



Town of Brookline Massachusetts

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PLANNING BOARD

Steven A. Heikin, Chair
Andrea Brue
Shelly Chipimo
Linda K. Hamlin
Abigail Hiller
Blair Hines
Mark J. Zarrillo

BROOKLINE PLANNING BOARD MINUTES By Zoom Event January 6, 2022 – 7:30 p.m.

Board Present: Steve Heikin, Linda Hamlin, Mark Zarrillo, Blair Hines, Shelly Chipimo, Andrea Brue

Staff Present: Victor Panak

Materials related to each agenda item can be found at:
<https://meetings.brooklinema.gov/OnBaseAgendaOnline/>

Steve Heikin opened the meeting.

1) **PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

There were no public comments on matters not on the agenda.

2) **BOARD OF APPEALS CASE** (Tentative Zoning Board of Appeals Hearing Date) and relevant Precinct:

98 Chestnut Street – (Continued from 11/15/21) demolish a two-family and construct a single-family dwelling and garage requiring zoning relief for setbacks and parking design. (TBD) Pct. 5

Victor Panak briefly summarized the project and discussion from the previous meeting on the case.

Jacob Walters (attorney) introduced the project and reviewed the ways in which the applicant attempted to address the Board's concerns from November 15, 2021.

Ian Masters (architect) provided the Board with a presentation of the revised plans.

Board members asked some clarifying questions about the plans.

Mr. Hines suggested moving the detached garage towards the rear of the lot by a few feet.

Mr. Heikin suggested that the garage might be narrowed to limit its impacts on the left abutter. He also suggested that maybe access to the site could be acquired through the rear of

the site via an easement with the rear abutter. Mr. Masters stated that it was discussed but the property owner was not favorable. Mr. Masters discussed why the garage was as wide as proposed.

Ms. Brue was not in favor of the angled orientation of the detached garage in part because of the impact on the left abutter. Ms. Brue and Mr. Masters discussed different orientations and locations for the garage.

Mr. Heikin suggested a single-car garage. Mr. Masters stated that leaving an electric car outside would significantly reduce its efficiency.

Ms. Hamlin stated she is opposed to the revised design because the garage would be too prominently visible from the public way.

Mr. Hines said he is okay with the diagonal orientation but that he thinks the garage should be reduced to one bay.

Public Comments

Ismail Akmuradov, 96 Chestnut Street, expressed opposition to the revised design on the grounds that the detached garage's proximity to the property line would adversely impact him as a direct abutter.

Polly Welch, 96 Chestnut Street, expressed opposition to the proposed location of the detached garage and liked the idea of access from the rear of the site or reduction of the garage to a single bay. She also raised concerns with tree removal and drainage.

Eric Johnson and Nina Olf, 100 Cypress Street, expressed opposition to the detached garage.

Mr. Zarrillo stated he is opposed to the proposed detached garage. Other Board members agreed. Mr. Heikin offered some suggestions for solutions.

Mr. Walters emphasized that electric vehicles are less efficient when left outside. Mr. Walters requested a continuance.

The case was continued.

53 Davis Avenue – Construct new parking space and curb cut requiring zoning relief for parking setbacks. (1/20) Pct. 6

Victor Panak briefly summarized the project and requested zoning relief.

Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert (attorney) introduced the owners and members of the design team and reviewed the proposal and necessary zoning relief.

Leonardo Coelho (architect) provided the Board with a presentation of the proposed plans.

Mr. Heikin asked about why access to the elevator requires walking up a few steps from the parking space. The applicant indicated that might be a further improvement in the future.

Mr. Heikin asked about the removal of a significant tree along the property line. Ms. Gilbert stated that the neighbor would like the tree to be removed but that the tree also wouldn't survive the installation of the paving.

Mr. Hines felt that two parking spaces should be enough and that he is not in favor of the proposal.

Ms. Chipimo was not convinced that the improvements to the site/building would facilitate aging in place in the long term and therefore was hesitant to approve the request.

