

MELROSE PLANNING BOARD
Regular Meeting & Public Hearing
Monday, June 28, 2010
7:45 p.m.
Mayor's Conference Room

PRESENT: Richard Connolly, Tom Pawlina, Ed Cassidy, Bob Mercado, John Sadowski, Anne DeSouza-Ward, Mike Cassavoy, Carla Francazio, and Jack Welch

Denise Gaffey, City Planner, and Matt Hennigan, Assistant Planner, were present.

The meeting was called to order at 7:50 p.m. by Mr. Connolly.

MINUTES

a) Draft Regular Meeting & Public Hearing, May 24, 2010

Mr. Pawlina MADE a MOTION to accept the minutes of May 24, 2010. Ms. DeSouza-Ward SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor with the exception of Ms. Francazio and Mr. Sadowski who had yet to arrive to the meeting. None opposed.

BOARD OF APPEALS

Case 10-012, 85 Morgan Street, Gill

The Applicant, Ms Gill, was present to describe the application to the Board. After a detailed evaluation of the Applicant's proposal by the members, Ms. DeSouza-Ward MADE a MOTION to send a letter to the Board of Appeals that noted the Board does not object to the Applicant's proposal. The Board finds that the proposed use shall produce minimal traffic and shall have a limited impact on the neighborhood. To avoid confusion, the Board suggested that the Applicant add a note on the plot plan to reflect that the "proposed addition" has been completed. Mr. Cassidy SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

Documents: ZBA application Case 10-012

Case 10-013, 533-541 Franklin Street, Senneville

The Applicant's Representative, Patrick McAvoy, was present with the Applicant, Dr. Senneville, to describe the application to the Board. Mr. McAvoy explained that the Applicant requests a special permit for a medical office use in the BC zone and a variance from the required parking requirements or, in the alternative, a special permit for substitution of required parking spaces in a municipal lot. Mr. McAvoy noted that Applicant has also submitted a Site Plan Review application, which is next of the Board's agenda for the evening. Mr. Connolly recommended that the Board review both applications simultaneously. See below.

SITE PLAN REVIEW

SP-10-004, 533 Franklin Street, Senneville (public hearing)

Mr. Connolly opened the meeting for public comment and noted that no members of the public were present to comment regarding this case.

Mr. Cassidy noted the difference between professional and retail use and suggested that the Applicant consider the installation of a sign to better blend into the commercial area. Ms. Gaffey described the details related to the City's Sign Grant Program. The members noted signage in the area for other medical uses. The Applicant indicated that he would be open to installing a sign. Mr. McAvoy noted the Applicant's limited hours and indicated that these hours could expand. Mr. McAvoy noted that the building has been

recently painted to be more cohesive with the Corinthian Hall next store. The members discussed the handicap accessibility of the building and the Applicant's plan for trash storage/disposal. Ms. DeSouza-Ward asked for clarification regarding the parking relief requested by the Applicant. The members noted that there is ample parking both on-street and in the nearby municipal parking lot located behind the building across the street to accommodate the small number of patients who will receive medical care at the practice at any given time.

Mr. Pawlina MADE a MOTION to grant the necessary waivers pertaining to the submission of required application materials. Mr. Cassavoy SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor with the exception of Ms. Francazio and Mr. Sadowski who had yet to arrive to the meeting. None opposed.

Mr. Pawlina MADE a MOTION to approve the Site Plan Review application for SP 10-004, 533 Franklin Street with the following conditions:

1. The Applicant shall install a quality exterior sign, consistent with many of the signs in the immediate area. Prior to fabricating the sign, the Applicant shall furnish drawings of the proposed sign as well as its placement on the storefront for review and approval by the Office of Planning and Community Development in connection with City's Sign Grant Program.

Mr. Cassidy SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor with the exception of Ms. Francazio and Mr. Sadowski who had yet to arrive. None opposed.

Documents: Site Plan Review Application SP 10-004

BOARD OF APPEALS - continued

Case 10-013, 533-541 Franklin Street, Senneville

The members reviewed the elements of the Applicant's presentation that pertained to the proposed medical use and the parking relief requested. Mr. Pawlina MADE a MOTION to send a letter to the Board of Appeals that noted the Board discussed the medical office use from the long term planning perspective and noted concern about the potential loss of vibrancy in the area that comes with the movement away from retail uses. Nonetheless, the Board agreed that the Highlands commercial district will benefit from filling the vacant space and the podiatry practice will provide a service to residents in the area as well as potentially enliven this end of the district. The Board is in favor of the parking relief for the part-time medical practice given the availability of ample parking at the nearby municipal lot. Mr. Cassavoy SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor with the exception of Ms. Francazio and Mr. Sadowski who had yet to arrive. None opposed.

Documents: ZBA application Case 10-013

Mr. Sadowski and Ms. Francazio arrived at the meeting.

SITE PLAN REVIEW-AFFORDABLE HOUSING SPECIAL PERMIT

SP-09-001, Blueberry Hill Lane, Delta Fairfield Corporation (public hearing)

Patrick McAvoy, the representative for the Applicant, was present with the Applicant, Mrs. Gianquitto, and the Applicant's Engineer to review the details of the application with the Board. Mr. McAvoy described the history of the subdivision application for the site. Mr. McAvoy indicated that the Applicant requires relief from the ZBA for the proposal before the Board, including a special permits and variances for the townhouse use and various parking requirements.

