

## Draft Minutes

### TOWN OF GUILFORD Design Review Committee Minutes – 10<sup>th</sup> May, 2017

A regular meeting of the Design Review Committee was held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May, 2017 at 4:00p.m. in the Guilford Community Center with Chairman Karin Patriquin presiding.

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

The meeting was called to order at 4:04p.m.

**Approval of Minutes:** Mrs. Repetti made a motion to accept the Minutes of 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2017. Mr. Campus seconded the motion and it was carried with 6 votes in favor. Patriquin and Repetti abstained since they were not present at the April meeting.

### **REVIEW APPLICATIONS**

#### **U-Haul, 301 Boston Post Road, Map 49, Lot 30, Zone TS (former Charles Mannix property): Site Plan Revision - Change of use from retail to self-storage, and truck and trailer rentals:**

Mr. Kral stated that he had been asked by this applicant's attorney to inform the Committee that the applicant would not attend today's meeting. He said the project was moving forward and that the applicant was working on a plan to move the storage building back approximately 20 feet and to articulate the building design. The applicant would like to meet informally with some of the Committee members, perhaps next week. If there was a good result from this meeting then the applicant would withdraw his application from PZC and submit a request for a variance to move the storage building back. This would require submitting a revised application to the Inland Wetlands Commission. The applicant would then return with revised plans to DRC's June meeting.

#### **2772 Boston Post Road (Tony Thompson of Plans Ahead), Map 83, Lot 25, Zone TS3: Site Plan Revision to change the use from a restaurant with apartments above to a 10-unit apartment building:**

Anthony Thompson (Plans Ahead, Branford, CT 06405) said he wished to go over the revisions from last month's meeting based on the Committee's comments to improve landscaping and add a destination for the tenants. Mr. Thompson showed a site plan and photographs of the property. He said circulation would be kept around the building as originally proposed. There will be a large landscaped buffer along the west side which will wrap around, and there will be cherry trees to "bookend" the property. Some of the existing trees will have to be removed to accommodate the septic system but two maples "bookend" the curb cut. Understory plantings will include spirea, boxwood, phlox and maples. Mr. Thompson mentioned that the property was originally the Moose Hill Schoolhouse. This building was not suitable for a landscape item but he took this concept and proposed an open area pergola with benches (12' x 16'), and showed a rendering of this. This would be open air and would be in the shape of the original schoolhouse so it would not have a flat roof, and would have a mulch bed around it. It would be located off the rear parking area. A plaque would be

installed on the pergola to pay homage to the schoolhouse. Mr. Thompson noted that the property was quite pastoral at the rear. William Thompson asked if there were any changes in the parking or basic siting of the building. Tony Thompson replied no. Mrs. Girioni asked if permission would still be granted for someone to remove the original timbers from the schoolhouse. Tony Thompson replied that no-one seemed to want these pieces. Mrs. Girioni said she understood this would be done because the Guilford Preservation Alliance had paid to have the structure evaluated. It was found to be worth salvaging and there was someone who would do this. The property owner stated that he would give permission for this work to take place as long as there were no safety issues. He added that he had spoken to town historian Joel Helander who knew of someone who would remove the timbers but the property owner said his main concern was safety. Mrs. Girioni said she just wished to be sure that this project was in place.

Mrs. Girioni said her second question concerned the adjacent property which was also being developed and the continuation of trees across both properties. Ms. Towers added also the continuation of the wall. William Thompson said he thought there had been a discussion about less asphalt and concealing the cars. Mr. Charney felt since the building was not retail and, therefore, did not need to be very visible that the building could be obscured with more plantings. William Thompson thought this would break down the view of the asphalt. Ms. Towers said it could block traffic noise which would be good for the tenants. William Thompson pointed out that it was a brand new use, it was adjacent to a very busy road and it had a lot of asphalt around it. The property owner said he thought the fire department did not wish to have clutter around the building and wished to keep it clean. Mr. Charney said the plantings could be increased for the diagonal view from the west and that the view from the front was less important. Tony Thompson said there was a lot going on at the corner that was not under his control and he was concerned that trees might block the queue line for the stop box. Mr. Charney agreed but felt there were ways to increase the plantings without blocking the view. He added that he liked the pergola at the rear but thought it should be turned 180° so it faced the meadow rather than the parking and felt like it was sitting in a meadow. Ms. Towers agreed saying it should be turned and pushed back – that it should be set up to get the long view. Mr. Cunningham recommended using native variety plants that did not require much maintenance. He suggested using no more than 2-3 varieties along the Boston Post Road. Ms. Towers said it would be wonderful if one more tree could be added at the west end of the parking lot which would do a lot to block the parking. Tony Thompson said he was suggesting a cherry tree there and if he could do several trees he would do so. Ms. Towers mentioned that boxwood was having a lot of problems and recommended using a different evergreen. Mr. Cunningham suggested a spreading variety of cherry laurel. He said he did not feel that the pergola had to echo the schoolhouse and that he did not want it on the edge of the parking lot. He agreed that it should be turned so it faced the rear. Ms. Patriquin asked for details on materials and the lighting plan.

