

WATERTOWN PLANNING BOARD

DATE: April 9, 2014 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; Fergal Brennock; Neal Corbett
Steve Magoon, Director; Ingrid Marchesano, Clerk to the Board; Gideon Schreiber, Senior Planner

ADMINISTRATION BUSINESS

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to approve Minutes of 3/12/2014.

Jeff Brown seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0 In favor

Chairman John Hawes announced that the 202-204 Arsenal Street petition has been continued to the next meeting of the Planning Board.

CASES PENDING

- **41 Lowell Ave**; Kevin & Nancy Donahue - Special Permit Finding

Kevin Donahue, this is a proposal to construct a single story addition in the back to make the existing kitchen larger.

Gideon Schreiber, the 6.5'x24.5' rear addition will replace existing extension. The proposed change is not substantially more detrimental, the increase of 79 s.f. is minimal. Staff recommends approval with standard conditions.

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

Jeff Brown seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0 In Favor

- **917 Belmont Street**; Walker Home & School – Site Plan Review

David Mackwell, Kelly Engineering, we are here for Site Plan Review for a structure over 4000 s.f.. We are submitting an aerial photo of the existing site showing the proposed addition. This 2 acre site is located in a T zone where institutional use is allowed by right. A 1,200 s.f. historical structure is located in front of the property facing Belmont Street. A 3,000 s.f. building was recently demolished. We are proposing to expand the existing building by 4,800 s.f. to include 40'x50' gymnasium for daily physical exercise, performing arts and school assemblies, arts studios and classrooms. The second 1,800 s.f. story will be used for additional classrooms. The site was purchased in 2006, the changes will allow for better define parking and landscape improvements. The proposal confirms to all the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance-height, setbacks and density. We concur with the staff report and conditions are acceptable. We have reviewed the letter from the abutters, neighbors are asking if the structure could be moved toward the center of the site. The existing design will minimize the cost of the construction. We are trying to blend the addition with the existing building and surrounding homes. Height is consistent with the abutting homes. The center green of the property will be improved, it will be used for gatherings away from the neighbors.

Gideon Schreiber, this is a 2.06 acre site with the historic Orchard house built in 1832 that was designated as Historic Landmark and the Beacon High school in the rear corner of the property. The 6,860 s.f. addition will be added to the existing Beacon School and the existing basketball court will be relocated. The proposed project is an exempt "Dover Amendment" use under MGLc.40A §3 and is allowed throughout the Town. The corner property is on Belmont Street and Knowles Road. The

building setback is 15' to the north and 29' to the west, open space requirements have been met. The site has 2 entrances and one exit, 38 existing parking spaces are on the site. DPW, Fire and Police departments have reviewed the project. New building is built to the current stretch code requirements. Plantings are proposed to allow for buffer.

Jeff Brown, I have visited the site, could the structure be placed closer to the old building or abutt the existing front building?

David Mackwell, if moved, it would interfere with the classrooms in the existing building.

Frank Elliot, Architect, we looked at other alternatives, this was the best option providing enough space for drop-off and pick up. This is the 7th design, 10 foot distance would not mitigate the neighbors, and connection on second floor would not work. This design will reduce the cost and is preferable by the school.

Steve Tannenbaum, Board of Directors, the programs in the school have changed, more space is needed. Students need to be in one facility to allow for continuous supervision. Different design would result in substantial cost increase.

Steve Magoon, the structure in front was deemed historical, the owners will restore the building

John Hawes, looking at the drawings, this is where the addition should be. Could the entire structure just slide down away from the rear property line? This is a very large long building, the school has the right to build, but it could be shifted. The design is efficient, the Board could add conditions.

Kevin O'Neill, 26 Knowles Road, we are immediate abutters, 10 feet would make a difference. We have purchased our property in 1998. The proposed landscape is not as critical as the height and distance.

Rosie Osser, 28 Knowles Road, there are always alternatives and more architectural options. Lots that have solar energy will now be blocked. Why does the gym have to be connected, additional 10' setback is a start.

Eleanor Donato, 15 Knowles Road, I have lived here when the Home for Little Wanderers occupied the site. It was placed away from the Knowles Road. We have tried to have a relationship with this school, they are very close to our neighborhood, and communication is needed.

Gideon Schreiber, the original design had Knowles Road as a front yard.

