

MELROSE PLANNING BOARD
Regular Meeting and Public Hearing
Monday, August 8, 2011
7:45 p.m.
Mayor's Conference Room

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

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:50 p.m. by Ms. Francazio.

SITE PLAN REVIEW - AFFORDABLE HOUSING SPECIAL PERMIT MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL USE IN A NONRESIDENTIALLY ZONED AREA SPECIAL PERMIT
SP-11-002, 185 Essex Street, Tom McGrath-McGrath Enterprises (continued public hearing)

Bob Bell, the representative for the Applicant, was in attendance with the Applicant, Mr. McGrath, the Applicant's Architect, Dan DiLullo, and the Applicant's Real Estate Agent, Kim Kaufman, to present to the Board. Mr. Bell offered an overview of the history of the property. Mr. Bell introduced Mr. DiLullo to review the details of the application with the Board.

Mr. DiLullo noted that the site plan has been revised to include new curbing and the relocation of the dumpster to the far corner of the parking lot. Mr. DiLullo stated that a patio seating area defined by a granite pier/wood rail fencing system at the Vine and Essex Street corner of the property has been added to the proposal. Mr. DiLullo noted that the Applicant has retained Steve Cefalo to be the Landscape Architect for the project and has submitted a landscape plan that includes reworked walkways, an increase in the size and quantity of trees along the perimeter of the site, and a variety of hardy of northeastern plantings. Mr. DiLullo stated the architectural elevations have been revised to include masonry up to the low roof belt line with multi-colored lap siding above. Ms. Kaufman expressed that the Applicant's smart growth proposal would be a benefit to the neighborhood. Ms. Kaufman stated that she feels that Applicant's proposed residential development would be attractive to buyers who are interested in downsizing, which would enhance the tax base while not burdening the school system. Ms. Francazio opened the meeting for public comment.

Ed Dunn, 230 Essex Street #20

Mr. Dunn agreed that the area could stand to improve. Mr. Dunn expressed interest in how the parking spaces would be allocated and whether parking would be included in the lease of the units should the Applicant be forced to rent some of the units.

Mr. Connolly noted the transit oriented nature of the proposal. Ms. Gaffey explained that the Applicant is allowed to apply for a parking reduction pursuant to the Affordable Housing Incentive Program. The Development Team emphasized the close proximity of the site to an abundance of transit options and stated that one space would be allocated per unit and the remainder would be available at an additional cost. Ms. DeSouza-Ward inquired regarding any provisions for visitor parking. Mr. DiLullo noted that two visitor spaces would be appropriate. Mr. Mercado confirmed that the site would include an irrigation system. Mr. Mercado noted that landscaping has been added that appears to block the rear walkway. Mr. Mercado noted that the rear walkway should offer connectivity to the Vine Street sidewalk. Mr. Mercado asked for more information concerning site lighting. Mr. DiLullo stated that the need for additional lighting requires further evaluation and acknowledged that if needed a conventional pole fixture could be installed next to the dumpster. Ms. Francazio noted the grade differential between the rendering and the elevation and was informed by Mr. DiLullo that the rendering is more current. Mr. Cassavoy suggested

the potential use of a more durable material in place of wood for the railings at the patio area. Mr. Cassidy asked for other examples of Mr. Cefalo's work. Ms. Francazio noted that the landscape plan includes a lot of flowering perennials and enough shrubs to provide balance during the winter months.

Mr. Cassidy stated that the architectural elevations have progressed. Mr. Cassidy supplied additional feedback, which included the incorporation of a stronger vertical expression with respect to the front entryway projection as well as the need for greater trim articulation to bolster the design's horizontal emphasis. Mr. Cassidy encouraged the Applicant to add more window/mullion detail. Mr. Cassavoy asked whether it was possible for the vent to be another shape. Mr. King noted that the location of the windows on the elevations do not correspond with the floor plans. Mr. DiLullo stated the floor plans are still in the process of being finalized based on marketing. Ms. Francazio confirmed with Mr. DiLullo that the absence of the second floor cornice was not deliberate. Mr. DiLullo stated that the façade shall be brown brick rather than red brick. The Board asked the Planning Staff to consult the City Engineer regarding the viability of the proposed 3" caliper trees. Discussion took place regarding the Applicant's fencing plan. The members noted the need for perimeter fencing to screen the headlights from the parking area. The members reviewed with the Applicant the additional items to be provided for the next meeting.

