



BOXBOROUGH DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
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Kevin Mahoney

Eduardo Pontoriero

Robert Stemple

Meeting Minutes
April 1, 2015
7:00 PM
Morse-Hilberg Room, Town Hall, 29 Middle Road

Members Present:

Kevin Mahoney, Chair
Eduardo Pontoriero, Member
Robert Stemple, Member

Adam Duchesneau, Town Planner

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Meeting Minutes of April 7, 2014

Mr. Stemple MADE a MOTION to approve the meeting minutes of April 7, 2014 as written. Mr. Mahoney SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor.

Pre-Application Conference for a Proposed Project at the Town Center (intersection of Stow Road and Massachusetts Avenue) – Senior Housing Development

Richard Harrington from Stamski and McNary, Inc. and Mike Jeanson were in attendance to discuss the project with the Design Review Board. Mr. Harrington introduced the project noting the original proposal called for 208 dwelling units, but they have reduced that figure to 158. He stated the density of the project site is now approximately 50% of what the zoning will allow. Mr. Harrington then went over the details of the project including the locations of structures and site layout.

Mr. Stemple asked about the allowable family size for each of the dwelling units. Mr. Duchesneau explained these units would be restricted to a deed holder who is 55 years or older, but no other requirements on age are required to be put in place. Mr. Stemple asked if the proposed access off of Priest Lane would be for emergency access only and Mr. Harrington confirmed this was correct. Mr. Stemple commented this would mean a significant number of vehicles would be entering and exiting from the one access point off of Stow Road. Mr. Harrington noted this particular type of use is typically a lower intensity use than a conventional residential development. Mr. Stemple stated he had public safety access concerns because if any portion of the roadway ever became blocked, a very dangerous situation could be created. He wanted to know how dwellings in certain areas of the development could be accessed or vacated if there was a roadway blockage. Mr. Harrington indicated this topic was still under discussion at this point.

Mr. Pontoriero stated he wanted the development to fit into the character of the surrounding neighborhood and the proposed density was a concern for him. Mr. Pontoriero preferred the density resemble that of Sheriff's Meadow and Tisbury Meadows. He felt cramming a significant

number of dwellings into a small area seemed out of character with the rest of the town. Mr. Harrington noted there were a number of different residential densities around town and that the density of the units closer to Route 111 was similar to Tisbury Meadows. Mr. Pontoriero commented that the larger unit cluster in the rear of the development seemed to have roughly double the density of Tisbury Meadows and overall the project did not appear to be generally lower density housing. Mr. Harrington stated he felt the project was harmonious to similar uses. He noted the structures in the project will have roof peaks, dormers, and other features that will mimic Sheriff's Meadow and Tisbury Meadows. Mr. Harrington stated the project team felt the proposed development fit into the higher density concentration aspect of the Design Guidelines.

Mr. Pontoriero asked if there was anyway to provide a meeting space or common hall for the project's condominium association. Mr. Jeanson stated they had created these in two other projects and the buildings are never used. He continued on to note that condominium associations now handle all of there votes and meetings via email instead conducting in-person meetings. Mr. Harrington stated they could look into a park, gazebo, or some type of outdoor open space in more detail as the application process moves forward.

Mr. Pontoriero indicated he was looking for a design that is more accommodating to the Design Guidelines. Mr. Stemple added that benches, tables, or some type of congregation point should be incorporated into the project. Mr. Pontoriero asked if there was any way to connect to the rear portion of the project via the Route 111 access. He noted this would give the residential dwellings at the rear of the site two access points. Mr. Pontoriero also asked if there was any way to pull in commercial development for the area along Route 111. Mr. Jeanson stated the project team briefly discussed this at one of the earlier Planning Board meetings.

Mr. Mahoney wanted to know how the access gate off of Priest Lane would function. Mr. Harrington stated it could work in a number of different ways involving a gate, pervious pavers, collapsible bollards, or some combination. Mr. Pontoriero commented the housing structures looked somewhat plain and encouraged the Applicants to enhance them anyway they could. Mr. Jeanson indicated they were going to put windows in the garage doors. Mr. Pontoriero suggested adding shutters to the facades. Mr. Jeanson noted the porches would have wide columns.

Mr. Harrington then provided a more detailed description of each of the front facades. Mr. Stemple asked how high the rear decks would be and Mr. Harrington stated that some could be a full story in height due to the topography of the land. Mr. Stemple asked if any unique mullion patterns would be used in the windows, such as nine over six, and the Applicants indicated they could look into this. Mr. Pontoriero encouraged the project team to vary the façade patterns and designs for each building. Mr. Jeanson asked what the Board thought of the half windows that were adjacent to each front door. Mr. Stemple stated an oval window or some other type of style would be preferable. Mr. Jeanson also commented they have a variety of colors and looks of materials they will be using, but all exterior siding materials would be vinyl. He showed the Board some materials they planned to use including a vinyl material that was designed to look like stonework. Mr. Jeanson also wanted to confirm the Board was comfortable with a different mullion pattern in each window and the Board indicated this would be a positive design aspect. Mr. Stemple noted he wanted to see heavy landscaping between the units which are most densely clustered together.

Mr. Duchesneau then provided a number of comments on the proposal. He asked the Applicants to provide side and rear façade elevations the next time they went before the Board. Mr. Duchesneau noted that a window on the second story façade appeared to be missing in the current renderings. He also encouraged the Applicants to look at using different façade materials such as clapboard, brick, or stone to provide variation in each of the facades. Mr. Duchesneau also asked the Applicants to show gutters and downspouts if they were proposing to use them in the project. Mr. Jeanson stated they would likely not be using them for these structures. Mr. Duchesneau also requested the front porches be a minimum depth of six feet to ensure they would have usable space, as opposed to simply being used for outdoor covered storage space. He continued on to state how the proposed two foot landscape strip between each driveway was inadequate and unsustainable. He encouraged the Applicants to make this area wider and more substantial, which would also help it break up the facades of each structure.

Mr. Duchesneau also requested that some type of material or surface pattern change be implemented in the areas where sidewalks would be crossing each driveway. The areas where pedestrians would be crossing a driveway should be clearly delineated in some manner. Mr. Duchesneau also requested there be patterning and windows in each of the garage doors because the current renderings made the doors look like large blank facades. He also asked the Applicants to display where sconces would be located on the facades if they were going to be used.

Mr. Duchesneau also asked where the utility connections would be located for each building and requested consideration be given as to where condensing units, dryer vents, and the like would be located. He also suggested each structure flip the bay window from side to side periodically so the bay window was not on the same side of every structure in the development. Mr. Duchesneau also asked the Applicants to think about increasing the width of the trim around each window and requested that each unit be a different color to provide variation throughout the project.

Mr. Stemple asked if there was a gas line along Route 111 and if so, he stated the Applicants should look into tapping into that for the project. Mr. Jeanson indicated each of the units would have natural gas or propane. Mr. Harrington stated they were trying to perform less grading around the rear of each home if possible. Mr. Pontoriero requested the siding stagger down the sides of each building where the topography sloped off towards the rear potentially exposing the foundation. This would especially hold true in the case of walkout basements.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:29 PM.