

Draft Minutes

TOWN OF GUILFORD Design Review Committee Minutes – 11th October, 2017

A regular meeting of the Design Review Committee was held on Wednesday 11th October, 2017 at 4:00p.m. in the Guilford Community Center with Vice-Chairman William Thompson presiding.

Present: Robert Charney, John Cunningham, Shirley Girioni, Mary Repetti, William Thompson, Shavaun Towers and Walter Weissenborn. Also present Town Planner George Kral. Karin Patriquin joined the meeting in progress (4:07p.m.). Excused: David Rosenthal. Absent: Philippe Campus.

The meeting was called to order at 4:05p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Mrs. Girioni made a motion to accept the Minutes of 13th September, 2017. Mrs. Repetti seconded the motion and it was carried with 4 votes in favor. Charney, Towers and Weissenborn abstained since they were not present at the September meeting.

REVIEW APPLICATIONS

30 Water Street (Architect John Matthews), Map 32, Lot 50, Zone C-1: Proposal to remove a portion of the back of the house and replace it with a 2-story addition (same foot print) to create 2 one-bedroom apartments on the second floor and an office on the first floor, add parking in the rear of the structure, fencing and landscaping: Architect John Matthews introduced himself. He said that the house was dated at 1756 but was unsure if this was correct. Mr. Matthews showed photographs of the interior of the house. He briefly described how the house had been put together, the various sidings that had been installed over the years, and noted that it was located over the property line in the northeast corner. Mr. Matthews said he had obtained a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals and would be before PZC next week. He explained that the building was in terrible shape and the first response was to tear it down but that his client was going to try and bring it back. The back eave has been pulled away from the structure, a beam in one area of the house had sunk so much that he has had to shore it up, and the front wall leans back approximately 12". The proposal is for commercial space on the first floor with 2 one-bedroom apartments above. Mr. Matthews said he would strip off all the exterior shingles to see what the clapboard underneath looked like. There is enough room for a 17' wide driveway with parking spaces in the rear and an enclosed dumpster. The existing front door will not be used for the commercial space. Instead there will be a new entrance in the rear with stairs to access the apartments and a handicap ramp because of the commercial use. Mr. Matthews showed the existing floor plan noting that there was not habitable space in the attic. He reviewed a new foundation plan with a new concrete foundation, new crawl space and a concrete slab with vapor barrier. The two existing front rooms will stay as is with new construction in the rear. Each 670SF apartment will have its own direct stair. Mr. Matthews said he would like a decorative archway for the walkway to the rear of the building. He showed a drawing of the rear of the building with the new 2-story

addition with partial attic where air-conditioning units will be located for the apartments. Mr. Matthews said he would like to do this in clapboard but that shingles might be the better solution. He added that the existing windows were a disaster but that there would be new egress windows for the bedrooms. Roof will be asphalt shingles. Ms. Patriquin asked Mr. Matthews if he would consider putting exterior insulation on the building. Mr. Matthews replied that this would change the whole appearance of the house as it would add approximately 4” to the perimeter of the house which could put it into the right-of-way. Mr. Thompson queried the windows. Mr. Matthews replied replacement SDL’s with impact glass. Referring to the rear drawing Mr. Charney asked if the two items in the attic were louvres or windows. Mr. Matthews replied windows. He added that he was trying to keep the house simple. There will be 3 air-conditioning condensers. Lighting will be two side lights on 14’ poles with LED downlights. Mr. Matthews circulated copies of a photometric plan. The walkway on the side will have small downlight deck lights – very subtle. Mr. Thompson said he felt cut off fixtures were very important. Mr. Matthews said he was considering a downlight that shone down on the path only – building mounted. He was proposing a medium gray side light so it would disappear. Mrs. Girioni asked if the variance had included conditions on the parking lights. Mr. Matthews replied that he had been asked to provide a photometric plan which he had done.

Michael Harkin, Harkin Engineering, introduced himself saying his company was the site engineering firm for this project. The driveway was being widened for fire truck access. The three air-conditioning condensers will be protected so they are not damaged by traffic. Since the impervious surface was being increased Mr. Harkin said there would be a large underground retention basin, plus catch basins. As much grass as possible would be retained. There will be a small dumpster with enclosure. Handicap parking will be located in the rear. A new septic system will be installed which has been approved by the Department of Health. Mr. Harkin said he had spoken to the neighbor on the east side who had approved of the plans. The existing wood fence will be replaced. Ms. Patriquin queried the parking calculation. Mr. Harkin replied 1 per bedroom for the apartments but he was providing 2 and 8 spaces for the commercial use so he actually had more than was required. Ms. Patriquin felt parking should be kept to a minimum. Mr. Harkin replied that he did not feel removing two parking spaces would make much difference. Mr. Charney questioned the need for the width of the driveway. Mr. Harkin replied that it was needed for two-way traffic. Mr. Charney asked if realistically there would actually be two-way traffic. Mr. Harkin replied that it was a PZC requirement.