Ms. Brue also expressed some concerns with the proposal and agreed with the suggestion of eliminating one of the tandem spaces along Waverly Street as a condition of installing the new space.

Ms. Hamlin also expressed concern with the loss of the significant tree.

Mr. Zarrillo expressed opposition to the proposal on the grounds that it does not meet the purported needs of the residents.

Mr. Heikin agreed with all previous comments and stated he would not be in favor of approving the request.

Ron Jarek (property owner) emphasized the amount of support from the neighborhood and stated that the removal of the significant tree is widely supported by abutters.

The case was continued.

CONTINUED - 1290 Beacon Street – Convert building from office use (Use #21) to a veterinary clinic (Use #20A) requiring zoning relief for use and design review. (TBD) Pct. 10

370 Washington Street – Construct new three-story office building requiring zoning relief for design review. (1/20) Pct. 6

Victor Panak briefly summarized the project and indicated that the Planning Department is supportive.

Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert (attorney) introduced the project and design team and reviewed the required zoning relief.

Laura Trust (owner) discussed the history of the Martin Trust Partnership in Education for Early Learners and explained the reasons behind the proposed use of the building.

Jaye Smith and Vicki Milstein also discussed the educational program.

Daniel Gelormini (architect) provided the Board with a presentation of the proposed plans.

Ms. Hamlin stated that she is not particularly pleased with the design of the building although she is not opposed to modern architecture.

Ms. Chipimo agreed with Ms. Hamlin's comments and said the current proposed design lacks character.

Ms. Brue said she would like to see if the existing building could be saved for reasons of sustainability and historic preservation.

Mr. Zarrillo said he thinks the building design needs to be improved.

Mr. Heikin agreed with previous Board comments.

Public Comments

John Bassett (26 Searle Avenue) expressed opposition to the proposal primarily on the grounds that it would entail the demolition of an existing historic building and he emphasized that the project should include the reuse of the existing building.

Jeff Wachter (411 Washington Street) expressed support for the proposal. He stated he supports the proposed design and feels that it adds architectural diversity to the neighborhood. Mr. Wachter stated he would prefer less parking and more open space on the site.

Lisa Cunningham (TMM Pct. 15) expressed support for the Planning Board's comments. She preferred to see some preservation of the existing building but also wanted to see some more creativity with the proposed building. She also said she would like to see a lot more sustainability elements incorporated.

Kathleen Clark (representing the Christian Community Church) expressed support for the preservation of the existing building and said she looks forward to working with the applicant on the parking on Goodwin Place.

Amanda Zimmerman (411 Washington Street) emphasized that early learning organizations work on slim margins and that the permitting process should move forward expeditiously. Ms. Zimmerman said she is not enamored with the architecture of the existing building and would prefer a modern building designed as sustainably as possible.

Ruthann Sneider (TMM) expressed opposition to the proposal.

Virginia Smith (12 Linden Street) was opposed to the proposal because she felt that the existing building is well designed and the proposed building is not appealing.

Bob Allen (attorney) said that the architects can digest the Board's comments and improving the design. He emphasized that converting the existing building to the property owner's needs would not be possible at a reasonable cost.

Alfred Wojciechowski (architect) discussed some of the challenges involved in converting the existing building to an accessible building.

Board members expressed a desire to understand why the existing building can't be repurposed for the proposed use.

The case was continued.

3) ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Endorsement of Approval Not Required Plan for 219 Gardner Road

The Board briefly discussed the Approval Not Required plan.

Mr. Zarrillo moved for the Planning Board to endorse the ANR plan for 219 Gardner Road. Ms. Hamlin seconded the motion. The Board voted 5-1 to approve the motion.

4) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Heikin moved to approve the minutes of 12-16-21. Mr. Zarrillo seconded the motion. The Board voted 4-0-2 to approve the motion.

The meeting was adjourned.