

Design Review Board Meeting
Virtual Meeting by Zoom
January 25, 2021
128 High Street

Board Members in attendance: Rue Sherwood, Ken Savoie, Laura Gresh, Bob Weatherall
Ethan Parsons, Planning Director
Carolyn Britt, member of Planning Board
Carl Gardner, citizen, Woods Lane
Applicant/Developer: Lou Rubino, Pasquale Kouloulas of MMC Realty Holdings LLC

Second presentation by MMC Realty Holdings LLC for design review relative to special permit application for 7-unit multifamily development at 126 & 128 High Street

This is a continuation of meeting on January 11, 2021 showing revised plans of 7 units proposed and maintaining the existing commercial business.

There is a contract to purchase 126 High Street (back lot) where the house will be demolished.

Lou Rubino said redesigned plans incorporate comments from the Planning Board and DRB. He said the new plans have increased green space with 50% of the property now being greenspace. There will be only one driveway entrance from High Street. Plans are to provide landscape screening between units. Redesign has less impact to abutters on Kimball Ave.

Two options were presented – Plan A and Plan B
Plan B had more greenspace,

Ken said he thought the single driveway at entrance from High Street was an improvement as well as reconfigured parking at commercial site. He said he saw the same density as previous presentation -- this reconfiguration does not create more greenspace. Parking / turning around for Unit 1 seemed difficult.

He thought seeing the development in relation to neighbors was an improvement. He suggested using the town's mapping system to do this.

Bob questioned the amount of open space in relation to the build space and questioned whether the plans met the current requirement for open space.

Rue questioned the small size of area designated for a patios and what furnishings would realistically fit in this space.

Lou said units 1, 2, 3 patio space is 22' x 30', units 4 and 5 patio space is 24' x 20' with units 6 and 7 have smaller area. He said the landscaping was yet to be shown but will include shade trees and screening between units.

Ken said the DRB would need to review the landscaping as well.

Bob commented on the plan with center circular drive allowing cars to access any unit.
Both Ken and Bob said they preferred the center circular drive plan.

The developer would need a waiver for 7 units. Ken said he would prefer to see 6 units with 3 duplex units --eliminating the 7th middle unit for the building with 3 units.

Exterior:

Lou said units will look identical with a mixture of clapboard and shingles and a post and beam entryway.

Bob said the generic same look for each did not reflect the diverse context of the neighborhood. Other comments -- It seems the exterior was designed to accommodate the interior plan. It might have been better to show the buildings as basic blocks if the design is not finalized for presentation. Present a design that honors the uniqueness of this town.

Proximity of unit 6 to commercial building is only 14 feet -- did this set-back meet set back requirements for proximity of commercial and residential buildings.

It was suggested changing the configuration of three buildings on the site with Building A parallel to Kimball Avenue, Building C rotated 90 degrees. Reducing the number of units to 6 to fit comfortably on the site. This would allow Building B more space and more distance from the commercial building.

Rue asked if any of the units would meet the affordable housing guidelines.

Lou said they wouldn't.

Carolyn Britt, member of the Planning Board, asked if there was consideration to build a home for the future with solar and electric power. Carolyn also said she surveyed other condo developments in town and saw similar buildings – garage on first level, small common use area, minimal open space, and units being approximately 2,300 sq. ft.

Current plans with living area on second floor and a two-stall garage on first level with entrances on the side does not allow for easy outdoor access and sociability.

Laura suggested a one-door tandem 2-stall garage. The space for second stall would be created by using the area designated for a first floor den/bedroom. This would allow for area for a more socially friendly entryway.

Rue suggested adding a front porch. These changes would make the units have the feel of a neighborhood.

Summary of comments / suggestions:

- Create less density on the site.
- Consider reducing the number of units from 7 to 6 and creating more open space.
- Changing configuration of buildings on the site also to create more green space. Rotate Building C 90 degrees.
- Create a more socially friendly entrances.
- Consider one door garage with tandem parking spaces for 2 cars.

Minutes from Meeting January 11, 2021

Rue moved to accept edited minutes. Ken seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

The meeting adjourned at.

Laura Gresh,
Secretary

Adopted: February 22, 2021