

MELROSE PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Regular Meeting
Monday, December 20, 2021
7:30 PM
Remote Meeting

PRESENT: Tim Bailey, Beth Delahaij, Anne DeSouza Ward, Brian Gregory, Paul King, Robert Mercado, Carla Morelli, Greg Sampson & Jack Welch

ABSENT: None

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, November 22, 2021

Ms. Morelli made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Ms. DeSouza Ward seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. None were opposed.

SITE PLAN REVIEW

Case 21-004, 8 Crystal Street, Trinity Properties LLC c/o Neal Ryan

Neal Ryan, Applicant, appeared to present the case. He spoke with the neighbors and they appreciated that he was renovating the existing building and making it feel more residential. He explained the different dormer types proposed and the sizes of the third floor bedrooms with each dormer. The imitation stain glass window cannot stay on the side of the building with the new floor plan. He will reuse it on the front dormer.

The Board discussed how the dormers can be longer than 50% of the roof to which they are attached because this makes the building three stories and eight story buildings are allowed in the BD district.

Member felt that adding a front door to the building was a huge improvement. Adding a large deck to the back may be challenging for the bedrooms for the ground floor unit. Mr. Ryan said that the rear deck is needed for utility and outdoor space.

Mr. Ryan explained the site. He looked into installing an underground stormwater system but the ground water was too high for this system. He cannot raise the grade of the site because it ties into the grades of the surrounding lots, which is needed for vehicular access. Members said that a maintenance plan will be needed for the rip rap to make sure that it is kept clean and functional. The erosion control will only be required during construction.

Members asked how the parking spaces would be assigned. Two of the units would get two parking spaces and two units would get one parking space. There would not be a dedicated visitor space in the lot. A member asked how they would prevent someone from parking on the grass. Mr. Ryan did not want to install curbing around the grass so that snow could be plowed onto the grass.

The Board discussed and requested these changes to the plan and/or more information on the following items before they vote on the application. The dormer and landscaping details can be reviewed in the future by the Design Review Subcommittee.

- Make front façade symmetrical or very asymmetrical for the Spanish Colonial architecture to be more cohesive.
- Create a consistent roof style with the dormer, roof over the door, and bay – plans show hipped, shed and pediment roof types. A hipped roof for the dormers may help to bring down their scale in the front of the building.
- Reduce massing of dormer and add detailing like is on existing dormer. Some members felt that the dormers looked less intrusive in the rendering. Others felt that they were overwhelming. People that choose to live here will appreciate the unique architecture and the need for sloping ceilings on the top floor.
- Identify where bicycle parking will be located. Mr. Ryan said that two bikes may be able to fit under the deck and others in the landscaped area not covered. The west side of the site is sloped, which is not good for bicycle parking. The ground and first floor units could wheel bikes inside of the units.
- Specify pavement markings and signage for traffic flow. They suggested painting the lane with arrows and a no parking sign on the pavement. Mr. Ryan said that the owner of the abutting property, over which is the access easement, is not opposed to installing pavement markings and signage. The number of trips for the residential use will be less than the trips generated from the prior commercial use of the building. The abutter only uses the easement when a vehicle needs direct access to the basement, which is rare. The parking for that building is in the front yard along Main Street.
- Include spot grades on the plan to better understand slope – especially near rip rap.
- Reconsider crushed stone under trash barrels and consider how barrels will be wheeled to the curb
- Include parking stops, a guardrail or bollards on the plan to address concern about cars hitting the deck

- Consider installing conduit for an electrical charging station
- Include the front yard in the landscape plan with native species
- Determine if mini-splits will be used and if so, where the units will go

No one appeared to speak in support of or opposition to the application.

Mr. Welch made a motion to continue the case to January 24, 2022. Ms. Morelli seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the continuance. None were opposed.

OTHER

Case 19-002, 732 Newburyport Turnpike, Garden Remedies, Inc. – Request to Modify Hours of Operation

Attorney Charlie Gill appeared to request a change in Garden Remedies hours of operation. In the Special Permit approval the Planning Board conditioned, #5, that the hours that they are allowed to operate is 8am to 10pm, seven days a week. Attorney Gill requested that the condition is changed again to 8am to midnight, seven days a week. Their business is successful and they have competitors that are open later than 10pm. They submitted letters from the Chief of Police and the Fire Department who both did not object to the midnight closing time.

Members said that a midnight closing time seems late but if the City's public safety officers do not have an issue with it, they do not either. The road that the store is on, Route 99, is a major road and they did not find that the late closing would negatively impact the area. The nearby Townline Inn is proposed to be redeveloped to a distribution facility, which would not be affected by the change.

Ms. Morelli made a motion that the proposed change to condition #5 is de minimis and to approve the change in allowable hours from 8am to midnight, seven days a week. Ms. DeSouza Ward seconded the motion. By roll call, eight members voted in favor. One, Mr. Mercado, voted in opposition to the request.

