

**City of Newburyport
Planning Board
March 2, 2016
Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM.

1. Roll Call

In attendance: James Brugger, Sue Grolnic, Jim McCarthy, Leah McGavern, Andrew Shapiro, Bonnie Sontag, and Don Walters

Absent: Doug Locy and Noah Luskin

Director of Planning and Development, Andrew Port was also present.

2. General Business

- a) The minutes of 2/17/16 were approved. Don Walters made a motion to approve the minutes. James Brugger seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

- b) ***Boston Way Subdivision – Request for Lot Release***

Director Port said the lot release was never recorded at the registry.

Andrew Shapiro made a motion to approve the lot release. Leah McGavern seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Motion Approved.

During the course of discussion and consideration of this application, plan(s), supporting material(s), department head comments, peer review report(s), planning department comments and other related documents, all as filed with the planning department as part of this application and all of which are available in the planning department, were considered.

3. Old Business

- a) ***Chart House Development, LLC
23 Hale Street
Major Site Plan Review (2016-SPR-02)
(Continued from 2/3/16)***

Steve Sawyer, DCI, 68 Pleasant Street, received peer review sign off on stormwater plans. Changes included enlarging the rain garden at the top of the entry and providing routing and piping for down spouts at the rear of the building to the infiltration chambers and the land at the back. In response to parking comments, the density was appropriate for six employees per unit. The proposed one space per 380 square feet was slightly more than a similar building at 3 Henry

Graf, Jr. Way that used one space per 360 square feet. Plantings replaced front parking spaces and evergreens were dispersed throughout the site. The dark sky compliant light fixture, emailed today, was cut off, included a shield, and the .5-foot candles trailed off at 30 feet.

Members asked about the positioning and visibility of the entrance sign with respect to the landscaping? Mr. Sawyer said the sign was positioned just back from the property line and would be visible in the summer. Evergreens were planted further back to maintain site lines. Chairman McCarthy said all City departments had commented, peer review had made modifications, and the fixture was acceptable. Waivers were photometric plans and a landscape architect.

Public comment opened.

Public comment closed.

Don Walters made a motion to approve the Major Site Plan Review with two waivers. Sue Grolnic seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Motion Approved.

During the course of discussion and consideration of this application, plan(s), supporting material(s), department head comments, peer review report(s), planning department comments and other related documents, all as filed with the planning department as part of this application and all of which are available in the planning department, were considered.

4. New Business

- a) *Hillside Living, LLC c/o Lisa Mead Esq.
Hillside Avenue and Cottage Court
Section VI.C Special Permit (2016-SP-03)
Major Site Plan Review (2016-SPR-03_*
- b) *Hillside Living, LLC c/o Lisa Mead, Esq.
12-14 Cottage Court
Major Site Plan Review (2016-SPR-04)*
- c) *Hillside Living, LLC c/o Lisa Mead, Esq.
18 Cottage Court
Major Site Plan Review (2016-SPR-05)*

Andrew Shapiro read the notices. Chairman McCarthy said he would like the applicant to present all three plans together at the same time.

Don Walters made a motion to continue the Major Site Plan Reviews to April 6th. James Brugger seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Motion Approved.

During the course of discussion and consideration of this application, plan(s), supporting material(s), department head comments, peer review report(s), planning department comments and other related documents, all as filed with the planning department as part of this application and all of which are available in the planning department, were considered.

5. Continuation of Old Business

**a) One Boston Way, LLC
1 Boston Way
Smart Growth Plan Approval
(Continued from 2/3/16)**

Lou Minicucci, manager, One Boston Way, LLC, introduced new renderings that addressed color scheme options and overall verticality. The building site was agreed upon. Greg Smith, architect, GSD Associates, 148 Main Street, Andover, said the sidewalk was widened, the front re-landscaped for a more unified entrance, and interior commercial spaces were opened up.

Renderings of the proposed color scheme also showed architectural modifications. A close up view from Boston Way showed landscaping 20 feet back from the property line at the street's edge for maintaining site lines. A second view from the MBTA station looked towards the Parker Street entrance. Mr. Smith demonstrated where a walkway connecting to the MBTA would be. Wood framed upper floors included new cornice lines that delineated two-story sections of brick that dropped down to one-story sections of brick. A box bay protruded slightly above the main entrance and ended near, but not at, the roofline. The commercial building sign was lower. Scott Cameron, principal, The Morin-Cameron Group, Inc., 447 Boston St, Route 1, Topsfield, said paths to the main entrance had straightened and seating areas were added. First floor work/live units facing the MBTA station, framed out to expose support columns, each had a bathroom.

