

Draft Minutes

TOWN OF GUILFORD Design Review Committee Minutes – 13th November, 2019

A regular meeting of the Design Review Committee was held on Wednesday 13th November, 2019 at 4:00p.m. in the Guilford Community Center with Chairman William Thompson presiding.

Present: Philippe Campus, John Cunningham, Shirley Girioni, Karin Patriquin, David Rosenthal, William Thompson, Shavaun Towers and Walter Weissenborn. Also present Town Planner George Kral. Excused: Robert Charney and Mary Repetti.

The meeting was called to order at 4:03p.m.

Public Forum: There were no members of the public present.

REVIEW APPLICATIONS

Boston Post Road West, Map 78, Lot 13, Zone TS-2: New commercial building (architect Robert Mangino): Architect Robert Mangino introduced himself and a representative from Nafis & Young Engineering. Mr. Thompson asked if this was the same application that the Committee had reviewed several months ago or was it a new application. Mr. Mangino replied that it was the same application for a 6,500SF building with a smaller, accessory building in the rear. The property is to the east of the plumbing business at 2346 Boston Post Road.

The representative from Nafis & Young showed a site plan. He said there would be two underground storage areas with 100% storage for new impervious area run off, and catch basins will connect into this system. He mentioned one concern that he had. The Committee had wanted curbing at the rear of the property but the representative said the land graded to the back and installing curbing at the back would create a bowl. How would one handle excess run off that was not impervious surface. Perhaps some areas could have curb stops rather than curbing creating a level spreader to the south. He added that he was not the engineer who had done the design for this project but was just filling in. If there was storage the property needed to lean back to the wetlands as it did now. Ms. Patriquin asked if he was well away from the 100ft. setback and the representative replied yes. Mr. Kral interjected that the revised plan had been received last week and reviewed by some staff but not the Town Engineer. A more in depth staff meeting will be held next week. He added that this application was pending before PZC.

Mr. Mangino showed building elevations explaining that there would be two tenants in the front building. One tenant would be selling pavement/masonry products which would be displayed on the sidewalk. He noted that he had proposed a metal awning to break up the façade of the building. The second tenant would be a tool/tractor business. Mr. Mangino mentioned that a landscape plan was being developed.

The Committee discussed the following:-

- Ms. Towers expressed concern about the grade drop off and she felt there was a 2ft. discrepancy somewhere in the proposed site plan which needed to be resolved.
- Mr. Mangino stated that the front building was approximately at the same setback as the adjacent motel at 2300 Boston Post Road.
- Mr. Thompson asked if the building had metal siding. Mr. Mangino replied yes, with a masonry footing.
- Mr. Thompson wondered about having an industrial shell on Route One.
- Mrs. Girioni said she would rather that it was hidden.
- Ms. Patriquin asked if the building was metal except for the entrance. Mr. Mangino replied yes, adding that there was a 4ft. canopy that went all the way around the building.
- Mr. Thompson asked about the pilaster elements and asked if the entrance was set in. Mr. Mangino replied yes.
- Mr. Weissenborn asked if there were 8 piers in front of the building. Mr. Mangino replied no, that there were 4.
- Mr. Weissenborn said there was no second floor. Mr. Mangino agreed that this was correct and that the upper windows were fixed.
- Mr. Thompson stated that he did not feel that this building was appropriate for the location.
- Mrs. Girioni mentioned design guidelines for Route One West.
- Mr. Mangino pointed out that there were other metal buildings in this area.
- Mr. Thompson said that the north façade was not working for him and this was what faced the road.
- Ms. Patriquin suggested more articulation on the side that was less visible. She recommended that the brow line should be all the way across the north façade and perhaps all the way around the west corner of the building.
- Ms. Towers felt the whole building would have to come up.
- Mr. Cunningham agreed that something could be done so that one's eye was not hit by a blank wall. He added that he would like to see pictures of the adjacent properties in order to provide context. Mr. Mangino offered to take some photographs.
- Mr. Cunningham said he would also like to see elevations for the adjacent properties.
- Mr. Weissenborn pointed out that the Committee was talking about planting trees to hide the building when the building was the problem and trees did not necessarily last. Essentially the building was a warehouse display area.
- Mr. Thompson said if the building had balance, windows and a roofline it might start to work.
- Mrs. Girioni queried the zone and was told TS-2. She felt this made a difference. She added that the building looked awkward to her and that the roof should come forward. At present it felt foreshortened.
- Mrs. Girioni asked if design guidelines were done for Route One West. Mr. Kral replied that he thought they were for the area further west than this area. He believed some sort of streetscape plan was suggested for this whole area to make the area more friendly. Later in the meeting he said the guidelines for Route One West were not formalized as they were for Route One East and the zoning was not changed to prohibit this type of use.
- Mr. Campus agreed with Ms. Towers that the building should come up and that it needed to be reworked.

