

WATERTOWN PLANNING BOARD

DATE: October 13, 2010 PLACE: Town Council Chamber TIME: 7:00 PM COMMENCED: 7:00 PM

PURPOSE OF MEETING: Regular Monthly Meeting

PRESENT: John Hawes, Chairman; Jack Zollo; Fergal Brennock; Linda Tuttle-Barletta
Staff: Steve Magoon, Director, Danielle Evans, Senior Planner, Ingrid Marchesano, Clerk

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Jack Zollo motioned to approve Minutes of 9/15/2010 meeting.

Fergal Brennock seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0 In favor

CASE PENDING

- **124 Maplewood Street;** Michael Mandel - Special Permit Finding

Michael Mandell, a set of revised plans is submitted tonight. A letter from neighbors supporting this proposal is also included. This is a proposal to enclose an existing porch to become part of kitchen renovation. A 13' deck will be constructed, the new staircase will be narrower and the landing renovated.

Danielle Evans, staff reviewed the request. This is a pre-existing nonconforming structure and the new enclosed porch will not be substantially more detrimental. Staff recommends approval.

Angie Kounelis, Town Councilor, the property will be improved by these renovations. Mr. Mandell stated that neighbors are in support, as I am.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to recommend to the Board of Appeals approval of the Special Permit Finding under Section 4.06(a) based upon the finding that it meets the criteria set out in the Zoning Ordinance subject to conditions set forth in the staff report.

Jack Zollo seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0 In favor

- **198 Summer Street;** John & Laura McKenzie – Appealing determination of the Zoning Enforcement Officer

Jack Zollo motioned to continue the above petition until the next Planning Board meeting to allow the petitioner to submit additional information.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0 In favor

- **264 Arlington Street;** Dafna Krouk-Gordon, TILL, Inc. – Special Permit/Site Plan Review

Steve Magoon, one of the issues at the neighborhood meeting for this project was PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes). The petitioner will meet with the Assessor to discuss the project.

Dafna Krouk-Gordon, TILL Inc., we are proposing to use the property for educational purposes. The majority of individuals served by this program have mental and physical disabilities. The center will teach disabled adults to be independent. We are now located on Pleasant Street, the hours of operation are 8-4:30. We have conducted a neighborhood meeting last week on the premises. The building is in disrepair and will be replaced within the existing footprint. The proposed buildings will fit into the neighborhood. This is a 30-year old organization and some students are residents of Watertown. There are 33 non-profit organizations in Watertown and we will meet with the Assessor to discuss the PILOT agreement.

Clifford Boehmer, Architect, this is an extremely low impact development. The buildings are significantly smaller, placed away from the neighbors. The hours of operation will be Monday-Friday, 8:00-4:30. We will provide a space for drop-off. Other proposals for this property were much more aggressive. The existing building is in very poor shape. The new 35 ft tall structures will have the same curve, and very nice materials will be used. We do not have a landscape plan yet.

Danielle Evans, a variety of reliefs, dimensional, parking, is needed. The site is already disturbed, there is no landscaping to be preserved. The proposed design will relate to the Coolidge Square neighborhood. The new buildings will have smaller footprint, and 10% of open space. Access through the curb cut will not be detrimental to the neighborhood and the pedestrian traffic. By eliminating the existing building, more pedestrian traffic will be created. Each building will be accessible to emergency vehicles. A Dover amendment variance is required for parking being less than 5 feet from the structures, and side yard setback of 11.9' where 15' is required. All the criteria have been met and the staff recommends approval of this proposal.

Angie Kounelis, District A Councilor, last week's neighborhood meeting was well attended. This is a very passive use with traffic in the morning and the afternoon. I am in support of the proposal but I want to make sure that the demolition has minimal impact on the neighbors. Several commercial property owners came to the neighborhood meeting and expressed their concern with the non profit status of this company.

Tony Colombo, Councilor-at-Large, this is a great site for such a use, I am very impressed by the TILL Inc. work.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to recommend to the Board of Appeals approval of the Variance under Section 5.04 & 6.02(k) based upon the finding that it meets the criteria set out in the Zoning Ordinance subject to conditions set forth in the staff report.

Fergal Brennock seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0 In favor

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to recommend to the Board of Appeals approval of the Special Permit/Site Plan Review under Section 5.05(d) & 5.01.2.a.2 based upon the finding that it meets the criteria set out in the Zoning Ordinance subject to conditions set forth in the staff report.