New renderings showed variations on new color schemes that included a choice between a darker terra cotta color and a darker gray color. Material samples included an Energy Star-rated exterior wall system with a base metal panel, a vapor and insulation barrier, and a gypsum layer. Sample façade materials included a grayish limestone-like panel, a darker gray cementitious panel, red brick with a water struck-look, and a molded cornice piece of high-density foam that prevented rot. Each layer of the wall system contributed to a tight, dry structure. Chairman McCarthy liked the large windows that would bring good light into the building, especially on the first floor. The four upper floor's windows were 6 feet x 6 feet; first floor windows were 9 feet high. Mr. Smith said the individual commercial entrances had glass-covered canopies to distinguish them from the residential units. A wider, deeper glass canopy covered the Parker Street entrance. A small plaza at the Parker Street entrance was separated from the sidewalk. Building signage off the first floor brick, not shown yet, would be low key.

Member comments: What was the thinking behind two floors of brick? Mr. Smith said the design reduced the scale and had a less monotonous appearance, like a streetscape. The darker grey next

Planning Board

March 2, 2016

to the lighter gray were both on the same plane. A brief discussion about dropping all brick verticals to one level to improve visual simplicity since the façade was broken up by colors did not result in a request for change. Chairman McCarthy said it was hard to tell visually where the floors were. As proposed, the second floor brick looked smaller. Mr. Smith said the design simulated some historic buildings. The intent was to give the building more character. Members said design standards required a setback on the second story. Director Port said the scale made sense for the brick because too much height was called out if the brick came down to the first floor all the way across. Members wanted more articulation on the first floor. Trellises that projected out would add to the human scale of the first floor brick and, in particular, activate the first floor exterior at the building's park. Mr. Smith said there were some trellises; more could be added. Director Port recommended something subtle, like the glass canopy. Members commented on the high contrast of the entryway canopy. Mr. Smith said the copper aged to a green patina, but was rendered as if new. What was beyond the tall entryway windows? Mr. Smith said the two-story space as you entered the first bay of the lobby might include amenities.

Questions about access to the balcony above the entryway from a second floor hallway door launched a discussion about whether balcony use would bother residents in nearby apartments. The elevator lobby was behind windows adjacent to the balcony. Mr. Smith would make an effort to address the concern but considered noise a natural part of the living arrangement. Director Port said access to outdoor balcony space was beneficial overall. How wide was the cornice near the balcony? Would anyone step out onto it? Mr. Smith said upper story windows opened only four inches by code, as a child protective measure. Chairman McCarthy said changing all the window trim to black was an improvement. Describing the window balcony details, Mr. Smith said the balconies were protective. Four-inch rails projected only 3-4 inches out from windows that opened fully. The previous balcony projection was eliminated. Chairman McCarthy asked why the brick façade was the base rather than upper floor? Mr. Smith said brick was the primary architectural style in Newburyport. Members said it was normal to have granite on the bottom and brick above. Director Port said with brick on the bottom, the more finely broken down material was at pedestrian level, whereas the less detailed blocks of granite-looking material were above the pedestrian level. Chairman McCarthy asked if the darker gray panel was colored all the way through? Would it hold color through years of weather exposure? Mr. Smith said the panels had a 25-year warranty. Whether panels were colored all the way through depended on which manufacturer produced the product. Paint starts to peel within 3-4 years as moisture is driven out of a building. The layered wall system would prevent moisture from showers, cooking, and other indoor activities from reaching the façade. The gypsum panel's fiberglass facing fronted a vertical trough for draining moisture. Chairman McCarthy liked the extra cornices and accepted the proposed color scheme. He pointed out that the City's design guidelines referenced only traditional structures. This building was not a traditional design but had many of a traditional building's good qualities.

Public comment opened.

Public comment closed.

Member comments: When would the building's energy rating be known? Mr. Smith was still working with consultants. The minimum would be the stretch code. The layered wall system

