



Town of Brookline Massachusetts

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PLANNING BOARD

Steve Heikin, Chair
James Carr
Linda K. Hamlin
Blair Hines
Matthew Oudens
Mark J. Zarrillo

BROOKLINE PLANNING BOARD MINUTES By Zoom Event January 28, 2020 – 7:30 p.m.

Board Present: Steve Heikin, Linda Hamlin, James Carr, Matthew Oudens, Mark Zarrillo, and Blair Hines

Staff Present: Polly Selkoe and Victor Panak

Steve Heikin opened the meeting.

1) PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

The Board briefly discussed when to hold a meeting at which the Planning Director would present the Planning Department's workplan.

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

5 Mason Terrace – Legalize existing driveway requiring zoning relief for parking design. (2/11) Pct. 11

Victor Panak described the proposal and the requested relief and noted that the Planning Department is supportive.

Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert (attorney for the applicant) briefly summarized the request and reviewed the proposed site plan. Ms. Gilbert also highlighted the neighborhood support for the project. Ms. Gilbert emphasized that the request parking area has been used as a parking space for a long time. Ms. Gilbert said that the applicant is proposing some raised planter beds or contribution to the tree fund as a counterbalancing amenity.

Blair Hines asked whether 3 curb cuts is a desirable outcome. Ms. Gilbert said that this is slightly different in that it is a pre-existing condition that is being requested to be legalized.

Mr. Heikin asked why the existing space along Mason Terrace can't be enlarged. Ms. Gilbert said that expansion of the space would take away from existing green space.

Mr. Heikin asked about the use of the detached garage along Lancaster Terrace. Chuck Ross (applicant) said that the spaces in the garage are being rented as they have been for years.

Ms. Hamlin asked whether there have been any complaints or whether they are simply asking for relief to be able to put a curb cut. Mr. Ross said they are making the request for the curb cut.

The Board and the applicant discussed the legality of the pre-existing use of the paved area as parking and the legality of driving over the sidewalk without a curb cut.

Mark Zarrillo raised objections to having three curb cuts. Mr. Zarrillo also suggested that to add another parking space, the applicant should expand the existing space on Mason Terrace and just expand the curb cut.

James Carr also suggested that the detached garage on Lancaster Terrace could be expanded. Either way, Mr. Carr indicated he would support the request.

Mr. Heikin said he supports the proposal.

Mr. Hines indicated he would vote against the proposal.

Mr. Oudens said he dislikes the idea of 3 curb cuts. He said that the right things to do would be to expand the single parking space on Mason Terrace. He said he doesn't feel so strongly that he would vote against the proposal but would strongly suggest that the applicants reconsider their proposal.

Ms. Hamlin said she agrees with Mr. Hines and Mr. Oudens. Additional parking should be added to the existing parking area along Mason Terrace. She indicated she would vote against it.

The Board agreed that they are not opposed to the addition of a parking space but they are opposed to the proposed location.

There were no public comments.

Mr. Heikin made a motion to recommend that the applicant eliminate the paved area in front of the house and add an additional parking space to the right of the existing parking space along Mason Terrace. Mr. Oudens seconded the motion. The motion was approved (5-1).

Mr. Heikin made a motion to recommend denial of the site plan by Whitman & Bingham Associates, dated 11/24/20. Mr. Zarrillo seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously (6-0).

471 VFW Parkway - Combine two existing parking lots creating 21 new parking spaces and construct a recycling center building requiring zoning relief for setbacks and use. (2/11) Pct. 16

Polly Selkoe described the proposal and the requested relief and noted that the Planning Department is supportive.

Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert (attorney for the applicant) emphasized to the Board that the proposal is completely separate from the 40B project on the property. Ms. Gilbert noted that the existing trash and recycling area has been the subject of many complaints and so the proposal is to construct a new recycling center to improve trash collection.

Andy Martineau (applicant) presented the plans for the project to the Board. Ms. Gilbert added that the Health Department has been requesting this kind of solution for trash and recycling on the property.

Theo Kindermans (landscape architect for the applicant) reviewed grading on the property. Mr. Heikin asked some clarifying questions about grading and retaining walls on the site.

Mr. Heikin asked why parking is being added. Mr. Martineau responded that additional parking is needed to meet demand.

Mr. Heikin asked about how trash pickup would operate. Mr. Martineau responded that trash pickup trucks would use Asheville Road but that he could not provide frequency of pickup data off hand.

Board members asked a few more clarifying questions about the operation of the trash/recycling center.

Mr. Carr pointed out that the recycling center would be several feet above the 40B building to the east and suggested that a sizable fence be installed for screening purposes.