Documents: Written request from Attorney Charles Gill dated December 14, 2021 with Attachments
Letter from Chief Michael L. Lyle dated December 9, 2021
Email from Edward Collina dated December 3, 2021

Case 17-002, 419-429 Main Street, Theodore Lantzakis – Signage & Awning Proposal

When the DRSC last met on November 4, 2021 they reviewed the rear awning and signage proposal for the basement tenant, which they did not approve. They explained their reasoning and ideas for a revised proposal.

Mr. Lantzakis submitted a revised rear awning plan and a plan for a replacement Re/Max sign for the front of the building. The existing Re/Max sign does not conform to the signage specifications approved by the Planning Board in the original Decision. He did not yet submit a revised signage plan for the basement tenant. The Re/Max sign will be the same material as the ATI sign on the building. He will make the balloon smaller so that it fits within the soldier course brick pattern. The larger awning will be 5 feet deep to cover the stairwell to the basement and the landing in front of the first floor door. The drip

edge would be between the ramp and the stairwell to the basement. Re/Max is requesting a rear awning too for some protection over their door. All of the awnings would have a consistent height at the bottom of the awnings and be made of Sunbrella.

The Planning Board found that the three awnings proposed for the back of the building and the Re/Max sign were appropriate and consistent with the signage design for the building. Re/Max could have a sign above the awning in the rear that is similar to the ATI sign. A sign on the awning would not be consistent with other signage on the building and would not be approved.

They asked Mr. Lantzakis to submit plans with dimensions. If dimensions and the items discussed above are incorporated into the plans, they will be accepted.

Ms. DeSousa Ward made a motion to request this information for the approval of the rear awnings and Re/Max sign on the front of the building. Mr. Welch seconded the motion. By roll call all voted in favor. None were opposed.

Documents: Signage and Awning Proposal Update from Staff dated 12.20.2021
Rending of Re/Max Sign on Front of Building
Rending of Three Awnings on Back of Building

Case 17-003, 87 Essex Street, Richard Arnone – Light Fixture

The Board approved the proposed light fixture for the porch by the front door and rear door. They found that the fixture has an appropriate design for the building.

Mr. King made a motion to approve the light fixture as proposed. Mr. Mercado seconded the motion. By roll call all voted in favor. None were opposed.

Documents: Document from Staff dated Dec 20, 2021 with screen shot of fixture – Bestshared
Exterior Wall Light, Outdoor Wall Mount Lighting, 1-light Outdoor Wall Sconce,
Wall Lantern Fixture (Black, 2 Pack)
Site Layout Plan dated revised Oct 16, 2017
Renderings of Building dated Sept 25, 2017

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE BOARD OF APPEALS

Board of Appeals Public Hearing on January 12, 2022:

Case 21-035, 19 Sharon Road, Eric Nyland

The Board found that the project would essentially result in the addition of a full third story for a significant portion of the structure. The Board was also of the opinion that there are no unusual circumstances that would necessitate a dormer of the proposed length to make use of the space. Additionally, half of this floor is proposed for storage space where full head height is not needed. The Board recommended denying the variance.

Ms. Morelli made a motion to send the Board of Appeals a letter with this recommendation. Mr. King seconded the motion. By roll call all members voted in favor. None were opposed.

Documents: Applicant materials for Case 21-035

Case 21-036, 60 Mooreland Road, Lauren Howell & Keith Howell

The Board found that the proposed addition does not appear to be detrimental; however, without justification of why it cannot be made two feet narrower to comply with the required setback, a variance does not appear to be warranted.

Ms. DeSouza Ward made a motion to send the Board of Appeals a letter with this information. Mr. Welch seconded the motion. By roll call all voted in favor. None were opposed.

Documents: Applicant materials for Case 21-036

Case 21-037, 1023 Main Street, Cara Drew

The Planning Board took no position on the application; however, members provided comments in case that are helpful in the ZBA's review of the case. This is a corner lot and the yards parallel to Pearl Street act as side yards. The architecture of the addition is in keeping with that of the house. The addition is appropriately subordinate to the main body of the house. One member pointed out that more thought could be given to make the southern elevation less monolithic. Should the ZBA approve the variances, the Board recommended that it be conditioned such that cars cannot park in front of the garage if they cannot fully fit on the property and overhang onto the sidewalk.

Mr. Welch made a motion to send the Board of Appeals a letter to request that they take these comments into consideration and include the information that the Board believes 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. Desouza Ward seconded the motion. By roll call all voted in favor. None were opposed.

Documents: Applicant materials for Case 21-037

OTHER

New member, Brian Gregory, was introduced and welcomed to the Board.

NEXT MEETING

Planning Board Meeting, Monday, January 24, 2022

The meeting adjourned at 9:42 pm.