John Cunningham, landscape designer, stated that there was not a lot of green space on the property. An existing magnolia will be retained. Of the two existing street trees Mr. Cunningham said one was O.K. but that the plum was not in good shape and was tangled in the overhead wires. He could try to prune it but it might have to be removed. There will be witch hazel on the side of the building, front groundcover and dwarf boxwoods by the front door. The neighbor to the east has requested some green screening rather than wood so Mr. Cunningham proposed arbor vitae. He said there could be just arbor vitae or arbor vitae and a fence but this was undecided. There is an existing chestnut tree on the southwest corner and columnar white pine will be installed on the west side. Mr. Cunningham said the wood detail on the dumpster enclosure would match the fencing on the property. Mrs.

Girioni queried the fence detail. Mr. Cunningham replied stockade fencing. Mr. Thompson asked if there was anything less stark and tall than arbor vitae. Mr. Cunningham replied that he could do something evergreen.

Mr. Charney complimented the applicant for trying to do a really good job. He suggested that perhaps the house could have clapboard on the front with shingles on the side. He also felt it was a pity that the area over the stairs was closed and that it would be nice to see a window over the stairs instead. Mr. Matthews said he could do that. Mr. Charney said he was also disappointed that there was more parking than required and suggested removing one space and replacing it with a tree. Ms. Towers pointed out that one would not see the area from the public way at all and nothing would be gained in the public realm by reducing the parking. Mr. Harkin stated that when the business was up and running if more grass could be installed this would be done. He said he did not wish to do this now in case of problems.

Mrs. Girioni reported that the preservation community was very grateful to the client for saving this house. It was a real asset and helped preserve the streetscape.

Mr. Charney said when considering the exterior fixtures around the house to consider the historic nature of the property and to not just use the quick “condominium” solution for screening, etc. Mr. Thompson agreed with this comment.

Mr. Weissenborn made a motion that the Committee recommended PZC approve this application with the following stipulations: 1) the plantings on the east side be softened using a fence or a fence and arbor vitae or an alternate plant type, to be reviewed by the Committee. 2) the number of parking spaces should be reduced, if possible. 3) that a window be installed over the apartment stairway. Ms. Patriquin seconded the motion and it was carried with 7 votes in favor. Mr. Cunningham recused himself and did not take part in the discussion and vote on this application.

2455 Boston Post Road (13 Summit Suite LLC – Jerry Saglimbeni), Map 84, Lot 29, Zone TS-2:

Review building elevations: Jerry Saglimbeni circulated a drawing illustrating a new entrance on the east elevation of the rear stand-alone building. He also showed samples of the hardiplank siding. Regarding the rear building, Mr. Saglimbeni said the entrance to the building was now closer to the middle of the building with a portico. Mr. Thompson asked if the portico was being used anywhere else in the development. Mr. Saglimbeni replied yes and circulated a drawing of the portico to be used on the front elevation of the condominium units. Mr. Weissenborn asked how far the decks would protrude. Mr. Saglimbeni replied approximately 12 feet. Mr. Thompson said he did not quite understand the height of the portico roof. Ms. Patriquin pointed out that the two porticos were not the same and that they should be the same. One has a frieze and the other does not. Mr. Saglimbeni replied that there was not enough space to make the porticos the same. However, Mr. Thompson disagreed feeling that there was plenty of room and that the style of the porticos should be similar. Mr. Saglimbeni said he would have to check this change with his client. Mr. Thompson said he had a proportional problem with the portico. Mr. Charney said one could not tell what material was on the

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new portico and he believed that it was incompletely drawn so the Committee was having trouble understanding it. Mr. Thompson felt the shared entrance stoop was good. Mr. Charney believed that the attempt was correct but that it was just not drawn correctly. Ms. Patriquin had a concern about the height of the retaining wall. However, Mr. Saglimbeni replied that it would be less than 4 feet. Mr. Thompson queried the landscape plan. Mr. Saglimbeni replied that the landscape designer was working on this and it would be ready next month. Ms. Patriquin asked about the trim. Mr. Saglimbeni replied that it would be a white composite material. Mr. Weissenborn queried the shutters. Mr. Saglimbeni replied that they would match the color scheme. The Committee agreed that it would like to see the final landscape plan, revisions to the entrance of the rear building, and the color palette for the shutters, balcony railings, steps, etc.