Mr. McAvoy explained that the Applicant was initially before the ZBA in September, 2009 at which time all their requests for relief with the exception of the special permit to allow parking on a lot other than the lot occupied by the accompanied use were denied. The Applicant appealed the ZBA decision to the Land Court. Mr. McAvoy stated that included in the appeal was the Applicant's objection to the City's decision to reject his application for Site Plan Review prior to receiving a special permit from the ZBA for the townhouses use. Mr. McAvoy stated that a settlement was agreed upon which remanded the application for a special permit for townhouse use back to the ZBA for a new hearing and allowed the Applicant to continue the ZBA hearing to allow time to undergo Site Plan Review before the ZBA acts on the townhouse use special permit. Mr. McAvoy indicated that the Applicant expects the development proposal to undergo changes during the site plan review process and will revisit the need for additional zoning relief with the ZBA, if that becomes necessary after the development is modified.

The members took a few moments to review the staff report from the Planning Office. Mr. Connolly explained to the members of the public present the purview of the Site Plan Review process and reinforced that it is not within the Planning Board's role to regulate the townhouse use. Mr. Connolly opened the meeting to public comment.

Michelle Barr, 4 Forest Street

Ms. Barr expressed concern regarding safety on the site and in the surrounding neighborhood. Ms. Barr explained that her son had been hit with a shard of rock when blasting was taking place, which required ten stitches. Ms. Barr added that a separate incident occurred that involved a piece of rock that broke her door, which was later fixed by the Applicant.

Joe Pesce, 103 Lebanon Street

Mr. Pesce expressed concern regarding the impact that the Applicant's proposal will have on the traffic pattern in the area as well as the water pressure.

Brian Bird, 97 Lebanon Street

Mr. Bird expressed concern regarding the townhouse use in the area as well as the magnitude of the development proposed.

Greg Lawless, 23 Hunt Terrace

Mr. Lawless emphasized that his main concern is parking.

Stephen Snook, 4 Perham Avenue

Mr. Snook expressed that he hoped that this development would provide work for Melrose residents.

Joe Arcadipane, 42 Dexter Road

Mr. Arcadipane indicated his largest concern is the proposed townhouse use. Mr. Arcadipane expressed concern regarding the drainage impact of the proposed development particularly with respect to the City cemetery.

Ralph Moore, 39 Dexter Road

As a member of the Cemetery Board, Mr. Moore reinforced the concerns related to the drainage impacts of the proposed project on the cemetery. Mr. Moore also echoed Mr. Arcadipane's concerns regarding the overall drainage impacts of the proposed project and indicated that he does not feel that the proposed drainage structures and catch basins are adequate for the project. Mr. Moore stated traffic is also a concern.

Michelle Barr, 4 Forest Street

Ms. Barr stated that drainage is also a problem in front of her property. Ms. Barr emphasized the importance of preserving the integrity of the land and suggested the number of proposed townhouses be reduced.

Mr. Connolly asked the Board for their comments. Mr. Cassavoy inquired whether the financial impact of the proposed 3-bedroom ownership units had been evaluated. Mr. Pawlina stated that the drainage standards have changed since 2006 when the Applicant's drainage plan was first reviewed in connection with the subdivision application. Mr. Pawlina requested that the Applicant supply drainage analysis/calculations for the 5 year 24-hour storm event. The Applicant's Engineer stated that the drainage system has been slightly enlarged from the subdivision application drainage plan to accommodate the 20 proposed townhouse units. Mr. Pawlina encouraged Applicant to draw from their Subdivision application and their Forest Street Slope Protection applications to provide the Board with the necessary information regarding drainage and slope stabilization. Mr. Sadowski asked for clarification regarding the severity of the slopes on the site and noted that the topography is pushing the density issue. Mr. Sadowski requested that the Applicant provide renderings of the development in its entirety to allow for evaluation of the visual impact of the project. Mr. Cassidy noted that the Applicant's design is unimaginative and is poorly laid out. Mr. Cassidy stated that the Applicant's proposal is too dense as well as too visible from a distance. Mr. Cassidy questioned whether the existing trees and vegetation will be able to provide sufficient screening. Mr. Mercado stated that the Applicant's site is unattractive in appearance and noted the absence of any temporary erosion control measures. Mr. Mercado inquired regarding the status of the three house lots on Forest Street. Ms. Francazio expressed the need for the Applicant to provide more contextual information, including the parcel lines of surrounding parcels. Ms. Francazio expressed concern regarding the visual impact of the proposal. Ms. Francazio noted the importance of designing a project that takes into consideration the contours of the land rather than "designing into the land" and altering its natural features. Discussion took place whether the proposed structures should be viewed as 3 stories above grade. Mr. Connolly requested that the Applicant's architect attend the next meeting.

The members reviewed with the Applicant the information that is needed for the next meeting. Mr. Cassavoy MADE a MOTION to continue the public hearing to July 26, 2010. Mr. Cassidy SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

Documents: Site Plan Review Application SP 09-001
 OPCD Staff Report dated June 28, 2010
 Public Works Memorandum dated June 28, 2010

OTHER

Schedule date for next Zoning Subcommittee Meeting

The members scheduled the next Zoning Subcommittee meeting for July 20, 2010.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 PM.