MELROSE PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Regular Meeting
Monday, October 25, 2021
7:30 PM
Remote Meeting

PRESENT: Tim Bailey, Beth Delahaij, Anne DeSouza Ward, Paul King, Carla Morelli, John Sadowski, Greg Sampson & Jack Welch

ABSENT: Robert Mercado

STAFF PRESENT: Denise Gaffey, Director and City Planner & Lori Massa, Senior Planner

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM by Mr. Sampson.

Pursuant to An Act Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency signed by Governor Baker on June 16, 2021, this meeting was be conducted via remote participation. Specific information 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 could be found on the City of Melrose's website, at www.cityofmelrose.org. 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, or in the event that we are unable to do so, they would be post on the mmtv3.org website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting. A link was also available on www.cityofmelrose.org.

Meeting access information was found at the following link: www.cityofmelrose.org/remote-meetings.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Planning Board Regular Meeting, September 27, 2021
Ms. DeSousa Ward made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Mr. Welch seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. None were opposed.

SUBDIVISION PUBLIC HEARING

Summit Avenue Modified Subdivision, North Shore Residential Development, Inc.
North Shore Residential Development, Inc. submitted an application for a modification of a subdivision plan for Summit Avenue. At the August 23 meeting the Board voted to accept the application.

This case was advertised for and continued from September 27, 2021. Attorney McAvoy had requested to continue to have more than seven members able to vote on the application. At this hearing one member was not able to make it unexpectedly and one member will be resigning

from the Board before the next meeting. Attorney McAvoy again requested to continue the case to a future meeting to have more Board members available to vote on the application. When asked by the Chair, Attorney McAvoy said that he would provide a written waiver of the timeframe needed for the Board to act on the application.

By not having a substantial discussion and hearing public testimony tonight all future Board members would be able to vote on the case.

Mr. Welch made a motion to continue the case as requested to November 22, 2021. Mr. Sadowski seconded the motion. All voted in favor. None were opposed.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE BOARD OF APPEALS
Board of Appeals Public Hearing on November 10, 2021:

Case 21-028, 8 Church Street
The Planning Board took no position on the application. One member wanted to point out that due to the grade change and the height of the deck, the residents of the abutting house may feel that it will loom over their house. Mr. Welch made a motion to send the Board of Appeals a letter that states that this case involves judgments that can best be determined by the Board of Appeals based on the application materials and the information provided by the applicant and abutters at the public hearing. Mr. Sadowski seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. None were opposed.

Documents: Applicant materials for Case 21-028

Case 21-029, 189 Forest Street
The Planning Board took no position on the application. Ms. DeSouza Ward made a motion to send the Board of Appeals a letter that states that this case involves judgments that can best be determined by the Board of Appeals based on the application materials and the information provided by the applicant and abutters at the public hearing. Mr. Sadowski seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. None were opposed.

Documents: Applicant materials for Case 21-029

Case 21-030, 274 Laurel Street
The Planning Board took no position on the application; however, they did want to point out that the house will be taller than its neighbor, albeit conforming to the height regulation. Additionally, the proposed garage conforms to the zoning regulations for setbacks but appears to be inaccessible for vehicles. The garage location should be shifted so that it is accessible and continues to confirm to the dimensional requirements. Ms. DeSouza Ward made a motion to send the Board of Appeals a letter that states that this case involves judgments that can best be determined by the Board of Appeals based on the application materials and the information provided by the applicant and abutters at the public hearing. Mr. Welch seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. None were opposed.

Documents: Applicant materials for Case 21-030

Case 21-031, 8 Prescott Street

The Planning Board took no position on the application. Mr. Sadowski made a motion to send the Board of Appeals a letter that states that this case involves judgments that can best be determined by the Board of Appeals based on the application materials and the information provided by the applicant and abutters at the public hearing. Ms. Morelli seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. None were opposed.

Documents: Applicant materials for Case 21-031

Case 21-032, 470 Lynn Fells Parkway

The Planning Board recommended denying the variance application. The Board has fairly recently amended the signage regulations and find them to be appropriate. They believe that the existing wall sign that faces the street is sufficient and that there is no justification for the need for a second wall sign on the side of the building. This proposed sign would not be very visible except when in the side parking lot and therefore it is unnecessary.

Ms. DeSouza Ward made a motion to send the Board of Appeals this recommendation. Mr. Welch seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. None were opposed.

Documents: Applicant materials for Case 21-032

OTHER

419 Main Street Basement Occupancy

The Design Review Subcommittee met in 2020 and 2021 to determine how the project at 419-429 Main Street, which was built with several variations from the approved plans, should be altered to come closer to conformance.

One of the changes that was made after the Board's approval was that the space in the basement was changed to allow for a future tenant(s). The residential storage, bike storage and mechanical areas were relocated and a common restroom was added. Additionally, the staircase at the rear was stopped at the ground level and relocated to the exterior of the building to allow for three large commercial spaces/storage areas. An areaway with windows and fall protection grates were added along the alley to provide natural light and ventilation. At that time, the Subcommittee required that a proposal for the basement occupancy should also be presented to the Planning Board given that this is a recently approved Site Plan Review project.

A tenant has been found to occupy all of the leasable space in the basement. The business has a retail component to sell Melrose apparel and would be screen printing onsite. The members felt that this tenant would make good use of the space and did not see any zoning barriers such as parking requirements. They had questions about the following items:

1. The plan for the mechanical system in the basement and any additional units or ventilation that may be needed.
2. Solid waste disposal needs for the business and how that will work with the current tote capacity.
3. Signage and access to the building.

Mr. Sadowski made a motion that this proposal is minor, does not require an amendment to the Site Plan Approval, and, as is conditioned in the Planning Board's decision, that the DRSC meet with the property owner and tenant to review and approval of the details to ensure that the proposal will not create circumstances that vary from the approvals. Mr. Welch seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. None were opposed.

Documents: DRSC approval letter dated April 20, 2021
As-built basement floor plan with mark-ups

OTHER

New member Mr. Bailey will replace Mr. Sadowski on the Design Review Subcommittee. This is Mr. Sadowski's last meeting as a Planning Board member.

NEXT MEETING

Planning Board Meeting, Monday, November 22, 2021

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.