MELROSE PLANNING BOARD
Annual Meeting and Public Hearing
Monday, March 26, 2012
7:45 p.m.
Mayor's Conference Room

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

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:58 p.m. by Ms. Francazio.

MINUTES

Regular Meeting February 27, 2012

Mr. Cassavoy offered minor revisions. Mr. Mercado MADE a MOTION to accept the minutes as revised. Mr. Welch SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

ASSENT CALENDAR

Case 12-005, 29 Orris Street, Hunter-Melo

Ms. DeSouza-Ward MADE a MOTION to approve the item on the Assent Calendar and send a standard letter to the Board of Appeals. Mr. Cassavoy SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

BOARD OF APPEALS

Case 12-001, 138 Main Street, Metro Credit Union

The Applicant's Representative, Donald Reid from Barlo Signs, was present with the Jay Dunham, vice president of Metro Credit Union, to describe the Applicant's revised signage proposal to the members. The members discussed the details involved with the case. Mr. Cassidy MADE a MOTION to send a letter to the Board of Appeals that stated at the suggestion of the Planning Board and the Board of Appeals, the Applicant returned to the Planning Board with a revised proposal for a standing sign in the UR-A District. Standing signs are not allowed in residential districts. It was noted, however, that this property has been used for commercial purposes since 1963 and a standing sign had been allowed by variance in 1990. The Planning Board is not opposed to a new standing sign for the present commercial occupants, but the Board feels strongly that the sign should conform to the dimensional requirements of the ordinance and reflect the residential context of the site. The Board noted that the Applicant has reduced the scale of its original proposal by abandoning the "v" shape configuration in favor of a standard double-faced sign to be installed upon a brick base surrounded by landscaping. The height of the Applicant's new sign has been reduced by 6" to 5' 3" (as a result of the elimination of the aluminum filler panel), which is in compliance with the 6' height limitation established in the zoning ordinance for standing signs. The Applicant's proposed sign has been relocated to be 10' back from the property line in accordance with zoning. The Planning Board is not opposed to the brick base and confirmed that the brick will match the brick used on the building. The Board noted, however, that the white aluminum proposed to cover the brick base is unappealing and recommends replacing this material with a bluestone cap, which will appear more natural and less commercial. In addition, the members found that the white canister lighting fixtures used to externally illuminate the previous sign do not complement the Applicant's proposal and should be replaced with fixtures that are appropriately sized and in a color that is more in keeping with the aesthetic elements of the proposal and the residential context of the site. Mr. Mercado SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

Document: Revised proposal for ZBA application Case 12-001

Case 12-006, 340 Main Street, Sprint Spectrum LP

The Applicant's Representative, David Archambault, was present to describe the application to the members. After a detailed evaluation of the Applicant's proposal by the members, Mr. Sadowski MADE a MOTION to send a letter to the Board of Appeals that noted that the Board identified that the proposed new antenna and Remote Radio Head installations appear to extend beyond the wall of the penthouse greater than the 12 inch maximum permitted pursuant to §235-73 paragraph D of the zoning ordinance. The Applicant indicated that he would verify the dimensions associated with proposed installations in advance of the Board of Appeals public hearing and revise the application to conform with zoning, if necessary. To minimize their appearance, the Applicant agreed to paint the new rooftop equipment to blend with the background color of the building rather than "to match existing conditions" as currently stated in the application. The Applicant should replace the word "conditions" with "background" on the notes on plan sheets A-1 and A-2 to reflect this agreement. Mr. Cassavoy SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

Document: ZBA application Case 12-006

Case 12-007, 354 & 360-362 Upham Street, Mark Carroll

Ms. Gaffey noted that that Applicant has also submitted Site Plan Review and Affordable Housing Special Permit applications in connection with the project, which is next on the Board's agenda. Mr. Cassidy MADE a MOTION to review all of the applications simultaneously. Mr. King SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

Document: ZBA application Case 12-007

SITE PLAN REVIEW - AFFORDABLE HOUSING SPECIAL PERMIT

SP-12-001, 354 & 360-362 Upham Street, Mark Carroll

The Applicant, Mark Carroll, was in attendance with the Applicant's Representative, Bob Bell, and the Project Architect, Tim Johnson, to present to the Board. Mr. Bell described the circumstances related to the Applicant's return to the Board for approval of the revised development proposal. Mr. Bell explained that financing/marketing issues combined with structural limitations related to the three-unit building at 360-362 Upham Street have forced the Applicant to revisit the development proposal that was originally approved by the Planning Board. Mr. Bell provided a brief history of the property. Mr. Bell noted the strong opposition by the neighborhood to the numerous unsuccessful attempts to maintain the non-conforming commercial use. Mr. Bell expressed that the Applicant's exploration of potential buyers for the property only uncovered interest in the same non-conforming commercial uses as in the past. The Applicant's new proposal includes three additional units for a total of eleven units. Mr. Bell stated that the new proposal better reflects the "right-size" market (one level living) that the Applicant is targeting. According to the Applicant's marketing advisors, the local "right-sizing" market is strong. Mr. Bell noted that the provision of garage parking is an important of element of "right-size" housing that was lacking from the Applicant's previous proposal.

