

Design Review Board Meeting
Virtual Meeting by Zoom
February 22, 2021 at 6:00 PM

Board Members in attendance: Rue Sherwood, Ken Savoie, Bob Weatherall, Linda Riley, Laura Gresh Ethan Parsons, Planning Director
Lou Rubino, Pasquale Kouloulas, Kylie Derekas, Liz Hall, Nick Betts, Sarah Winderlin, Roger Leblanc, Patrick Norton, Mike Lindstrom, Charlie Wear, Kate Kenner, Don Greenough

Minutes November 12, 2020

Rue motioned to approve. Bob seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Minutes January 25, 2021

Ken requested to edits. Bob motioned to approve with edits. Linda seconded motion. All voted in favor.

Minutes February 8, 2021

Bob motioned to approve. Rue seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

126-128 High Street

Applicant Lou Rubino presented revised plans since meeting January 25, 2021.

The site plan showed six-units instead of the originally proposed seven units. This provides an increase in open space to more than 50% of the site.

This would meet the 50% requirement for open space. Added landscaping will provide screening /privacy between the buildings and also for neighboring houses. Full landscape plan is to be determined.

Front façades and rear elevations have been redesigned. These revisions were presented to the planning board and were well received. Front elevation shows a gabled front façade. Post and beam entry with pillars. Within the gable is an arched window at the third level and bay window below on second level below. The second level projects out / garrison-like over the simple double garage door at first level. Plans show varied materials and different textures at the front façade.

Bob inquired about surface of circular drive. Lou said he would like to use both asphalt and cobblestone. Bob said that the change in the roof pitch and addition of gable ends was an improvement from previous plans.

Bob suggested adding more width to the second-floor bay window to be more compatible with the large third floor arched window.

Ken suggested using the same trim for both windows to unify the façade.

The rear elevation shows third-floor bedroom windows wider and taller than second-floor windows. The second-floor smaller windows accommodate the interior kitchen sink. Laura suggested adding width to these windows similar to the third-floor windows.

The gabled side elevation shows two small windows. This façade faces Liberty Street and School Street. Ken suggested adding small windows diagonally at interior staircase. More windows would be desirable on this side for improved design and additional light. Bob said the residences which would have ends with a view should be designed to take advantage of those views, and natural light.

The interior floor plans can be revised to achieve these changes. Bob suggested a varied use of siding materials to break-up the monotony. It was noted that heat and AC condensers will be housed inside the structure.

Pasquale said that four windows on the side elevation could be accomplished. He also suggested instead of bay windows at 2nd level front façade the windows be changed to be the same height and width as 3rd floor arched windows with raised panels.

Ken asked if the middle building could be rotated at an angle. Pasquale said to comply with setback requirements, it couldn't be rotated.

The board agreed that the changes presented were an improvement especially changing from seven to six units on the site.

Developer agreed to come back with revisions and a landscape plan.

87 High Street

Winderlin said the house was converted to a two-family with a separate accessory dwelling in 2005. There is also a shed/studio on the property. She said she had approval from the APDC in 2018 to add 4-units. The property is zoned IR in-town residential which promotes more density and RRA requiring 2 acres for a dwelling. The property owner can opt for one of the two for to develop this property.

Ken Savoie recused himself from the discussion as he is the architect for the proposed project. Rue Sherwood recused herself as she is the landscape architect for the proposed project.

The proposed project will increase the units from three to seven with the addition of a 4-unit building at the back of the property. The proposed project does not require any waivers as it meets zoning requirements. The building will have a ground floor handicapped apartment and another that meets affordable housing guidelines.

Bob asked if the width of the driveway was what is required by the fire department. The owner indicated the building will have a sprinkler system installed.

The barn-like structure front façade shows a single entrance with access to the other first floor units on the side facades. Building is tucked into incline at the back of the lot. 140 feet from the road and 75 feet from neighboring properties. Plans show varied siding textures with board and baton and clapboard. Ken said cement board will be used for siding. Bob said natural materials should be used since the structure will be in a historic neighborhood and that the aesthetics and patina from natural materials is preferred.

Neighbors have not opposed the plans and expressed a need for parking to be screened.

Next step is to present feedback from DRB to Planning Board with a public hearing on March 11 and a presentation to the APDC on March 15. Both the Planning Board and the DRB will defer to the APDC for final decision.

Rue inquired about plan for drain water.

Linda volunteered the owner and builder to see her handicapped living situation.

The next presentation will address access the fire truck access to property and provide a landscaping plan.

New England Biolabs Child Care Center

Access to the site is from Campus Road – 1800 feet from Fellows Road. It is zoned RRA. The lot is not part of the Great Estates which would require a special permit. The buildings will replace the current child care center and double the existing space.

The proposed structures were described as barn-like with 2 buildings with solar panels and will be a green sustainable structure. Bob noted the proposed solar array and its supporting structure and hoping for aesthetic sensitivity/ creativity.

Landscape with plantings relating to the existing species and support bees and butterflies. The building is surrounded by meadows with a buffer zone of wetlands.

Rue complemented the proposed landscape plan.

Attorney Don Greenough said the property is zoned RRA where a child care facility is permitted. The lot is 6-acres with 50 feet of frontage.

Ken asked what materials were planned for exterior facades. Architect said it is a German product -- a textured cement board.

Bob encouraged the use of natural products and suggested wood. Samples of the materials will be part of next presentation.

The exterior facades design is in progress with the possible addition of color. Bob said the façade design should be engaging to children and staff.

Ken suggested window openings be scaled for children.

The modern industrial interpretation of a barn was an interesting design.

Attorney Greenough said the next step was to present before the Planning Board on March 11 with a follow-up presentation to DRB.

New Business

No new business

Bob said there is a need to make sure DRB recommendations are conveyed to the planning board.

Ethan suggested a summary of meeting be forwarded to the Planning Board so that the Planning Board has the input of various boards before making a decision.

Laura agreed to put together minutes soon after meeting so Ethan could convey our comments and concerns.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30.

Minutes prepared by Laura Gresh

Minutes adopted: March 22, 2021