- Ms. Towers felt the proposal had come a long way and having the entrance to the property start 2ft. lower helped, and with having a driveway between the two areas. However, she was concerned about the catchment area.
- Ms. Patriquin asked if a Butler building was appropriate here and she felt it could be but that the Committee was concerned about the view from the Boston Post Road.
- Mr. Cunningham agreed that the north side needed to be worked on. He felt the landscape plan would help when one saw all the grades and surroundings and had a better idea of the proposal.
- Mr. Cunningham said he was not concerned about the second building which would be down from the Boston Post Road and less visible. He added that a notation on the plan was needed to show how water was going to move down to the natural area.
- Mr. Thompson felt a horizontal band and fenestration on the north side would help.
- Mr. Campus said to think about signage on the north side of the building.
- Mr. Campus said the skirt around the building and the piers should be reworked so they looked to have more substance and to have a play of light across the front of the building, they should not look flat and as though they had just been stuck on the façade.
- Mr. Mangino mentioned that the piers were not needed for support.
- The engineering representative noted that the masonry on the building should match the materials displayed in front of the building.
- Mr. Weissenborn stated that the Committee had talked about the skirt on the building but it also needed to consider the upper level and asked if something could be done higher up.
- Ms. Towers said information on the color was needed as this could make a difference.
- Mr. Weissenborn felt perhaps the building needed to go more modern, perhaps the rhythm of glass should continue around the corner, maybe the band could be eliminated.
- Mr. Campus said going to a single pitch on the roof could make the building stronger.

Mr. Thompson summarized as follows: a) the site had come a long way; b) it would be helpful to have information on the two adjacent properties for context; c) work needed to be done on the Route One grade requirements – on the down slope how does the run off work; d) on the building – either resolve the whole north street elevation with language as started or just do fenestration but this should be resolved one way or the other; e) photographs would be helpful, including views of across the street; f) information was needed on signage, materials, and on the rear building.

Regarding timing, Mr. Kral said PZC had to act on this application on December 4th. In order for Mr. Mangino to return to DRC on December 11th with the above-mentioned information he would have to grant an extension to PZC. Mr. Mangino agreed to do so.

Other Business: 1) Zoning Code: Mr. Kral announced that Planometrics had been hired to redo the whole zoning code with an emphasis on resolving issues. He explained that these would be more “editorial” in nature than substantive changes. If the Committee wished to comment Mr. Kral said it needed to do so now. Mrs. Girioni asked if the Committee should prepare some comments. Ms. Patriquin replied that some DRC members were already participating in meetings on this project. Mrs. Girioni wondered if the Design Review Committee could be made regulatory rather than advisory but Mr. Kral said that would be a huge change. Mr. Thompson asked Committee members to think about this issue before the next meeting.

Approval of Minutes: Mr. Weissenborn made a motion to accept the Minutes of 9th October, 2019. Ms. Towers seconded the motion and it was carried with 6 votes in favor. Mrs. Girioni and Mr. Rosenthal abstained since they were not present at the October meeting.

Approval of Bills: Ms. Patriquin made a motion to approve the following bill: Katharine Stewart, secretarial services. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10p.m.

The next meeting of the Design Review Committee will be held on Wednesday 11th December, 2019 at 4:00p.m. in the Guilford Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Katharine Stewart
Recording Secretary