Mr. Campus made a motion that the Committee recommended PZC approve this application with the following stipulations: the pergola should be moved back and re-orientated to face the meadow, trees should be added along the road, and the final material palette, landscape and lighting plans should be presented to the Committee for review. Mrs. Girioni seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

**2730 Boston Post Road (former Old Broadway Mason & Garden Supply), Map 49, Lot 51, Zone CD: (New Haven Middlesex Association of Realtors, Inc.) – Redevelopment to office space:** Mr. Cunningham recused himself. Architect John Matthews introduced himself and showed a site plan for orientation purposes. The proposal was to renovate the existing building with an

addition to the rear and to enclose an open area which currently just had a roof over it. Mr. Matthews said the site had been disturbed and there was paving for the storage of material, etc. An area in the rear was extensively developed as a garden with walking paths and a water feature. He said there was a man-made wall which was in bad shape so he proposed eliminating this. Mr. Matthews said the existing sign was in the State right-of-way so it was not included in this application and signage would be applied for separately.

Mr. Matthews said the front of the building would mostly remain as it was now with an addition in the rear for continuing education. There will be a board and batten pattern over the existing entrance on the north side with a new entrance being located on the east side. He showed a floor plan and elevation drawings, noting that there would be windows on either side of the rear addition. There will be a patio on the west side overlooking the pond. Mr. Matthews circulated copies of the photometric plan for site lighting. Poles will be 20ft in a dark gray color with full cut off fixtures. Mr. Thompson queried temperature. Mr. Matthews replied that he did not know. Mr. Thompson said the Committee preferred 3,000K or warmer. Mr. Matthews noted that the light pattern was based on the fixture head. He also noted that 4 landscape islands had been added to the parking area.

John Cunningham, landscape designer, circulated copies of a planting plan and some photographs. He said the free-standing block wall had been poorly built without footings so it would be removed. There is a small water course with concrete blocks walls on either side which will be retained and a new fieldstone head wall will be added which will be visible from the Boston Post Road. Mr. Cunningham stated that the existing wall was on this property but the sugar maples planted in front of the wall were not. The planting beds in the parking lot will have low plant material. Most of the garden area will be retained but there are invasive plants that will be removed. Three new trees will be added (Yoshina Cherry). The light poles will be in the parking lot planting beds along with honey locusts. Mr. Cunningham said if the existing wall was removed something may be done on either side of the entrance, maybe small fieldstone columns. There will be lighting under the canopy of the new entrance. Mr. Matthews said there would be down lights in front of the building. Mr. Cunningham said he did not feel pole lights were needed in front of the building. Ms. Towers thought removing the two front lights would be very beneficial. Mr. Cunningham said the existing greenhouse area had a nice base and this may be used for special events. Ms. Towers suggested considering walking to this outdoor space. Mr. Charney queried the color and materials. Mr. Matthews replied that he was continuing the same as the original.

Michael Harkin, Harking Engineering, said the plans had been revised to take in comments from PZC, IWC, staff and engineering comments. He showed a site plan pointing out that the whole back area was impervious. However, the total net site would reduce impervious surface from existing by approximately 5-10%. A lot of green has been added and an infiltration basin will be added. This could not be located underground so it has to be above ground and will have a sand filter bottom. A new septic system had been approved by the health department and the existing greenhouse will be removed. PZC required a loading zone which will be to the east of the new entrance. Mr. Charney queried dumpsters. Mr. Harkin replied that the client had not asked for this but, if needed, it could be accommodated and screened on site. Mrs. Repetti asked about plantings on the walk to the building. Mr. Harkin replied that the client had discussed planters across the front. Mrs. Girioni mentioned that the planters at the Shoreline Diner were four-season. Ms. Patriquin wondered if the parking could be moved so the planters would not be under the canopy. Cost was mentioned as a factor in adding planters since the project was still in the contingency phase. Ms. Towers said the Committee would like to see planters but this was not mandatory. Mrs. Girioni felt it was a well-thought out plan and

thanked the applicants for their efforts. Mr. Matthews stated that the roof over the existing building and the new addition would be raised and the element at the new entrance was to help transition the two sections of roof. Mr. Thompson felt the proposal was much improved from the first rendition.

Mr. Thompson made a motion that the Committee recommended PZC approve this application as submitted with the following stipulations: there should be more trees at the building, the pole lamps proposed on the north side should be removed, lamps should be at least 3,000K and, if possible, planters should be added on the north side. Mrs. Girioni seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

**Other Business: 1) Commission Openings:** Mrs. Repetti nominated David Rosenthal (graphic designer) to serve on the Design Review Committee. Mrs. Girioni seconded the nomination and it was carried unanimously.

Mr. Kral left the meeting at 5:35p.m.

**Approval of Bills:** Mrs. Girioni made a motion to approve the following bill: Katharine Stewart, secretarial services. Ms. Towers seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30p.m.

The next meeting of the Design Review Committee will be held on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2017 at 4:00p.m. in the Guilford Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Katharine Stewart  
Recording Secretary