

MELROSE PLANNING BOARD

Regular Meeting

Monday, August 23, 2010

7:45 p.m.

Mayor's Conference Room

PRESENT: Richard Connolly, Bob Mercado, John Sadowski, Anne DeSouza-Ward, and Jack Welch

ABSENT: Tom Pawlina, Ed Cassidy, Mike Cassavoy, and Carla Francazio

Denise Gaffey, City Planner, was present.

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

MINUTES

a) Draft Regular Meeting & Public Hearing, July 26, 2010

Members offered minor revisions. Mr. Mercado MADE a MOTION to accept the minutes as revised. Ms. DeSouza-Ward SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

b) Draft Design Review Subcommittee Meeting, July 26, 2010

Members offered minor revisions. Mr. Sadowski MADE a MOTION to accept the Design Review Subcommittee minutes as revised. Mr. Mercado SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

c) Draft Zoning Subcommittee Meeting, April 22, 2010

Ms. DeSouza-Ward MADE a MOTION to accept the minutes of Zoning Subcommittee minutes April 22, 2010. Mr. Mercado SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

BOARD OF APPEALS

Case 10-016, 20 Meadowview Road, Curry, Jr.

The Applicant, Mr. Curry, and the Applicant's Representative, Jason Happel from Sullivan and Clark, were present to describe the application to the members. 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 stated that the Board acknowledged the topographical characteristics of the lot including its "L" shape and the presence of an existing terrace and retaining wall which limit the placement options for the replacement shed. The new shed is slightly longer than the existing but smaller in height and profile and will be less visible to the neighbors than the existing shed. While the Board is typically concerned about setback encroachments and maintenance issues with structures located in close proximity to the lot line, we recognize that this is the condition with the existing shed and appreciate the Applicant's concerted effort to minimize the visibility of the proposed replacement shed. Mr. Mercado SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

Documents: ZBA application Case 10-016

SITE PLAN REVIEW

SP 08-002, 42-44 Grove Street, 42-44 Grove Street Realty Trust – Request for Extension

Ms. Gaffey presented a letter received this afternoon from Attorney Bob Bell. The letter noted that Site Plan Approval for the Grove Street Development no longer requires an extension due to new state legislation. Governor Patrick recently signed the Permit Extension Act to extend all permits that were in effect between August 2008 and August 2010 by two years. This was done to promote economic development. The new deadline for SP Approval is July 28, 2012.

Document: Letter dated August 23, 2010 from Attorney Bob Bell to the Planning Board.

OTHER

Dunkin Donuts Use Variance

Chairman Connolly mentioned the Dunkin Donuts application pending in front of the ZBA. Ms. Gaffey noted that the case was continued without any discussion at the hearing at the attorney's request. Attorney Clark claimed that her client needed more time to respond to the many letters of concern issued in advance of the hearing. Mr. Connolly discussed the Planning Board's position on the matter and questioned whether the Board should have confronted the question of the variance more directly. Ms. DeSouza-Ward noted her general reluctance to interfere with the ZBA's quasi-judicial role on variance issues. Ms. Gaffey agreed but noted the aspects with the particular application that were in the Board's purview to comment upon. In particular, the omission of any reference to the criteria required for granting a variance and the "big picture" planning question of whether the drive through use is appropriate for the location. There was some sentiment that it would have been beneficial had the Board taken a broader view of the application and not focused on the site plan details before the use has been established.

Signage Zoning Amendment

Mr. Sadowski suggested the Zoning Subcommittee consider a prohibition of all reader boards and flashing/blinking signs in the proposed zoning amendment. He noted a blinking neon sign in a downtown Laundromat that is particularly offensive.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.