location of the bike rack, and the trash and recycling program.

Ms. Fiacco suggested that a formal parking agreement should be submitted for the overflow parking. Ms. Allison stated that she was concerned about the future use of the third floor event space since it allows a large number of people to gather. She noted that this will impact parking for the Post Office, the Belmont Public Library and the adjacent commercial properties.

Ms. Allison noted that the traffic needs to be consistent with the conversation that the PB is having with BDS as the traffic comes out on the same street. She also noted that she would like to have more information regarding night time lighting and HVAC noise levels. She also noted that she was concerned about fire access and wanted confirmation from the Fire Department. Mr. Krafian noted that the fire access is code compliant. Ms. Allison suggested forming a working group to resolve these issues. The PB concurred that parking is a major issue and although potentially resolvable with signage and a clear and detailed written agreement. She noted that as the new event space at 395 Concord Avenue frees up space at 380 Concord Avenue, the First Armenian Church may use its space for other functions. Mr. Krafian noted that the Zoning By-Law allows them to have parking within 400' feet of the building. He added that he will provide decibel levels of the HVAC equipment and will get documentation from the Fire Department.

MOTION to continue to May 23, 2017 was made by Mr. Manjikian and seconded by Ms. Fiacco. Motion passed.

c. 29 Jason Road – Special Permit – Addition Greater than 30% - Single Residence C District.

Bob Kockem, abutter, spoke in support of the project and stated that it will enhance the neighborhood.

Mr. Wheeler reviewed the plans and noted that there are architectural details that need to be addressed by the Applicant: including details for the front and rear porch railings, window. He also raised the issue of aligning the window and changing the pitch of the roof to mimic the pitch of the garage.

Mr. Manjikian questioned the basement layout. Ms. Allison stated that she is concerned that fifteen 50' tall pine trees would be removed and replaced with grass since the pines form a very effective barrier between this house and the house behind it. The Applicant explained that the trees have roots that could cause damage and that they block the neighbor's sun. Mr.

Clark stated that the PB has asked for the landscaping to ameliorate the impact of an addition and noted that grass is not the type of landscaping that will suffice.

Mr. Manjikian noted that the application had not included third floors showing current and proposed layouts. Several PB members noted that the roof was at the maximum legal limit and asked that the pitch of the roof be lowered. Ms. Allison noted that the current pitch may allow substantial usable space on the third floor and that this must be included in the calculation of GFA and TLA. She reiterated that PB view that development should enhance the neighborhood.

The Board agreed that Mr. Haglund and Mr. Gober serve as a working group to review the landscape plan and other issues raised by the PB. Ms. Fiacco asked the Applicant to include the neighbor's input on the landscape plan.

MOTION to continue to May 23, 2017 was made by Mr. Manjikian and seconded by Ms. Fiacco. Motion passed.

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

a. The Bradford (formerly Cushing Village)

Mr. Wheeler noted that that Toll Brothers held a neighborhood meeting to preview the design changes and generally get input from the neighbors. Ms. Allison noted that she had attended the meeting and that there was 2 ½ hours of discussion. As yet the PB has not received an application for changes in the design. The PB would need to review the revisions if they are submitted. He noted that the project is now called the Bradford.

4. Preview Agenda for the Next Meeting 05/23/17

Agenda items were discussed during this meeting.

5. Review and Approval of Minutes

Meeting Minutes will be reviewed and approved at next meeting.

6. Adjourn 9:49 PM