Fergal Brennock seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0 In favor

- **118-120, 132, 140 Pleasant Street;** Claudio Coppola, Coppola Pleasant Street LLC – Special Permit/Site Plan Review

William York, Atty, a development team is here tonight to present the project and answer any questions the Board might have. This proposal, located in I-3 zone, is in a total compliance with the Zoning Ordinance. Existing 3-family house and repair garage will be razed. The height has been reduced, setbacks extended. The Town encourages more housing and this proposal will do that. This project will enhance the site, it is located near the River and near public transportation. We have not received any objections from the town departments reviewing the project. We have welcomed the neighborhood input. We are in front of the Board because any development with 4 units or more requires Special Permit/Site Plan Review. This project consists of 44 units, 4 affordable units will be provided.

Ed Nardi, Cresset Development, revisions were made since the last time this project was in front of the Planning Board. Originally, there were 48 units, the building was very long along the street. We have changed it to 44 units, the total length has been reduced to 140 feet in the front, 185.7' in the rear, and the height is now reduced by 3 feet. Primary façade on Pleasant Street is 3 stories with a 4th story

being set back. The front yard setback has been increased, the building pushed back 22 feet – from 20 feet. There is no parking on Pleasant Street. We are proposing a 5 car drop off at the main entrance. Some of the units have been modified in size, all parking is underground. This is a green building, high quality insulated envelope, with energy efficient appliances. There is drainage control on the site, bike path in the rear near the River, we will provide bike spaces on the site.

Dartagnan Brown, Architect, the project has been reduced from 48 to 44 units, there is 6,300 s.f. of floor space, building footprint has been reduced, as well as the building height. We have removed a section of building and created entrance/drop off area. 84 parking spaces and 33% of landscaped open space will be provided. The site design provides a 24' curb cut at the east end of the property which will provide access to the lower level parking. A stone wall will be build along the south elevation, the south side of the property will have shrubs.

Cindy Lee, Environmental Consultant, the property is located within 10 minute walk of public transportation. It is very unattractive; this proposal will be major improvement to the property and the area. Storm water management system will be installed. This system will also provide greater than 90% Total Suspended Solids removal. The light on the site will not spill over to abutter's properties. We will work with the contractor to reduce construction waste. Durability is a feature of green design.

Brad McKenzie, Engineer, we will work with the landscape architect to provide low impact development drainage design. There will be no drainage mitigation towards the Charles River. The proposal consists of low impact green design elements, the runoff is directed towards the sides of the property. The site now has five curb cuts, which will be eliminated and 2 added at the extreme end. We have met with the DPW regarding the utility connections and storm water design. The landscape architect is not present tonight, the plans are showing variety of red maples, magnolias, Japanese maples, and many shrubs. An existing tree located on the east side will be preserved. Most of the site is paved, over 30% of the site will be green. Portions of the existing wall will be removed, decorative fence will be placed along the back portion and side of the property.

Kenneth Cram, Landstrategies LLC, there will be decrease in traffic with this project. The 44 units will generate less trips than the existing use. The main driveway is onto Pleasant Street. Stairway to the DCR property will remain clear for safety reasons. 84 parking spaces are provided for the 44 units.

Ed Nardi, we are trying to address the neighborhood concerns. We are working with Mr.Coppola as partners. The ultimate goal is to determine what is best for this site.

Danielle Evans, this project does not require any dimensional relief. Special Permit/Site Plan Review is required for any 4 or more units. The site is an appropriate location, this use is allowed, and the property is within walking distance to Watertown Square. The petitioner is providing 13% more of open space than required. This project will replace blighted garage and provide 4 much needed affordable units. Five curb cuts will be removed, 2 will provide better access management. SPR criteria were reviewed by all Town departments. The size of the building is appropriate, all setback requirements have been met, and there are other large structures near the Square. All utilities are underground, trash dumpster is located in the garage. The mechanical equipment will be within the building. Lighting plan will be submitted. The 4 criteria for affordable units have been met, all affordable units will be of same quality as the market rate units.

John Hawes, a lot of interaction between the staff and the developer took place. This is a difficult site, placed in I-3 zone. The Board is trying to relate to residents and to the developer. Planning Board will make a recommendation and the Zoning Board of Appeals will make the final decision.

Jill Halloran, 154 Pleasant Street, cars back up on Pleasant street from Watertown Square at 8 am. The new plans for this project seem to be the same like last year. Four story building is too high for this site.

Many abutters from 111 Pleasant Street expressed their concerns regarding the enforcement of parking rules. Each unit at this address has parking garage and 6 visitor parking spaces are provided. The proposal at 140 Pleasant will have young professionals with many overnight visitors. The flow of traffic from this property will jam neighbor's driveways.

Clyde Younger, 188 Acton Street, this project is in conformity with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. New traffic lights were placed at Rosedale and Myrtle Street intersections. How will that affect this area? We need to look at all the properties in the area, not just one, to see how it affects the flow of traffic. The problem is not just this project, it might be Watertown Square.