Mr. Bell turned the presentation over to Mr. Johnson to provide an architectural overview. Mr. Johnson stated that the proposed development will meet or exceed the Stretch Energy code. Mr. Johnson noted that the units have been designed to accommodate "empty nesters" with master bedrooms on the 1st floor and garage parking. Mr. Johnson noted that the Periwinkles building shall be converted to four dwelling units (3 one-bedroom units and 1 two-bedroom unit). The two units on the ground floor shall be handicap adaptable. Mr. Johnson stated that the paved area on the site has been reduced from 9,000 square feet to 7,300 square feet.

Mr. Bell reviewed with the members the Department Head comments from the Planning Department's staff report. Mr. Bell noted that Public Works provided detailed comments concerning sewer and water service that require implementation by the Applicant. Mr. Bell noted that the staff report points out that the revised 11-unit proposal has resulted in an increase of approximately 4,000 square feet of impervious surface on the site. Mr. Bell stated that the drainage system has been modified to accommodate the additional impervious surface and includes three leaching chambers that have been designed to handle the five year 24 hour storm in accordance with the zoning ordinance. Mr. Bell stated snow storage shall be accomplished by snow removal. At no time shall the open space at the rear of the site be used for snow storage. With respect to parking, the Applicant's proposal includes 18 parking spaces which include 10 garage spaces and 8 surface spaces. Mr. Bell noted that the townhouse style units allow for tandem parking in front of the garages and the internal roadway that serves the development is wide enough to offer guest parking. Mr. Bell stated that under the provisions of the Affordable Housing Special Permit the Planning Board has the discretion to reduce the parking ratio required by the zoning ordinance, which is what is being asked by the Applicant. Mr. Bell stated that the Applicant's trash storage/trash pick-up plan has not changed. Trash will be picked up privately as demand calls for it. Mr. Bell indicated that as a result of feedback from the police chief the units will be installed with security alarms that are compatible with police department's systems. Mr. Bell stated that the 11-unit development includes 7 new units, which requires compliance with the City's affordable housing zoning. The proposal will include one affordable unit. Mr. Bell stated that he would allow Mr. Johnson to describe the proposed site lighting and architecture in greater detail. In closing, Mr. Bell noted that the Applicant's proposal is more responsive to the "right-sizing" niche market, which shall serve those looking to down-size, but not necessarily to leave Melrose (just those looking to leave their over-sized houses). Mr. Bell stated that the Applicant's marketing advisors have informed him at least 100 "right-size" units are needed in Melrose. There are currently none. The Applicant has a list of prospective buyers who have expressed interest in the project. Mr. Bell stated that the proposed residential use is far more compatible than the existing non-conforming use that the neighbors do not want.

Mr. Johnson described the site lighting included in the application. The internal roadway shall be installed with 12', dark sky compliant, period pole fixtures that shine down to minimize any spillover impact on the surrounding properties. Recessed lighting shall be installed within the overhangs of the units. As a result, these fixtures shall not be visible. Mr. Johnson noted that the Applicant's proposal features a high level of detailing and the use of high quality materials, which shall include hardiplank siding and architectural grade shingles.

Mr. Mercado MADE a MOTION to open the public hearing. Mr. Cassidy SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

Mr. Cassidy excused himself briefly from the meeting.

Ms. Gaffey noted that the Applicant's revised development plan contains the same enhancements to the site and the streetscape that shall be a benefit to the neighborhood as the Applicant's earlier proposal. Ms. Gaffey highlighted that the sidewalk shall be replaced for the length of the frontage and installed with street trees. Ms. Gaffey stated that the Applicant proposal preserves mature trees along the perimeter of the site and adds new trees and plantings throughout the property.

Mr. Cassidy returned to the meeting.

Mr. Sadowski asked if there was a copy of the site plan for the Applicant's previous 8-unit proposal available for comparison purposes. The Planning Staff provided the requested information.

<u>John Gonslaves, 25 East Street</u>
Mr. Gonslaves expressed that he has no issues with the Applicant's proposal.

<u>Denise Judware, 116 Highview Avenue</u>
Ms. Judware expressed that she supports the project and wants to get it going.

<u>Kathy McNeil, 30 Ardsmoor Road</u>
Ms. McNeil stated that she wants to see the project get started as well and noted that it would be prudent for the Planning Board to take into consideration the Applicant's previous proposal to ensure a complete review of the application. Ms. McNeil expressed her concerns regarding the setbacks at the rear of the property, drainage, and the proposed turn-around. Ms. McNeil stated that she liked the Applicant's renderings.

