

Draft Minutes

TOWN OF GUILFORD Design Review Committee Minutes – 9th November, 2016

A regular meeting of the Design Review Committee was held on Wednesday 9th November, 2016 at 4:00p.m. in the Guilford Community Center with Chairman Karin Patriquin presiding.

Present: Robert Charney, John Cunningham, Shirley Girioni, Karin Patriquin, Mary Repetti, William Thompson and Walter Weissenborn. Also present Town Planner George Kral. Shavaun Towers joined the meeting in progress (4:19p.m.). 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 12th October, 2016. Mrs. Repetti seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

REVIEW APPLICATIONS

Soundview Road LL (Metro Pooch), Soundview Road, Map 42, Lot's 118-4,5 & 6, Zone I-2; Special Permit, Coastal Area Management, Site Plan, Construction of a 12,212 SF+ Pet Boarding Facility (§273-91 §273-97 §273-79): Chuck Mandel introduced himself, architect Warren Freedenfeld, and landscape architect John Cunningham. Mr. Mandel stated that the project was on the west side of Soundview Road. It is comprised of three lots which will be combined. PZC amended the zoning code to allow for this use which will be an upscale facility. Mr. Mandel said the property was in a flood zone so it would be constructed to meet those regulations. There will be 80 kennels and two grooming stations. There will also be retention areas/rain gardens installed on the property.

Architect Warren Freedenfeld (Rauhaus, Freedenfeld & Associates) said that he specialized in animal care facilities. This will be a boarding facility and his intention was to make it a warm, friendly and fun place for the community. Mr. Freedenfeld showed a rendering of the facility approaching from Soundview Road. This showed the entrance to doggie daycare and canine and feline boarding. A site plan was then shown and Mr. Freedenfeld noted that the facility did not require a lot of parking. There are exercise yards and three rain garden/retention areas. The floor plan showed that most of the usage was on the first floor with feline facilities and administration offices on the second floor. Mr. Freedenfeld briefly reviewed the site plan noting that playrooms connected to the outside play yards. He showed elevations of the facility and Mr. Thompson queried the material palette. Mr. Freedenfeld replied that he would be using a recycled material that looked like wood. Mr. Thompson asked if this would have a shiny or matt finish. Gershon Gottlieb replied that it would be matt. Mr. Freedenfeld added that there would be blue accents because of the relationship to the water. There will be fiber cement board panels on either end of the building. The intention is to be environmentally friendly by using recycled materials. Mr. Charney said there were both skylights and vertical elements going into the play yard areas and wondered if both were needed. Given the surrounding area, Ms. Patriquin asked about sound control within the building and outside. Mr. Freedenfeld replied that there would be both – acoustic panels designed to absorb sound and walls which will prevent sound transmission from the inside to the outside and he circulated information on this. Ms. Patriquin assumed that dogs would not be outside in the evening. Mr. Freedenfeld agreed and said that during the day dogs would be supervised and any over-excited dog would be brought inside. Mr. Weissenborn asked if this was the only Metro Pooch facility. Mr. Freedenfeld replied

that it was the first of a new generation of facilities. Mr. Charney stated that in his personal opinion the southern portion of the building was calm and nice but that the northern portion made no sense to him. He said the shed roof cut out with a triangle was confusing to him. Mr. Freedenfeld replied that the shed roof was meant to reflect New England and that he wished to bridge the gap with contemporary designs. Mr. Charney said this was a noble sentiment but that Mr. Freedenfeld did not have to do this and could just have done a contemporary design. He added that expressing the delight of the inside on the outside was not working for him and that he found it inconsistent. Ms. Patriquin agreed that more consistency was needed. Mr. Charney suggested extending the shed roof and making it a porch. Mr. Freedenfeld replied that he would be happy to look at this suggestion. Mr. Weissenborn agreed that there was a lot going on in the northern section and that he saw an “airport” from the 1940’s with people coming and going, not arriving to stay. Mr. Charney said that Mr. Freedenfeld had been very thoughtful about the project but that he disagreed with some of the conclusions and that he did not like the form that Mr. Freedenfeld had ended up with at the entrance - visually.

Landscape Designer John Cunningham showed the landscape plan noting that there were not a lot of planting areas on the property. All plant material will be native such as Red Maples and Shadblows. There will be a walking trail ending in a viewing area which will be open to the public. Mr. Cunningham said he believed all the lawn areas could be left natural. There will be a substantial retaining wall with a guard rail along the parking area. Lighting will have full cut off fixtures. Mr. Weissenborn asked if car headlights would be visible and Mr. Cunningham replied that they would be screened. Ms. Towers questioned the grades around the retaining wall and Mr. Charney felt it needed more study. Mr. Freedenfeld said he would try to save as many of the existing trees as possible. Ms. Patriquin asked about the pathway material and Mr. Cunningham replied that the final material had not yet been discussed. He said planting around the building would be very simple such as junipers and dwarf grasses. Ms. Patriquin queried the schedule. Mr. Freedenfeld replied that he would be going to Inland Wetlands Commission tonight and PZC next week for the second time.