Mr. Bell requested a continuance of the public hearing to the Board's August 22nd meeting. Mr. Cassidy MADE a MOTION to continue the public hearing to August 22, 2011. Mr. Cassavoy SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

Document: Site Plan Review Application SP 11-002

SITE PLAN REVIEW - AFFORDABLE HOUSING SPECIAL PERMIT

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

Patrick McAvoy, the Applicant's Representative, the Applicant's Engineer, Chris Ryan, the Applicant's Architect, Dan DiLullo, and the Applicant's Traffic Engineer, Ken Cram, were in attendance with the Applicant to present to the members. Mr. McAvoy reviewed with the members that the proposal has been revised to include 19 units comprised of 14 three-bedrooms and 5 two-bedrooms and 31 parking spaces. Mr. McAvoy introduced the Traffic Engineer to present the updated Traffic Report. Mr. Cram reviewed with the members the trip generation for the proposed development and the intersection analysis for the area. The traffic report confirms that traffic impacts generated by the additional residential units will be minimal. No change in level of service for the Forest Street and Lebanon Street intersection is anticipated. Mr. Cram stated that the report includes all new traffic counts. In addition, a speed analysis and crash analysis were performed. Mr. Cram noted that the site distance at the entrance to the development is adequate and should be kept clear of trees and shrubs.

Mr. Ryan reviewed with the members his responses to comments from the City Engineer. Mr. Ryan noted that he has reached out to a geotechnical engineer who is in the process of reviewing the design. Discussion took place regarding the importance of ensuring that the areas of stabilized slope retain their natural feel rather than exhibit a pre-engineered appearance. Mr. Ryan presented the flow test results with the Board. Ms. Gaffey pointed out that that flow test information that has been provided is for Lebanon Street instead of Forest Street, which was originally requested. Mr. Cassavoy expressed an interest in seeing a rendering of the retaining wall as viewed looking north from Forest Street. Ms. DeSouza-Ward noted that a smaller development would require less cutting and filling. Ms. Francazio opened the meeting for public comment and noted that no members of the public were present.

Mr. Mercado requested details for the areas of rock slope behind Lots 1 & 2. The members inquired whether the contours on the site plan have been updated and suggested the use of spot grades to validate the sections. The members expressed interest in seeing a successful project after all the years of disruption and delay at the site. Mr. Connolly expressed concern regarding the water pressure issues in the area with respect to public safety and noted that the proposed density is not ideal. The members emphasized the importance of the use of landscaping in the sloped areas from an aesthetics perspective. Ms. Gaffey reviewed additional information to be provided by the Applicant for the next meeting, which included:

- Flow test results for Forest Street Hydrant;
- Structural and geotechnical results for all proposed sloped structural areas along the roadway and all proposed retaining walls;
- Rendering of the development as viewed from the south
- Revised landscape plan that demonstrates sensitivity to the sloped areas;
- Section drawings: a section for the roadway, a section from the cul-de-sac, and a section including the 5' retaining wall at "the elbow" behind Unit 11.

Mr. McAvoy requested a continuance of the public hearing. Mr. Connolly MADE a MOTION to continue the public hearing to October 3, 2011. Mr. Mercado SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

Documents: Revised Traffic Study dated May 18, 2011
Revised Site Development Plans dated June 16, 2011

OTHER

Signage Zoning Amendment

Ms. Gaffey reviewed the proposed signage amendment with the members for additional input. Ms. DeSouza-Ward MADE a MOTION to send a letter to the Board of Aldermen to consider the proposed Signage Zoning Amendment. Mr. Connolly SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

Document: Proposed Revisions to Article VII dated July, 21, 2011

TD Bank Modification Request

Ms. Gaffey informed the members that TD Bank has contacted the Planning Office to request permission to remove the ornamental site lighting fixture near the rear entrance and install parking signage. Ms. Gaffey explained that TD Bank is concerned with the customer visibility of the rear sign. With respect to parking, TD Bank has found that non-customers have been utilizing the parking lot and hope that the addition of signage will allow bank customers to conveniently park in the lot. Ms. Gaffey noted that the proposed elimination of the ornamental fixture is not anticipated to be detrimental from a public safety standpoint. TD Bank conducted an analysis of the revised lighting plan and found the light level not to be a concern. The members discussed the proposed changes and did not find the use of the bank logo on the parking signs to be appropriate. The Board approved the requested minor modifications administratively on the condition that the parking signage does not contain any logos.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 PM.