



Town of Brookline Massachusetts

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PLANNING BOARD

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BROOKLINE PLANNING BOARD MINUTES By Zoom Event March 16, 2023 – 7:30 p.m.

Board Present: Steve Heikin, Mark Zarrillo, Blair Hines, Andrea Brue
Staff Present: Beccah Mapure, Polly Selkoe

Materials related to each agenda item can be found at:
<https://www.brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/Index/3771>

Steve Heikin opened the meeting and informed that meetings might change to hybrid starting in April if the current deadline for allowing zoom only meetings is not extended by the Legislature.

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

Polly Selkoe informed the Board that after Town Meeting the Planning Department will start requiring applicants to put up signs on their property with information about the case approval process. This will complement the notices that are sent to abutters and hopefully replace notices for renters in the future.

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

11 and 12 Goodwin Place - Convert single-family dwelling to two-family and construct a rear addition (4/13) Pct. 6

Beccah Mapure introduced the case and described the required relief. She noted that despite being heard together, the properties were separate.

Attorney Bob Allen introduced his team and summarized the proposal. Allen clarified that 12 Goodwin was currently a two-family.

Steve Heikin asked if the applicant intended to wait on the demolition stay or work with Preservation to lift the stay. Bob Allen replied that it was to be decided.

Architect Mark Sangiolo and landscape architect Susan Sangiolo presented the proposal.

Andrea Brue said the massing of the original proposal was better, even though it extended towards the rear yard setback. Since the third floor was unprogrammed, massing on the sides of the first and second floors could be moved to the third floor. Brue added that access to the back unit passing by the windows of the front unit was problematic.

Mark Zarrillo suggested creating a gateway into the site as part of the landscape either with pillars or a gate since the property is behind other structures.

Andrea Brue appreciated that the applicant was keeping the house and encouraged them to work with the Preservation Commission.

Steve Heikin was also pleased that the building was being preserved but said the units were still fairly large with a great amount of parking being provided even with the reduced parking requirements. Other concerns were regarding the multiple decks and the division of the rear yard into four separate fenced areas.

Blair Hines also shared concerns about having too many decks and suggested eliminating or reducing the ground-level deck for the front unit since there was a roof deck.

Steve Heikin said that if the height of the third floor of the existing building could be increased, the building could be made more compact with clear divisions between the front and the back units.

Mark Sangiolo said that dealing with an existing structure imposed certain limitations.

Public Comments:

Margaret Waller Burhoe said the building was of a high historical significance, built before the Civil War and connected to renowned individuals. The proposed project was irresponsible to its historical past and present climate change issues. It looked like a plan for the suburbs in a village. The great loss of green space was not replaceable and would have climate change impacts.

Kenneth Goldstein, was present to represent Dan and Diane Descenza at 37-39 Waverly Street, direct rear abutters. While the abutters were thankful for the responsiveness of the applicant, they still had concerns. They asked that trees be maintained away from the property line to avoid problems. Their support for the project was conditional upon keeping the fence at the rear at a 4-foot height. Goldstein noted that demarcating Goodwin Place should be carefully considered since many properties had access rights to the street.

John Bassett, 26 Searle Avenue, was pleased with the preservation of the existing house and responsiveness to the neighbors' concerns but would like the addition's style to be simplified and parking reduced. He also shared concerns about keeping the openness of the neighborhood and hoped no 6-foot fences would be allowed nor the backyard be divided. Bassett added that no property had exclusive rights to park in Goodwin Place and asked what relief was being asked.

Beccah Mapure provided an overview of the required relief.

Board Decision:

Steve Heikin said that even though the project did not need much relief, there were still concerns about the excessive bump-outs and decks and the Board was uncomfortable in recommending approval before the Preservation Commission review.

Polly Selkoe suggested requiring the final design to be subject to the Planning Board review.

Steve Heikin asked the attorney if they intended to work with Preservation or wait the demolition stay.

Bob Allen replied that he would advise his client to wait. He would prefer to get approval and move to ZBA and could return for final review.

Blair Hines was inclined to support the project but agreed the interior and the decks could still be improved. He was pleased the house would be saved.

Mark Zarrillo expressed his support for the project but agreed it could be improved.

Andrea Brue was supportive but believed there was still room to improve the quality of the spaces since there were unprogrammed spaces that could allow a reduction in square footage.

Steve Heikin suggested a fence type: a four-foot solid fence with a two-foot lattice on top.

Andrea said there was also an opportunity to improve the media room space on the ground floor, which had not much natural light.

Blair Hines asked if the two exterior parking spaces were necessary since the property is near transit.

Bob Allen replied that the exterior parking was existing and would be mainly used for guests or contractors. Neighbors had no concerns about that.

Steve Heikin said that if there were fewer garage spaces there could be some usable space in the basement. Heikin asked if the building was going to be fossil fuel-free since it was a large renovation.

Bob Allen replied that they would comply with current energy code requirements.

Steve Heikin made a motion to recommend approval noting that the Board was pleased that the existing house was being preserved as opposed to being demolished and it did not require much zoning relief. Heikin added that the Board still had concerns about some design aspects that could be improved, namely, the decks, community vs privacy, and the amount of parking being provided vs Town requirements.