Mr. Thompson asked about lighting and would it have a warm spectrum? Mr. Gottlieb replied that this had not yet been discussed. He circulated information on the lighting noting that CO1 would light the doorway area and CO2 would be for the 6ft. vinyl fence around the exercise yards. This would be low level lighting just meant to light the exercise yards at night. Mr. Weissenborn felt the project had the potential to look like a minimum security prison from a distance. The Committee said it would want warm spectrum lighting with full cut off fixtures. Mr. Gottlieb said all lighting was LED. He added that no lighting on the building would be shining upwards.

Mr. Cunningham left the meeting at 4:55p.m.

Mr. Thompson felt the applicant was trying to make a really nice facility and that editing the entry to simplify it would be more positive. Mr. Freedenfeld agreed to look at this.

Mrs. Repetti made a motion that DRC recommended PZC approve this application as presented with the stipulations that before a building permit is issued that the applicant return to the Committee with a material and color palette, architectural changes to the building entry, lighting details, and grading details for the retaining wall. Mr. Charney seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously. Mr. Cunningham recused himself and did not take part in the discussion or vote on this application.

**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:**

Peter Sciortino and another representative were present. The representative showed a site plan and reviewed the landscaping for the front and west side of the property. He planned to use simple street trees such as Red Maples and Lindens. He explained that the utility wires and sidewalk were in the right-of-way so the street trees would be installed behind this area. Below the shade trees would be holly, bayberry and spireas. The street tree look would be continued along the west side with the addition of White Pine and some shrubs and screening would also extend to the rear of the property. There will be foundation plantings around the building of shrubs and perennials.

Mrs. Girioni again mentioned the issue of Zoning Code Chapter §273-120 (26) which “... *prohibits rental vehicles from being parked, stored or displayed within 50 feet of the front property line, and the use must be screened*”. Mr. Thompson queried the distance of the property line to the vehicle line. The representative estimated 30ft. Mrs. Girioni asked Mr. Kral about the setback requirement. Mr. Kral replied that the previous use by a car dealership and then U-Haul parked vehicles much closer than 50ft. He said the question was to what extent the current applicant had the right to park as was done in the past. If the previous use was in place up to the present day then there would be no problem. What was causing a problem was that there was another retail use (Grass Island Market) that was approved which resulted in a modification to the previous practice. When this was approved the applicant had stated that he was also planning to display U-Haul vehicles on the side and rear of the site. Mr. Kral said that PZC would have to answer the legal question on the 50ft. setback. Mrs. Girioni stated that the answer to this question would affect the Committee’s decision. Mr. Kral said the applicant would be asked to say how he thought this law would affect him and then PZC would review this argument and then ask its legal counsel to review it. He added that PZC tended to resolve these matters as part of an application but that it did not have to be done this way. Mrs. Girioni felt it would be clearer to go by the present rules. Mr. Kral replied that the zoning was not clear and that the law was quite liberal with non-conforming rights. Mrs. Girioni asked if the non-conformity was broken wouldn’t that change things? She also queried Zoning Code Chapter §273-58 “... *Prohibits signs on trucks and vans when they are being used mainly for advertising*”. Mr. Kral said there was no way that PZC would enforce this issue. Mrs. Girioni said this application was for grouping and displaying vehicles. Mr. Kral replied that PZC would not win that battle and that it was an integral part of the business to display vehicles. Mr. Sciortino interjected that Grass Island Market had displayed U-Haul vehicles. He said it would be part of someone’s job to make sure all the vehicles were lined up each day. Mr. Sciortino said he would like to continue with his plan as it was now.

Mr. Thompson asked if the storage building could be moved back. The representative said the retention area was still being designed so moving the building back had not been researched. Mr. Thompson pointed out that the mass was fairly substantial and it was near the brow of the hill so if the building could recede it would help it. The representative said the grading was still being worked on and that he was here today to discuss screening, etc. He added that moving the building would not change the screening along the front of the property. Mr. Thompson noted that the Committee had asked about moving the storage building last month. He said in his opinion there should be concern about where it sat on the site relative to its mass. A second issue was where to display products. Ms. Towers pointed out that the proposed building was set back beyond the maximum setback. Regarding the landscaping Ms. Towers said she would add one more tree as the current layout looked as though one tree was missing. Alternatively the layout of the trees could be moved along to the west or one tree could be added to the corner of the new building. She felt the palette and materials were good.

The representative said there would be lighting along the perimeter of the property (25ft. high). Mrs. Girioni felt this was too high. Mr. Sciortino mentioned that the lights would be on a timer but also that it was a 24 hour facility. The building lights will remain on all the time. Mr. Thompson wondered how bright the lights would be at 1:00a.m.

Mr. Thompson left the meeting at 5:45p.m.

Continuing the discussion Mr. Charney said the design of the retention area and septic was critical to how the building could be set back. He also said one issue was that the Committee was not seeing the project as a whole and it was difficult to look at it piecemeal. Mr. Kral recommended that the applicant file an application which would help resolve the legal issues.

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 5:55p.m.

The next meeting of the Design Review Committee will be held on Wednesday 14th December, 2016 at 4:00p.m. in the Guilford Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Katharine Stewart
Recording Secretary