

MELROSE PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Design Review Subcommittee
Thursday, November 5, 2020
7:30 PM
Remote Meeting

PRESENT: Michael Cassavoy, Robert Mercado, Carla Morelli, John Sadowski, Jack Welch

ABSENT: none

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM by Ms. Morelli.

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 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.

419 Main Street – changes to approved plans

Matthew Roman, General Contractor, appeared for the discussion. He became the General Contractor in August of 2019 after a rocky start for the project. Mr. Roman said that the owner, Teddy Lanzakis, invests in Melrose. He is in it for the long-run and puts costs aside. Mr. and Mrs. Lanzakis are at the property almost every day maintaining it. 419 Main Street is ready for occupancy permits and there are discrepancies between the as-built conditions of this mixed-use building and the approved plans. The Planning Board approved the project in October of 2017. At the request of Ms. Gaffey, Mr. Roman provided a document with the approved plans and images of the built condition and noted elements that were changed.

Ms. Morelli and Ms. Gaffey noted the following discrepancies, mostly in the rear of the property:

- omitted the loading dock
- discontinued the sidewalk (labelled deck) along the rear of the building connecting all rear entry doors
- omitted the trash enclosure and located trash bins in the alley between the building and Papa Ginos
- omitted planting along the alley adjacent to Papa Gino's

- omitted two planting beds with "hearty plantings" altogether that were intended to screen the concrete walks, deck and ramp
- omitted the canopy over the rear entry
- omitted a door from the rear elevation, which would have provided access to a central corridor running from front to back
- Rotated the rear steps to terminate on the abutter's property, as opposed to the developer's property
- Substituted pipe rail for the ramp railing
- The signage is not consistent with the approval
- A full sized material mockup was not provided

Mr. Roman said that he looks at plans as a guide and during construction they learn things that make for better plans. He thinks that all of the changes are improvements. They were not done for cost savings. They added the following items that were not on the plan:

- Added sills and lintels to the windows
- Changed the windows from vinyl to aluminum clad
- Increased the size of the light fixtures on the front of the building
- Installed a more durable water table material
- Will be installing solar panels on the roof
- Changed the siding from brick veneer to full sized brick
- The top floor changed from hardi-panel to full brick

Mr. Roman said that they have received complements on the building. The landscaping on the plans would not survive due to shade or insufficient area. Arborvitae were shown in the area marked as snow storage. The plantings near the Eastern Bank drive-through would block the drive aisle. The dumpster enclosure was planned when a restaurant tenant was contemplated for the building but neither of the first tenants are restaurants. The tenants have a 15 year lease and will generate little trash. Mr. Roman spoke with the Health Department and they did not have a problem with the totes in the alley. He ordered screening fences for the totes and will run that by Engineering. The loading zone is still there. The rear stair was turned because if it was built as it is on the plan a truck in the load dock would block the Eastern Bank drive-through. They were waiting to see what tenants occupied the building before installing the awnings in the rear. Mr. Roman was not involved with the ReMax sign. They must have received a permit to install the sign.

The Board said that the approved plans must be followed and are not just guidelines. When issues come up during construction, they are there to evaluate changes just as Mr. Roman came back to them for use and façade changes previously. They require as-builts and would like to see them. Mr. Romans said that this is a heavy burden.

Board members gave the following feedback. The hope was that this building would be a gateway building to downtown with a tenant that would seek outdoor dining and provide pleasant alleys for people walking through. The approved plan screened the utilitarian aspects of the building. Now the parking lot bleeds into the property and it looks like the ramp is in the middle of parking spaces. Will parking spaces be striped here? The Board wanted to see the commercial space occupied and is glad that there are tenants. The reality is that the businesses

may not stay and they need to think about future tenants. The trash totes in the alley are not adequate and are already overflowing. Trash storage either needs to be brought inside of the building or to the back of the lot. Landscaping is not adequate and would require a variance if none is provided. The signage is not in keeping with the sign character on Main Street. The handrail system may not meet code for a commercial building. The stair exits onto someone else's property. The architect should check that these items meet code. They should also provide a basement plan that shows bicycle storage and tenant storage and a roof plan to show if the condensers moved due to the solar panels.

The only Certificate of Occupancy that was issued is for a commercial tenant, although Mr. Roman acknowledged that there are several tenants who have moved in to the residential units. Mr. Roman asked if they could get a temporary CO for 90 days. He said that he can have revised plans ready in about one week. They will make the decision about a temporary CO when he gets the materials back to Ms. Gaffey. The members requested that the architect be present at the next meeting as well.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.