

WATERTOWN PLANNING BOARD

DATE: May 9, 2012 PLACE: Town Council Chamber TIME: 7:00 PM COMMENCED: 7:00 PM

PURPOSE OF MEETING: Regular Monthly Meeting

PRESENT: John Hawes, Chairman; Jeff Brown; Linda Tuttle-Barletta; Neal Corbett
Ingrid Marchesano, Clerk to the Board; Danielle Evans, Senior Planner;
Gideon Schreiber, Senior Planner

ADMINISTRATION BUSINESS

Jeff Brown motioned to approve Minutes of 4/11/2012.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta seconded the motion.

Voted 4-0 In favor

CASES PENDING

- **401-405 Main Street;** Anthasasios & Vasilias Mitropoulos – Variance & Special Permit Finding

Jeff Brown motioned to continue the above case to the May meeting of the Planning Board.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0 In favor

- **REPTON CIRCLE;** MCRT Investments LLC – Amendment to Special Permit/Variance

Rob Hewitt, VP Mill Creek Residential Trust, this 385 unit residential project was permitted in 2006 as a 2 phase proposal. The Phase I three condominium buildings have 179 units, and are completed. Phase II was delayed and the entire property subdivided by Beacon Communities Development. The 6.54 acre lot is under new ownership and will consist of 2 buildings with rental units. Minor project changes are being proposed. The existing decision will be enforced to Phase I only.

We have developed properties around the country, mainly on the East coast, the most recent is a garden style property in Concord. The interior of the properties is high end, outdoor areas are well landscaped. We have met several times with the Planning staff and the Housing Partnership, 15% of the units will be affordable where 10% is required. All condo units have been notified of the change. The footprint and size of the buildings will be the same as approved originally, with some minor changes to site plan and landscaping to improve pedestrian circulation. The color scheme will be different and the entries to the buildings updated making them more prominent focal point. The 32 affordable units will be added to the Town's affordable housing inventory. The smaller building 2 is on Pleasant, the much larger building 1 is in the rear. Both are 4 stories high. A pool and grilling area will be added. Fire Department's comments have been addressed and the front curb line changed to allow the fire trucks to turn, roads will be 18' wide. Evergreens will be added on the Stanley Ave side to provide privacy. Entry stoop has been moved to allow for handicap access. The façade will have darker bricks on the bottom, grey on the top. Layout of units has been improved. All the proposed changes are minor.

Danielle Evans, staff reviewed the changes. This is an appropriate site for residential use, the size of the buildings and number of units is the same. Many improvements were added to the original proposal. There will be a minimal traffic impact. Staff recommends conditional approval of the Amendment to the Special Permit.

Since the project was approved in 2005, the criteria have changed, but this project is being considered under the original criteria. The buildings are located in the same place, the change to the entry of the buildings is an improvement. The pool area counts as an open space, but it is not impervious. Utility service is the same, signage will be subject to separate review. Fire and Police requested 18' wide drive to allow for emergency vehicle access. 10% of affordable housing is required, the petitioner will provide 15%, and the original agreement will be amended because these are rental units. Staff recommends conditional approval of the amended project.

Jeff Brown, is the change from condominiums to rental because of financial reasons? Are the garages enclosed and ventilated? How long is building 1? Are there firewalls? The Board would like to see elevations of the buildings, it is difficult to see the impact without it.

Andrew ..., The Architectural Team, the structure is over 500 feet long. Fire walls will be included. We do not have full front elevation drawing, only parts of it.

Neal Corbett, the façade changes in color and materials are not an improvement. Why so many changes? Will the pool be secured by a fence?

Rob Hewitt, there is no demand for condominiums, our company does only rentals. We wanted to create our own identity, the brick color is richer.

John Hawes, the main concern is the entryway. Could it be changed to provide better handicap access? It would make is consistent with the other buildings. The outdoor sitting area is not very accessible. Is there a handicap space at building 2?

Rob Hewitt, both parcels are separately owned and will be managed separately. The amenities will be shared, including snow removal, etc.

Martha Starr, Repton Place/Building #3, I have lived in this 4th floor unit since November 2007. My corner unit will now be blocked by the large building. Traffic will increase, how many parking spaces are provided for each unit? I am concern with the noise and pedestrian safety. Beacon Properties told us that the colors will remain the same. We are concerned with the resale value of our condos, we will never recover the original value.

John Hawes, most of the traffic will be from the rear building. This project was already approved, the variation of colors might be better.

Gideon Schreiber, we would like to add 2 conditions. The curb cut on Pleasant Street needs to be removed, new curb cut will be approved by DPW. Existing chain link fence should be also removed.

Danielle Evans, condition #22 "To address the proposed changes to the site (replacement of passive open space areas with the pool and "grilling area" as well as to vehicular circulation), modifications to the site plan deemed necessary by DCDP (to facilitate connectivity between the site and the Stanley Avenue corridor, increase the amount of contiguous open space on site, reduce the amount of impervious surfaces, and reduce physical barriers to improve emergency access among adjacent properties) shall be required and be reviewed through a Site Plan Review process and/or approved administratively", is part of the staff report.

Deborah Horwitz, Atty, there are minor tweaks that need to be addressed. We generally agree with the conditions but will continue to work on it prior to the ZBA meeting.

Danielle Evans, the project was approved in 2005, many changes happened in the area. Stanley Avenue is very important part of the area to be used for pedestrian, bicycle and emergency vehicle access. We want to remove as much asphalt as possible. Condition #22 will allow that and provide more open space on the site.

John Hawes, we should not approve something that staff and the petitioner are still working on. The ZBA will make the final decision.

Danielle Evans, we need to have time to be able to revisit the situation and to make it adaptable for future discussions. We can add "subject to future discussion between the petitioner and the staff prior to the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting".

Linda Tuttle-Barletta, this is an advisory Board, the ZBA will make the final decision. I would prefer to have condition #22 included.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to recommend to the Zoning Board of Appeals approval of the Amendment to Special Permit/Variance #05-45SP/VAR based upon the finding that it meets the criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance subject to conditions 1 to 31, additional conditions #32 & 33 set forth in the staff report and add to condition #22 "subject to future discussion between the petitioner and the staff prior to the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting".

Jeff Brown seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0 In favor

Chairman John Hawes adjourned the meeting at 8:30 PM.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:30 PM MINUTES APPROVED: _____

For more detailed Minutes see tapes dated 5/9/12 available in the DCD&P office.