**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:**

David Gagnon, civil engineer with Langan, introduced himself and briefly reviewed the project. He said there were no changes to the site plan and that the applicant was here today to build on last month's discussion.

Architect Ken Boroson circulated information illustrating this project. He said last month the Committee had requested that the stairway be pulled away from the wall but this would not be possible. Last time there was talk of having a window pattern of 4:2:4:2 but Mr. Boroson said it would now be 4:1:4:1. The building is split by board and batten and everything else will be clapboard. He added that he had been asked to look at a brick face but that he did not like this. Mr. Boroson said he had gone up and down the street and was recommending a cultured stone for the base. Mr. Thompson noted that the brick face did not have to be red. Mr. Boroson replied that he liked the grayer color of the stone. He showed material samples. Mr. Thompson suggested that the foundation material did not need to be rusticated. Mr. Boroson also showed perspective drawings with the trees ghosted in and with solid trees. The trees will mature at 10 years. He explained that the side facing the highway will be barn-like and that he felt this was a good place to locate the U-haul sign. The windows will be centered over the bays and the band will go all the way around the building. Ms. Patriquin queried the width of the mullion. Mr. Boroson replied a standard width of 2". Roof will be metal slate color – blueish/gray and Mr. Boroson said he could supply a sample of this later. Mr. Thompson asked how tall the side eaves were. Mr. Boroson replied approximately 22ft. Top of the roof is 36' 4". He added that one did not see the building as being three stories. Mrs. Girioni felt it was a huge improvement and thanked Mr. Boroson for his work. Mrs. Repetti queried lighting. A representative replied that it had not changed and that there would be new LED full cut off fixture on 25ft. poles. Mr. Thompson queried internal illumination. The representative replied that this would stay on all night. Mr. Thompson asked for more specific information. The representative replied that there would be lights facing I-95, and other lights would come on if someone was in the building, as well as lighting on one floor along Route One. Mrs. Repetti mentioned that Guilford supported the Dark Skies initiative. Mr. Charney noted that the Committee had been told the lights would be on a timer. He added that he had seen a U-haul facility in Providence which was extremely bright like headlights. Mr. Thompson suggested that if there was a

photometric for the lights that would shine outwards then the Committee could have a discussion on this. He felt the building should be darker when no-one was present. Mr. Charney recommended finding out the lamping and density in Providence and then making sure that this was not present in Guilford because it was far too bright.

Ms. Patriquin left the meeting at 5:25p.m.

Mrs. Repetti said she liked the changes but was concerned about the lighting. She added that businesses in Guilford took the Dark Skies initiative seriously. She also had concerns about signage and did not want a trademark building.

Mr. Weissenborn felt the project had come a long way for which he thanked the applicant. He liked the transparency which was a vast improvement. Mr. Weissenborn suggested considering another gable in front of the slope on the building as an option.

Mr. Thompson said maybe the extra gable at the west entry shed roof could go away. Mr. Boroson agreed to review this.

Mrs. Girioni asked Mr. Kral if the issue regarding displays on the trucks had been resolved and he replied no.

Mr. Charney agreed that the project had come a long way. He said looking at the drawings he had thought a shadow was actually a column and that it would be a great column. There could be a dialogue of columns between the old and new buildings, using the columns as one unifier. Mr. Charney said he was concerned about the lighting and when it was all on the building would be orange, not a subtle gray. The lighting consultant said he had just reviewed the minutes and saw that dimmers had been discussed so he could revisit this issue.

Ms. Towers thought the area between the two south gables was slightly dead and suggested putting higher plantings in the corners. Mr. Charney recommended having one off center so everything was not symmetrical. Mr. Cunningham mentioned that there was a proposed off-center tree on the southwest corner of the building.

Mrs. Girioni stated that the project had come a long way from the initial plan. She asked about the street trees. Mr. Gagnon replied that they would all be native trees such as Sugar Maple and Linden. Mrs. Girioni asked if everything was deciduous and was told yes.

Mr. Thompson made a motion that the Committee recommended PZC approve this application with the following stipulations: 1) the gable should be removed in the west shed area. 2) the architect has the option to revise the column elements. 3) the size of the plant palette should be adjusted and submitted to the Committee for review. 4) additional information is needed on the inside lighting

shining outwards, what the effect of this might be, and timing on the lighting. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

In conclusion Mr. Charney said a great job had been done working with a limited palette. He added that he was still disappointed that this building was being built in this location. That it was a wonderful site but this was not the best use of the site. However, that being said he felt the applicant had done a good job but a different building could have looked better on the site.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50p.m.

The next meeting of the Design Review Committee will be held on Wednesday 8th November, 2017 at 4:00p.m. in the Guilford Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Katharine Stewart
Recording Secretary