Mr. Oudens suggested eliminating some of the parking and using the additional space to move the recycling building further away from the 40B building. Mr. Heikin and Mr. Carr agreed with the suggestion. Mr. Martineau and Mr. Kindermans said they had looked into such a design but found that it wasn't worth it.

Public Comment

William Varrell (45 Asheville Road) stated he is strongly opposed to the proposal. He argued that if the current residents of Hancock Village can't take care of their current trash compactor, the Town shouldn't allow a larger recycling center to be installed. Mr. Varrell raised a variety of other objections related to the intensity of the site and impacts on abutters.

Judith Leichtner (TMM Pct. 16) stated that she believed that abutters had not been sufficiently informed. She suggested that the applicant move the proposed recycling center to a location closer to the center of the property.

Mr. Heikin asked if Mr. Martineau would be willing to continue review of the project to allow more outreach to abutters and to consider alternative options where the recycling center is located in a more central location.

Mr. Carr also suggested that the applicant consider more innovative ideas to mitigate odors and sounds from the compactors.

Mr. Martineau emphasized that trash collection would stay in this location, whether the application was approved or not. He also added that the proposed recycling center would be an improvement over the existing conditions with respect to odor and sounds. Mr. Martineau went over the site plan for the full Hancock Village campus and identified the locations of existing and future trash centers.

Mr. Hines said he likes the proposal but asked that Mr. Martineau go over other locations that were considered and why they didn't work. Mr. Kindermans indicated that a few other locations were looked at but that this was the only location that satisfied the need to have the trash center be toward the exit of the site.

The Board continued to discuss alternative locations and the operation of the recycling center.

Mr. Heikin asked if the applicant was complying with the Town's Tree By-law. Mr. Martineau and Mr. Kindermans indicated that they had met with the Town Tree Warden and that they believe they are complying with the By-law.

The case was continued

101 Monmouth Street (*Continued from 11-5-20*) - Modification of Variance #893 (9/5/1958) requiring 190 parking spaces to only requiring 75 spaces. (TBD) Pct. 1

Polly Selkoe described the proposal and the requested relief.

Jeffrey Allen (attorney for the applicant) indicated that most of the parking spaces are unused and that's why they want to reduce the parking requirement.

Mr. Heikin raised doubts about the accuracy of the submitted floor plans for the garage.

Mr. Allen indicated that the reduction in parking spaces would allow the applicant to look into adding more residential units.

Mr. Hines stated that he is not opposed to the reduction in parking requirement but that the garage floor plans does not make sense.

Public Comment

Sean Lynn-Jones wanted to confirm that the building would remain entirely for the use of parking. Mr. Allen stated that the building wouldn't necessarily stay as a garage. Mr. Lynn-Jones stated he is concerned with granting the requested relief without understanding the full scope of the applicant intentions for the site. Mr. Lynn-Jones also suggested that the Planning Board require all EV-ready spaces.

Bob Schram (47 Monmouth Street) also noted his concerns with granting the requested relief without a full understanding of the applicant's intentions for the site. Mr. Schram also felt that granting the parking relief would be an unjust windfall to the developer of the property.

Marc Zimman also noted his concerns with the applicant's intentions for the site. Mr. Zimman insisted that the parking lot is being used.

Marilyn Koblan (71 Monmouth Street) stated she believes that the applicant is intentionally separating their proposal for the site into discreet requests.

Mr. Hines agreed with the public comments and felt that the request for relief is premature. He felt that the applicant should be presenting a full proposal.

Mr. Heikin stated he felt that the application involved a lack of transparency and that a more complete understanding of the site's future should be presented before the Town provide the requested relief. Other Board members agreed.

Mr. Heikin made a motion to recommend denial of the modification of the Variance. Mr. Hines seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion.

280 Harvard Street – *Final Design Review* - Rear addition to the Coolidge Corner Theater requiring zoning relief for height, floor area ratio, and setbacks and requiring Design Review (n/a) Pct. 9

Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert summarized the history of the project, including the fact that it received approval from the Zoning Board of Appeals. Ms. Gilbert noted that the decision requires final Design Review. Ms. Gilbert stated that the DPW Commissioner agreed to the elimination of a few parking spaces to allow for more event space in front of the building.

Eric Howeler (project architect) presented the final plans for the proposal.

The Board and applicant briefly discussed the timing of the project.

Mr. Heikin made a motion to approve the final design of the project. Ms. Hamlin seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion.

3) OTHER BUSINESS

32 Marion Street – Discuss 40B application/plans and issue comments to the Select Board for inclusion in Town's response letter to the subsidizing agency.

No discussion was had on this item.

The meeting was adjourned.