Planning Board
March 2, 2016

alone was a benefit with at least R21. An Energy Star rating required testing, beginning with creating an energy model of the entire building and ending with third party testing of the building once it was built. Each unit would have an individual HVAC unit with a heat pump and heat recovery ventilation. The units themselves would be very tight with little heat loss. Would a conduit duct draw air in from the outside? Mr. Smith said yes, the ventilation system would capture that energy. Would the building use low volume toilets and showerheads? Mr. Smith said he would meet, if not exceed, code in the effort for an Energy Star rating. Were renderings computer generated and accurate to scale and height? Mr. Smith said yes. Were external elements, such as utility poles, also accurate and to scale? Mr. Smith said external objects were representative. Was the road actual or representative, given that halfway through the elevation of Boston Way from Parker Street the slope leveled out? Mr. Cameron said the building was draped to the slope. Was permission received from the Conservation Commission to plant grass on the other side of the street? Mr. Smith said the rendered grass would not actually exist. Mr. Cameron said the area was all phragmites. Off the building's campus nothing was actual; features were added to provide context only. Would sidewalks be extended as requested? Mr. Smith said, yes, although they were not shown. Was it possible to see what the building looked like anywhere that pedestrians could see the building at a distance, such as the other side of the rail trail approach? How would gas meters be handled? Mr. Smith said electric heat pumps were being considered instead, although that was subject to change. Chairman McCarthy requested a detail of the balcony-slider arrangement. He noted no concrete foundation could be seen coming up from the ground as on the Woodman Way property. He requested that no more than a foot of concrete be visible. Mr. Cameron said concrete was used to hide infiltration mechanics behind the rain garden. A facing would be used if the concrete was visible. Stormwater plans filed today would be presented after peer review comments arrived.

The proposed 10-foot wide sidewalk extending to connect with the redevelopment of Parker Street was the result of a lengthy conversation with City engineer Jon Eric White. A bike lane in the road would have created the appearance of a wider road with the effect of increasing traffic speed. Chairman McCarthy liked the idea and asked if Parker Street was one-way? Mr. Cameron said it was two-directional. Chairman McCarthy asked about safety measures for taking a right turn out of the parking lot while glancing left at the rail trail? Mr. Cameron said the technical drawing showed a bullnose curb with a fully raised curb cut that would require drivers to stop and think about the turn. A painted stop line and a stop sign were also added. A member commented on the high speed of cars driving down Parker Street today. Chairman McCarthy asked if it was possible to add an attention getting device? Mr. Cameron said the flashing stop controls could not be missed. Trees would not be planted in that location in order to maintain the 400-foot sight line. A stop-distance analysis determined that drivers would slow because of the visuals that included the curb, the tighter turn, the bump outs, the sidewalk, the stop line, the stop sign, and the flashing lights. Director Port said there would be no more danger than what existed today and there was enough visibility in both directions. Mr. Cameron said a traffic analysis had not been performed at that location because the more traffic was expected on Boston Way where the garage was the primary vehicular entrance. A member said Boston Way was in terrible condition. Mr. Cameron said coming off Parker Street, Boston Way was steep, then flattened out. The loss of the crown on the road caused water to collect. Plans included repaving that section of Boston Way and adding a well-defined crown.

Planning Board

March 2, 2016

Chairman McCarthy requested specifications and a walk through of both landscaping and photometric plans, a detailed presentation of pedestrian circulation, and signage details. The board requested pedestrian level visuals of the building lit up at night from further away. Director Port said a montage of the 3-D model in the distant setting would be sufficient.

Director Port asked Karen Pollastrano, MINCO Planning and Permitting, if she had heard from the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)? She said no and was planning to submit to DHCD and Director Port at the same time. Mr. Cameron said Bob Uhlig, landscape architect, would be ready for the next meeting. A cut out of the reserved area at 4 Boston Way could be seen on sheet C1. There would be a full overlay for Boston Way. Chairman McCarthy requested a presentation on how the building operated, including on-site maintenance and the caretaker for renter's concerns. Mr. Minicucci said building management would be in conjunction with MINCO's units at Longview, 9 Patriot Lane, Georgetown. The two buildings would share a maintenance staff of 2-3 people and an on-site manager. The Dolben Company, 150 Presidential Way, Suite 22, Woburn would serve as the building's management.

Director Port said Ralph Castagna had followed up with the Planning Office on the covenants and a concern that the number of units exceeded the original MBTA bid approval. Mr. Castagna thought the approved bid limited the numbers units that could be built. Mr. Minicucci said 60 units was the MBTA's floor. Above 60 units, which the MBTA intended and hoped for, required additional payment. Director Port said the covenants were not limiting, but he understood Mr. Castagna's concerns. The board might hear from Mr. Castagna's attorney, Mark Griffin.

Leah McGavern made a motion to continue the Smart Growth Plan approval to March 16th. Andrew Shapiro seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Motion Approved.

During the course of discussion and consideration of this application, plan(s), supporting material(s), department head comments, peer review report(s), planning department comments and other related documents, all as filed with the planning department as part of this application and all of which are available in the planning department, were considered.

6. Adjournment

Don Walters made a motion to adjourn. Leah McGavern seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 8:54 PM.

Respectfully submitted -- Linda Guthrie