<u>Paul Tarpey, 25 Bancroft Road</u>
Mr. Tarpey stated that the current site is an eyesore and that the proposed project is just what the neighborhood needs.

<u>Adam Blanchard, 352 Upham Street</u>
Mr. Blanchard noted that significant vibrations were experienced during the recent water main work and expressed the need for the required standard of care to be taken by the Applicant during demolition. Mr. Blanchard expressed that he is excited about the project.

<u>David O'Brien, 348 Upham Street</u>
Mr. O'Brien expressed support for the project. Mr. O'Brien asked that care be taken by the Applicant to ensure that the nearby properties are not disturbed.

Ms. Francazio read to the Board a letter of support from <u>Ann Spataro, 373 Upham Street</u>.

Ms. Francazio asked the members for their comments. Mr. Cassavoy expressed concern regarding public safety access to the Periwinkles building and asked whether there is an easement on the west side of the building. Mr. Bell confirmed that an easement exists for access. Mr. Cassavoy noted the importance of a consistent stockade fencing solution. Ms. DeSouza-Ward noted the increase in impervious surface on the site as a result of the Applicant's new proposal. Ms. DeSouza-Ward supported the use of pervious pavers for the walkways and patios. Mr. Bell noted that the Applicant's drainage plan already takes into consideration the five year 24 hour storm as required by the zoning ordinance without making any allowances for percolation. The Applicant agreed to explore the use of pervious pavers for the patios, but expressed safety concerns relative to their use for the walkways. Mr. Mercado suggested the incorporation of a stormceptor into the Applicant's stormwater management plan. The Applicant noted that an oil separator is already included in the plan. Mr. Cassidy inquired regarding the proposed windows and noted that the Design Review Subcommittee will be interested in their appearance and mullion configuration. The Applicant indicated that he is interested using an Anderson 200 series vinyl/clad energy star window with a PVC exterior sill. Mr. Cassidy suggested the use of Azek for the sill. Mr. Cassidy noted that the gutters and downspouts are not shown on the elevation plans. Mr. Cassidy asked whether a roof shingle has been selected. Mr. Johnson stated that the shingle selection has not been finalized; however, the use of a 40 year multi-layer asphalt shingle is anticipated.

Mr. Cassavoy suggested softening the elevation of the two-unit dwelling closest to Upham Street. The Applicant highlighted the proposed picket fencing and use of landscaping along the street frontage. Mr. Cassavoy asked the Architect to clarify the proposed roofline for the Periwinkles building. The Architect stated that the existing roofline of the Periwinkles building is 32' high and gradually drops down to match the height of the adjacent one family unit. Mr. Sadowski confirmed that the street shown on the plans is an internal roadway not a City street. Mr. Sadowski asked whether the Applicants plan to include landscaping at the foundation of the structures. The Applicant expressed that his new proposal contains a more simplified landscape plan from a maintenance perspective. Mr. Mercado expressed concern regarding the use of concrete curbing and asked whether granite is being considered. Mr. Mercado asked the Applicant to confirm that the surface parking spaces conform with the required size established in the zoning ordinance and verified that the proposed handicap space is not required to be a handicap van space.

The members discussed the Applicant's waiver requests. The Applicant's new proposal contains the same waiver requests as the original proposal. As with the original proposal, the waiver for existing and proposed topography is not necessary because spot grades have been added to the plans. There are no areas on the site subject to the 100-year flood and no signs proposed as a result these waivers are also not needed. The Board noted that they previously voted to waive the submission requirement for a Traffic Impact Report for the original 8-unit proposal based on the determination that the traffic impact attributable to the project would be minimal compared to the existing traffic volume on Upham Street and compared to the type of commercial uses on the site in the past. The members noted that the traffic impact associated with the revised 11-uit proposal shall be di minimis. Mr. Mercado MADE a MOTION to grant the requested waiver for a Traffic Impact Report. Mr. Cassidy SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

The members expressed that another meeting is necessary for the Applicant to respond to the issues raised tonight. Mr. Bell reviewed the outstanding items needed for the next meeting. Mr. Bell stated that the Applicant will plan to ask the Board of Appeals for a continuance. Mr. Cassidy MADE a MOTION to continue the public hearing to April 23, 2012. Mr. Mercado SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

Document: Site Plan Review – Affordable Housing Special Permit Case 12-001

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Ms. Francazio noted that this was the annual meeting of the Board and as such members are charged with appointing officers. Mr. Cassidy MADE a MOTION for the slate of officers to remain the same with Ms. Francazio as Chair and Ms. DeSouza-Ward as Clerk. Mr. Mercado SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 PM.