Chuck Langenhagen, 111 Pleasant Street, the trucks from the landscape company that is now on the site leaves before the rush hour and enter before the rush hour. The traffic study is sloppy, it does not show the actual trip count and it does not show the proposed developments on Pleasant Street. This is not an urban setting. The proposed driveway is across from 121-123 Pleasant Street. The staff report describes the current configuration. The developer did not provide light or shadow study. The proposed building does not fit harmoniously with other buildings in the area. 4 stories is too high, the massing of the building is too big. The Planning Board has the power to modify the building, it should be only 2 stories.

Kenneth Cram, the volume of the traffic generated by this project is minimal. We used only peak hour numbers. Trucks used by the landscaper will be replaced by automobiles.

Joan O'Brian, 111 Pleasant Street, 4 less units is not enough, the fourth story should be removed. This building is higher then the abutters. Traffic on Pleasant Street is very bad. The streets flooded during the spring rains. Where will the snow go? There are no balconies on this building.

Dom Zaccagnini, 23 Conant Road, I have lived in this area for 88 years. Two stories would be sufficient for this site, we would like to keep this are a family neighborhood. Visitor will park on side streets. The building is too large for this site.

David O'Dette, 100 Pleasant Street, I have lived here for 40 years. The snow from 111 Pleasant Street gets pushed across the street. All streets leading to Watertown Square have traffic issues. The Town will benefit from this project. Claudio Coppola helps the neighbors remove snow, etc. All the criteria of Zoning Ordinance have been met.

Susan Delong, 26 Conant Road, I have lived here for 3 years. I appreciate that a lot of effort went into this design but it is not enough. None of the plans include view toward Conant Road which is a dead end street and will be impacted by this proposal. This design is not appropriate for this area.

....., Charles River Watershed Association, neighbors have touched on all the issues. Any development on this site needs to enhance the Charles River environment. A Notice of Intent was filed with DEP in 2009. The focus tonight has been on the front of the property, we are more concerned with the rear that abuts the bike path and the DCR property.

Brad Mackenzie, the project was withdrawn last year, a new Notice of Intent will be filed. The Charles River area will be restored. This is now a blighted site that has been cleaned up, the storm water runoff will be treated.

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Steve Corbett, Councilor At Large, I am in support of this proposal. The Town needs to support development, this proposal will enhance the site. If I lived next door, I might have similar concerns. Many commercial properties abut residential properties, this is part of Watertown character. The project is allowed by zoning. It is a vast improvement to the present situation, 4 stories is not excessive.

Mark Sideris, Town Council President, the Zoning Ordinance allows this project to go forward. We, as a Town, need to look at different picture. This project will expand the tax base. More proposals will come and if say no to everything, the developers will stop coming.

Vince Piccirilli, Town Councilor, I am not asking the Board to say yes or no. Some neighbors are in support, others are against. Conant Road will get most impacted because it is a dead end and many people already park there. Signs should be posted at the 140 Pleasant Street site that no visitor parking is allowed on Conant Road.

Theresa Jones, Mr.Coppola's daughter, we have owned this property for 45 years. There were many issues with the property that have been addressed. My father is 73 years old and still runs the landscape business. We have met Cresset Development 3 years ago. We are asking the Board to vote yes on this project, we have a list of 70 Watertown residents who are in favor of this proposal.

Angie Kounelis, District A Councilor, I have been contacted by the area residents. The proposal has been reduced by 4 units which is very minor. It is the Board's discretion to ask for further reduction. It is important to be sensitive to the abutters, we need to move on.

Barry Spitz, 144 Pleasant Street, I have visited the Planning office and the staff was very helpful. On the plans shown, my 2 family houses look taller than the proposed development. As a direct abutter, I will be affected by this proposal, the renderings are without dimensions. I have been friends with Claudio Coppola for many years, but this proposal is too big for the site. I am urging the continue the petition to allow more time to review the proposal.

John Hawes, the building is now pulled back, it will not affect the abutters. The staff needs to resolve the front yard parking issue as well as visitor parking.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta, the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance have been met.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to recommend to the Board of Appeals approval of the Special Permit/Site Plan Review under Section 5.01.1(f), 6.01(h), 9.03 based upon the finding that it meets the criteria set out in the Zoning Ordinance subject to conditions set forth in the staff report.

Fergal Brennock seconded the motion.

VOTE: 3-1 In favor

Linda Tuttle-Barletta against

John Hawes, the Zoning Board of Appeals will meet in two weeks on October 27, 2010. Some of the questions could be answered then.

Steve Magoon, we have received numerous emails from abutters and neighbor who spoke against and for the proposal.

OTHER

Chairman John Hawes adjourned the meeting at 10:45 PM.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 10:45 PM MINUTES APPROVED: _____

For more detailed Minutes see tapes dated 10/13/2010 available in the DCD&P office.