

MELROSE PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Design Review Subcommittee
Thursday, November 4, 2021
7:30 PM
Remote Meeting

PRESENT: Carla Morelli, Paul King, Jack Welch & Robert Mercado

ABSENT: Tim Bailey

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 PM by Ms. Morelli.

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.

Case 21-001, 52 West Emerson Street

Applicant Frank Barbosa, Engineer Eric Bradanese, and Architect Jason Jarvis appeared to present the items that were conditioned in the Planning Board's decision for the DRSC to review and approve.

The façade materials and colors presented were acceptable to the Subcommittee; however, final approval will occur when a mockup of typical building materials and colors is presented to them as construction progresses. The materials were chosen for their durability and low level of maintenance. The siding will be lap siding LP Smartside 7-inch smooth finish in a quarry gray color. The mansard siding will be LP Smartside cedar shakes in a tundra gray color. The window trim, all fascia and eave trim will be a composite material that is white. The balcony decking will be a composite material that is slate gray. The railings will be a composite material that is white and the style of the awnings will be traditional.

The windows and doors presented were acceptable to the Subcommittee. The windows will be Marvin Essentials, which are fiberglass, and the sash and frame will be the color ebony. The patio sliders will also be Marvin Essentials in the same color.

The front door was not specified. It may be painted a color to add a touch of vibrancy to the building that otherwise has neutral colors.

The project was approved with nine parking spaces. During the public hearing the Board discussed how the trash storage was not functional as presented, and parking space number 6 was difficult to access. These issues were conditioned to be finalized with the DRSC and the Subcommittee was satisfied with the plans present to them. They show 5 parking spaces inside of the building and 4 outside. Trash and recycling storage is inside where parking space number 6 was previously. The bicycle parking in the garage will be large enough for 8 bicycles.

The landscape plan includes a maple and flowering dogwood in the front yard. At the meeting the team represented that the trees will be 2 ½ to 3-inch caliper when planted. Rows of rhododendron and hostas will line the front of the building. The front, side and rear yards will be grass. There will be a Japanese Lilac tree in the rear and daylilies that follow the proposed grading. Rose of Sharon will be planted near the rear property line. Boston Ivy will be planted along the retaining walls at the side lot lines.

The land behind the subject property that the Applicant will plant and maintain will be a perennial ryegrass with two Black Typello trees. These species are tolerant of wet conditions as this land gets flooded with heavy rain. The ryegrass can be mowed.

The Subcommittee approved of the landscape plan and asked that care is taken to maintain the trees including using tree watering bags.

The adjustments in the plantings from the Planning Board meeting has allowed room for usable outdoor space in the rear yard with a sizable flat lawn space that can be used by the residents for seating or other outdoor activities. The access and usability of this space was found to be sufficient. The lawn area will also provide space for snow storage in the winter.

There will be ceiling mounted lights above the front and rear doors. Wall pack lights are proposed to be on the side of the building along the driveway and there may be a few on the rear of the building. The Architect specified that these fixtures have an adjustable reflector to project the light downward but the members questioned whether this type of fixture would still cast light onto the neighboring property. The Architect will choose another fixture that projects the light downward. The exact height of the wall mounted lights will be determined in the field to make sure that they are not projecting onto neighboring property. They are typically 8 to 10 feet above grade. They will be on a timer or have a photocell sensor.

The site plan shows a typical stop sign at the end of the driveway but the DRSC did not approve of it. The back of the sign will face the street and look awkward. They discussed if a small wooden sign that said 'stop' or 'watch for pedestrians' would be more appropriate but decided that it is unnecessary. A sign is not required and it is customary to stop at the end of a driveway before crossing the sidewalk and entering the street. Cars will be pulling out in a forward direction and there will not be visual obstructions to seeing pedestrians or vehicles.

The only signage that will be installed is the street number of the property that will be near the door and will not have dedicated lighting.

Ms. Morelli reminded Mr. Barbosa that the building and site must be constructed according to these plans. Any requested changes that may arise as the project progresses will need to be submitted for review and approval before they are acted upon. The building material mock-up should be constructed in advance of when the materials need to be ordered.

Documents: Façade and Lighting Materials, Sheet A-0.2 dated September 21, 2021.
Civil Plans, dated revised August 26, 2021

Revisions to Case 17-002, 419-429 Main Street

Teddy Lantzakis, Property Owner, appeared to present a proposal for the use of the basement and new awnings and signage on the building.

The DRSC met several times in 2020 and 2021 to review changes to the building and site that differed from what the Planning Board approved in their Decision and the DRSC approved subsequently. The memo from the Subcommittee dated April 20, 2021 outlined the changes to the approved plans that were eventually agreed upon and documented the modified plans.

One of the changes that was approved was that the basement layout was changed to allow for a future tenant(s). A tenant has been found to occupy all of the leasable space in the basement. The business is a retailer that sells Melrose apparel and would be doing screen printing onsite. The Planning Board discussed the tenant at their October 25, 2021 meeting. Members felt that this business would make good use of the space and they did not see any zoning barriers to the proposal such as parking requirements. They found that the request was minor, did not require an amendment to the Site Plan Approval, and, as is conditioned in the Planning Board's decision, the DRSC should meet with the property owner to review and approve of the details to ensure that the proposal will not create circumstances that vary from the approvals. They specifically asked the DRSC to review the following issues and the members discussed them at this meeting.

The HVAC system and ventilation has already been installed in the basement and no changes are needed for this tenant. The intake and exhaust is through a mini split system that vents through the exterior wall. The unit just services the basement and is not integrated with the other HVAC systems in the building.

The floor plans will not be reconfigured. They would only be making cosmetic changes to the interior space.

The tenant will receive a lot of boxes that will need to be recycled. Also, the approval for the trash totes for the property versus a dumpster came with the condition that the Applicant will provide an update on how the trash and recycle pickup is going. The members found that the tote area has remained clean; however, this tenant will increase the quantity of waste.

Mr. Lantzakis submitted an updated trash management plan states that he will increase the frequency of the weekly trash and recycling pickup if needed. The basement tenant will store boxes to be recycled in the back production space, out of the path of egress, and the tenant will remove it. Other tenants leave large cardboard to be recycled in the space marked on the plan as “utility closet” but this space has never been used for utilities. There is a sign on the door that says “Residential Recycling Storage”.

The awning and signage plan includes three awnings above the stairs to the basement with a wall sign located above the top one. The signage material will be a thick acrylic affixed to an aluminum backer and pin-mounted to the brick, which is the same material and same fabricator as the ATI sign to the right of the proposed sign. The sign will not be lit.

The Subcommittee had issues with the proposed awnings for the following reasons. The number of awnings makes this tenant more prominent and they do not have a cohesive look with the rest of the building. The Subcommittee’s preference is that the awnings and signs have a consistent appearance with one awning and one sign per tenant that are at the same height and do not intersect with the pilasters. They understand if the awning for the basement stairs has to be lower to make it deeper to cover the stairs but they questioned if that was even necessary. The accessible entrance and all external stairs are not covered from the weather. A member cautioned the Mr. Lantzakis to consider the drip line of the awning so that water does not shed off of it and onto the abutting ramp.

Customers can access the basement through the exterior stairs, the ramp in the back of the building and the front door. Signage to inform customers of these entrances is forthcoming.

The member asked about signage for another commercial tenant in the building, Remax. Their sign does not conform to the signage approved by the DRSC. Mr. Lantzakis assured the members that he will create a plan for a new sign for this tenant and submit it to them. He will incur the cost of the sign and have the current sign replaced.

The DRSC found that the information presented to them was satisfactory to allow this tenant to occupy the basement space with the condition that a new awning proposal is submitted for review and approval. Mr. Lantzakis should also submit a plan for informing customers about the accessible entrances and a plan for a replacement sign for Remax at the same time.

Documents: 419-429 Main Street Proposed Basement Floor Plan October 6, 2021
Existing Conditions Photos of Front, Back and Rear Staircase
Interior Rendering
Mothership of all Design Awning & Signage, A1.1.5 & A1.1.6 October 6, 2021
Solid Waste Management Plan Update Received November 4, 2021

The meeting ended at 9:05 pm.