Fergal Brennock, 26-28 Knowles Road will be impacted by this design and should be considered. I would encourage continuation of the project.

John Hawes, the owner should consider additional 10' setback.

Steve Tannenbaum, the 10' setback would result in one classroom elimination. If we are continued tonight, the same conclusion will be in a month. The roof line and the height are the same as surrounding residential structures. The design is not perfect but it will be the best option for students. We are trying to be sensitive to the neighbors, but this is the best design.

Neal Corbett, I would recommend a shadow study.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta, this project is encroachment on residential area, it is important to be sensitive.

Steve Magoon, the Planning Board is the only permitting authority, it cannot be denied, it is a by right approval with conditions. If the applicant does not want to continue, the Board can vote and add a condition that the project is moved 10' forward.

Steve Tannenbaum, to move the structure 10' is cost prohibitive, 1 month continuation will not make any difference. We need very clear guidelines from the Board.

John Hawes, the Board would like to see what the actual problems are. It is a good project but we have to take the neighbors into account. I would prefer to continue the petition, meet with the staff and try to find a solution.

Anthony Donato, 15 Knowles Road, the petitioner is not very neighborly, the property is not maintained, the children are not supervised

Eileen Hsu-Balzer, 897 Belmont Street, this is the first time we are hearing about this project, neighbors need to be involved. Students are out on Knowles Road and neighbors get upset. The proposed structure should be moved, it is not right to wait until the last minute to inform neighbors.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to continue the petition until the next meeting of the Planning Board.
Jeff Brown seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0 In Favor

CONTINUED CASES

- **33 Mt. Auburn Street;** Robert Bray, Manager, 33 Mount Auburn Street Realty, LLC - Special Permit with Site Plan Review – *REQUEST FOR CONTINUANCE*

William York, Atty, the principals of LLC met with John Hawes and Neal Corbett to address the concerns from the last meeting.

Steve Hurley, Architect, the major concerns to be addressed were façade materials, garage windows on south and west elevations. We have prepared board with materials and colors to be used on the building. Finished materials and colors have been extended down to commercial space. Brick was mentioned several times but the Board found that the cementitious clapboard would be appropriate.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta, 4" siding would be preferable

Fergal Brennock, 4" siding is more appropriate. I would prefer metal awnings at the windows. Natural ventilation in the garage is better, openings with louver system are preferred.

Steve Hurley, fabric awnings are more appropriate, it will be maintained by the owners.

William York, a condition can be added that awnings will be maintained.

Steve Magoon, there should be an increase in commercial space to allow for bathroom facility, storage and more flexibility even if a parking space is lost.

William York, there will be 2000 s.f. of commercial space. We have reached out to ice cream and sandwich business owners that have shown serious interest in 1,400 s.f. of the space.

Joanna Erickson, 48 Chester Street, the 3 façade options presented tonight are alike. The awnings should be on all windows.

Cecilia Lenk, Town Councilor, I am happy to see this project moving forward. The design is very nice and the retail space has lot of potential. I am glad that the park area will be improved. This project will add to the revitalization of downtown.

Tony Palomba, Town Councilor. I agree with the new changes and change to the retail space area.

Ernesta Krackiewicz, 77 Brookside, I like the project but I am concerned with the garage door opening, inside materials should look good when the doors open.

Steve Hurley, the materials will be the same, the doors will be closed at night, frosted glass lights will shine toward outside.

Steve Corbett, Town Councilor, this project is a great asset to Watertown Square, retail component is very important.

Matt Lash, we are very excited about seeing this development. The quality of the job should be considered, ensuring that Watertown residents have access to the construction jobs.

Linda Tuttle-Barletta motioned to recommend approval of the revised project with the modification to the façade to use Alternative #3, plan A7.3C with 4" high clapboard and increasing floor area of the commercial space to accommodate bathroom and storage not to count toward retail square footage and to eliminate condition #14

Jeff Brown seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0 In favor

OTHER

John Hawes stated, a very large Arsenal Street project followed by another one, is coming in front of the Board next month. Athena Health is coming up with several amendments for the Arsenal on the Charles.

Steve Magoon, number of zoning amendments are coming up in front of the Planning Board and the Town Council. Several community meetings will be scheduled for new projects. The Planning Board might have a second meeting in May.

The Planning Board will have a special meeting on April 16 to allow further conversation with the consultant.

John Hawes adjourned the meeting at 9:20 PM.