

**MELROSE PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

Design Review Subcommittee

Monday, March 20, 2023

7:30 PM

Cassidy Conference Room, City Hall, 562 Main Street, Melrose

PRESENT: Carla Morelli, Michael Aveni, Paul King, Jack Welch & Tim Bailey

ABSENT: None

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Carla Morelli Chair of the Design Review Subcommittee.

Case 21-004, 8 Crystal Street

Applicant Neal Ryan and prospective new owner and builder Richard Arnone appeared to present materials that were conditioned for the Design Review Subcommittee to review and approve as part of the Site Plan Approval for this project.

Mr. Arnone suggested that in place of the grass in the area on the landscape plan marked “G”, there are pervious pavers that allow grass to grow through them. Members preferred the grass and did not approve of the pavers for area “G”. Grass is more pervious than pavers and with these types of pavers residents would not have a functional yard space. Due to the large spaces between the pavers, a chair cannot easily be placed on them and play is difficult on that surface. They requested that the path labeled “E” is extended to the asphalt so that the trash and recycling totes can be pulled from the storage area under the deck, along a hard surface to Crystal Street where they will be picked up. They requested that a final landscape plan is submitted to them for review and approval before the site work has begun.

The DRSC were presented with three styles of dormers and chose the hipped style. They would prefer for the dormers to start below the ridge of the house so that they did not appear to be so prominent. They also suggested that the color of the dormers be a complementary color to the roof, and darker than the main body of the house, so that they visually recede into the roof. The Members would like to see a rendering with the final colors before making a decision on colors.

The Members chose for the building to remain as stucco on the exterior as opposed to being clad with lap siding. It was clarified that the siding will be solid stucco and not EIFS. They wanted to preserve the Spanish Colonial style of the building. The roof material is proposed to be GAF shingles. The color was presented as charcoal; however, during the meeting Mr. Arnone suggested that a tan color would be more appropriate. As noted above, a rendering was requested to make the final decision about colors including the roof color.

The windows presented were black 9-pane casement and awning windows. There is a window schedule on the plan. Members questioned whether the windows were acceptable for egress from a bedroom but otherwise did not have any comments.

The front door was specified and not specifically discussed during the meeting. The columns that were on the elevations submitted to the Subcommittee will not be installed. The overhang over the front door will remain as it was shown on the plans that the Planning Board approved.

Mr. Arnone said that he will have a stained glass window made that looks like the one on the building and install it in approximately the same location, which can be seen on the east elevation on sheet A-2. The soffit brackets will be replaced with brackets that have a similar style. The bell on the side of the building will be refurbished. A member suggested building a niche for it between the dormers.

The proposed light fixture was acceptable. It will be installed on both sides of the front door and on one side of the side and rear doors. Mr. Arnone was not planning to install any additional lighting. There is an existing residential flood light on a 3-4 foot pole at the edge of the parking lot that provides sufficient light. He would retain or replace the fixture if needed.

The Subcommittee reminded Mr. Arnone that the building and site must be constructed according to the approved 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. They reviewed that the conduit for EV charging, the bicycle rack, and bollards will be installed as was shown on the approved plan.

Based on the information presented, the Subcommittee determined that Condition 3 of the Site Plan Review Decision was fulfilled with the following conditions:

1. The Applicant shall submit a final landscape plan for review and approval to the DRSC with the path extended as noted above before site work begins.
2. The Applicant shall submit a rendering and color samples of paint colors for the main body of the house, dormers, front door and roof shingles to the DRSC for review and approval prior to making purchases related to these items.

Documents: Cover Letter dated March 8, 2023
Images of pervious pavers
GAF Timberline Roof Shingle Specification
HardiePlank Specification
Picture of Existing Structure
Craftsman Front Door Specification
Picture of exterior light fixture
Architectural Plan dated 3.7.2023
Landscape Plan dated 1.4.2023

Case 21-002 & 21-002-R, 735 Newburyport Turnpike

Philip Cox, Senior Project Manager, and Meghan Bruckman, Project Engineer, appeared to request a change to the fence materials related to the Site Plan Approval. The change is for the fence proposed on the southern property line from a board-on-board fence to a chain link fence with vinyl slats. Mr. Cox stated that the fence was originally not going to be installed along the entire property line in this location but was going to be installed only for certain sections and it was not intended to be a screening for the residential abutters. The new proposal is for the fence to be along the southern border up to the Melrose/Malden city line. The City of Malden's Building Commissioner approved of the change to chain link without the need for a review from a board/commission that approved the project. The request originally included expanding the fence along the side property line to Newburyport Turnpike but that proposal was withdrawn because of the concern voiced by staff that it would block visibility at the driveway entrance. The reason for the change is that they feel that the proposed fence will be sturdier and will be easier to maintain. The slats can be replaced if damaged. They would like to install the Cape Cod Grey color.

The change to the fence would be on the City of Malden's side of the property but the Planning Board considered the whole site cohesively and felt that this change should be vetted in a public meeting. The Members considered that there were residential abutters and some of them appeared at the public hearing in support of the project. These abutters could have been amenable to the project in part because of the proposed fence. The Members took a close look at the abutters' yards and they all have existing chain link fences along their back yards so the addition of a chain link fence on the other side of the stream, which divides the properties, would be a common fence type. The proposed slats would still provide the screening that the abutters were promised.

For the fence along the northern property line, the plan said that the existing chain link fence would be replaced if needed. The fence was replaced and vinyl slats are installed. Mr. Cox said that they have been in communication with the manager of the cemetery to the north and he was satisfied with the fence on that side.

Members do not generally approve of chain link fences with vinyl slats; however, in this situation where there is an industrial use, neighbors that already have chain link fences, and the proposal will have the same level or more screening considering that the fence will now cover the stretch that the Board originally envisioned would be screened, they approved of the change from the board-on-board fence to the chain link fence. Members debated the color options for their ability to be least prominent and for durability and did not have a strong reason to not allow for the proposed Cape Cod Grey color of the options given.

Documents: Site Plan
Master Halco StatMaster Privacy Specification

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm.