MELROSE PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Regular Meeting
Monday, September 21, 2020
7:30 PM
Remote Meeting

PRESENT: Mike Cassavoy, Anne DeSouza-Ward, Paul King, Robert Mercado, Carla Morelli, Sharon Petrillo, John Sadowski, Greg Sampson & Jack Welch

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Denise Gaffey, Director, Emma Battaglia, Senior Planner & Lori Massa, Planning Coordinator

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Ms. DeSouza-Ward.

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Melrose Planning Board was conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Meeting access and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting was found on the City of Melrose's website, at www.cityofmelrose.org/remote-meetings. No in-person attendance of members of the public was permitted, but every effort was made to ensure that the public could adequately access the proceedings in real time. An audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings was posted on the mmtv3.org website as soon as possible after the meeting. A link was also available on www.cityofmelrose.org.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Planning Board Regular Meeting, August 24, 2020
Mr. Sadowski made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from August 24, 2020. Mr. Welch seconded the motion. All members by roll call voted in favor. None were opposed.

ASSENT CALENDAR

Board of Appeals Public Hearing on September 9, 2020

Case 20-019, 50 Burrell Street, Chris O'Reilly

Mr. Sadowski made a motion to send a neutral letter to the Board of Appeals for this case. Mr. King seconded the motion. All members by roll call voted in favor. None were opposed.

Documents: Application Materials, Case 20-019

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE BOARD OF APPEALS
Board of Appeals Public Hearing on September 9, 2020

Case 20-020, 25 Bratley Street, Ian Moriarty
Mr. Moriarty and Ms. Rivais appeared to explain the proposal.

The Board discussed how the neighbors to the right would be most impacted by the elevated deck and although the Applicant discussed the deck with these neighbors they recommended showing the plans to them.

Mr. Sadowski made a motion to send the Board of Appeals a letter stating that since the existing stairs need to be replaced and because of the location of the door to the house the Board found that the proposed deck was in a reasonable location. Mr. Welch seconded the motion. By roll call all voted in favor of sending this letter. None were opposed.

Documents: Application Materials, Case 20-020

Case 20-022, 3 Wildwood Road, Alfred & Diane Porcaro
Attorney Bell appeared to explain the proposal. He said that there is a totally opaque fence along the property line already and the proposed pool would not be visible from the street.

The Board was sympathetic to the more onerous setback regulations for corner lots and wanted to mention in the letter to the Board of Appeals that they will be reviewing a possible zoning amendment for corner lot setbacks. However, in this case, they discussed how the lot is large, flat and there did not appear to be any ledge outcroppings that would constrain the pool's location. With the information that they had it seemed as though the pool could be shifted to conform to the required setbacks and therefore the Board recommended denying the variance. They also recommended considering the required fence height for a pool as there are regulations about fence heights in the front yards.

Mr. Sadowski made a motion to send the Board of Appeals these recommendations. Mr. Welch seconded the motion. By roll call all voted in favor. None were opposed.

Documents: Application Materials, Case 20-022

Case 20-024, 647 Main Street, Follow Your Art Community Studios
Kris Rodolico appeared to explain the proposal. Follow Your Art has been in this new location for a year and they would like a sign so that patrons can identify the building.

Members discussed how other businesses in the same zoning district have free standing signs with similar setbacks. The sign as proposed is appropriate for the use and its setback cannot be conforming because of the limited depth of the front yard. The sign does not appear to interfere with the site distance for vehicles exiting the driveway next to the building. The Historic District Commission has approved of the sign and illumination. For all of these reasons the Board recommended approval of the variance for the sign. Members suggested seeking clarification on the regulation that the Building Commissioner cited in the denial letter.

Mr. Sadowski made a motion to send the Board of Appeals this recommendation. Mr. Mercado seconded the motion. By roll call all voted in favor. None were opposed.

Documents: Application Materials, Case 20-024

SITE PLAN REVIEW

Case 20-002, 138 Main Street, Metro Credit Union

Ms. Gaffey explained that the application was advertised for this date in the newspaper and to abutters; however, the deadline to post the notice was missed. The Applicant has agreed to request to continue the case to October 26, 2020.

Mr. Welch made motion to accept the request to continue the case to October 26, 2020. Mr. Sampson seconded the motion. By roll call all voted in favor. None were opposed.

Documents: Letter from Christopher Tolley, dated September 15, 2020

OTHER BUSINESS

Sidewalk Waiver for Regan's Way Subdivision

Mr. Szekely asked for a minor change to the Regan's Way subdivision approval to only construct a sidewalk on one side of the street. This was discussed and agreed to during the public hearing process but one of the sidewalks was never removed from the plan. The seven residents that live on the street signed a statement that says that they only want a sidewalk on one side of the street.

The Engineering Department determines the amount of money that developers pay in lieu of providing a sidewalk and it is based on the length of the sidewalk not constructed.

Members asked if the number of street trees, cross section of the area and curb changed. Mr. Szekely said that these elements did not change from the plan. There is more pervious area without the sidewalk pavement.

The Board prefers sidewalks and there is a sidewalk on one side of the street. The Board is not opposed in this instance to allowing Mr. Szekely to pay into a fund so that the City can create a sidewalk in another location. Neighbors were asking for improvements on Dexter Road which is nearby.

Mr. Sadowksi made a motion to grant a waiver to the requirement to construct sidewalks on both sides of Regan's Way and instead contribute to the City's sidewalk improvement fund in the amount determined by the City Engineer. Mr. Sampson seconded the motion. By roll call all voted in favor. None were opposed.

Mr. Szekely also asked about the potential to construct a welcome wall on the left-hand side of the street at the entrance where the sidewalk was originally shown. This request came from the

residents of the street. It would be approximately 3 to 4 feet tall and 8 feet wide and say Stone Ridge Heights. Board members had varying opinions and questions like who would maintain the sign. Some members felt that it would be acceptable if it was small and understated.

Mr. Szekely said that he would speak with the residents and would come back to the Board if they wanted to move forward with it.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 26, 2020 at 7:30pm.

The next Zoning Subcommittee Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 24, 2020 at 7:30pm.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.