A condition was added to require final approval by the Planning Board. Mark Zarrillo seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

The Planning Board recommends approval of the site plan by SPRUHAN ENGINEERING P.C., PLS, dated January 13, 2023 and architectural plans prepared by SANGIOLO ASSOCIATES, ARCHITECTS, RA, dated January 24, 2023, subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall electronically submit final floor plans and elevations, stamped and signed by a registered architect, and a final site plan, stamped and signed by a registered engineer or land surveyor, subject to the review and approval of the Planning Board.**
- 2. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall electronically submit a landscape plan, subject to the review and approval of the Planning Board. The counterbalancing amenities must be executed in accordance with the approved plan.**
- 3. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall electronically submit to the Building Commissioner for review and approval a) the site plan, floor plans, and elevations displaying the approval stamp of the Assistant Director for Regulatory Planning; and b) evidence that the Board of Appeals decision has been obtained from**

the Town Clerk’s office by the applicant or their representative and recorded at the Registry of Deeds.

36 Osborne Road - Attach new single-family to existing single-family (4/13) Pct. 8

Beccah Mapure introduced the case and described the required relief.

Attorney Bob Allen introduced his team and summarized the proposal and the required relief.

The owner Michael Courtney was present.

Architect Dennis Greenwood presented the plans.

Andrea Brue said the proposal was nice and she had no complaints.

Steve Heikin was pleased the existing building was being preserved. He asked if they could have a steeper sloped roof in the new building and if a decorative gable could be added to integrate the addition with the existing one.

Dennis Greenwood said a steeper roof could be accommodated but not the decoration per Preservation preference.

Blair Hines agreed with the suggestions about the roof.

Mark Zarrillo agreed the roof could be steeper and use some decoration.

Andrea Brue suggested putting a canopy over the entrance of the rear unit. Dennis Greenwood said the Preservation Commission was not supportive of that idea.

Public Comment:

John Harris, an abutter across the street, introduced himself as the facilitator of a group of neighbors concerned about the bad precedent the proposed design would set for the historic district. Rather than extending the house to the backyard, they preferred an upgrade of the garage to match the existing house and expand into living space. He displayed examples found in the district and explained it was too late when they submitted them to Preservation.

Moshe Cohen spoke to clarify that opposition from neighbors was stronger than stated by the attorney. Opposition was due to the scale of the project and encroachment on the neighbors, and not about the increase in density.

Board Decision:

Steve Heikin asked the applicant to inform the Preservation Commission about the Planning Board’s suggestions to improve aesthetics and functionality: having a steeper roof, a decorative gable, and a canopy over the entrance.

Steve Heikin made a motion to recommend approval. Blair Hines seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

The Planning Board recommends approval of the site plans SCOTT M. CERRATO, PLS, dated February 14, 2023 and architectural plans prepared by SOUSA DESIGN ARCHITECTS, dated February 14, 2023, subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall electronically submit final floor plans and elevations, stamped and signed by a registered architect, and a final site plan, stamped and signed by a registered engineer or land surveyor, to the Assistant Director for Regulatory Planning or designee for review and approval.**
- 2. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall electronically submit to the Building Commissioner for review and approval a) the site plan, floor plans, and elevations displaying the approval stamp of the Assistant Director for Regulatory Planning; and b) evidence that the Board of Appeals decision has been obtained from the Town Clerk's office by the applicant or their representative and recorded at the Registry of Deeds.**

50 Vernon Street - Construct an additional top story and create an additional housing unit (3/30) Pct. 7

Polly Selkoe introduced the case and described the required relief.

Attorney Bob Allen introduced his team and summarized the proposal and the required relief.

Architect Gary Hendren presented the plans.

Blair Hines asked if two stairs were required for the roof deck.

Gary Hendren replied that the egress calculation estimated 50 people, thus a second stair was required.

Blair said that two stairs seemed excessive and suggested creating a green roof to reduce the area of the deck and therefore reduce the egress requirement. Hines appreciated the addition of greenspace on the lot but said parking could also be parallel to the rear line to make it easy to maneuver.

Mark Zarrillo asked about the handrail on the roof deck. Gary Hendren responded that the handrail would be a glass panel.

Steve Heikin supported the idea of reducing the deck area to eliminate one of the stairs. Heikin suggested moving the railing back from the roof edge to reduce its visibility from the ground.

Mark Zarrillo would like to see the building represented in relationship to the abutter to the left.

Gary Hendren said they shared the curb cut with the left abutter and that the proposal would match their grade.

Steve Heikin asked if legal permission was needed to move the passageway. Heikin also asked where the ten trash bins for the five units and bicycle parking would be placed.

Public Comments:

Alex Chernov, 73 Park Street – apartment 5, asked for copies of the drawings of the parking lot. He shared his email and Bob Allen said he would contact him.

Mr. and Mrs. Bourque said in the chat that the proposal would look unattractive and set a bad precedent. They asked where the compressor would be placed [on the roof]. They were concerned about having 50 people on the roof deck.

Joshua Beekman, 73 Park Street asked, in the chat, how access to the rear would be maintained during construction.

Bob Allen and Gary Hendren assured access would be maintained as part of the construction management plan.

Board Decision:

Andrea Brue said it would be nice to add some trees and asked if any fencing would be added to the backyard.

The applicant team said they could add one tree and no fence would be included since the yard was connected to the abutting attached building.

Steve Heikin made a motion to recommend approval with revised conditions. Andrea Brue seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

The Planning Board recommends approval of the site plans by Boston Survey Inc., PLS, dated 9/23/22 and architectural plans by Hendren Associates, dated 9/27/2022, subject to the following conditions.

- 1. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall electronically submit final floor plans and elevations, stamped and signed by a registered architect, and a final site plan, stamped and signed by a registered engineer or land surveyor, to the Assistant Director for Regulatory Planning for review and approval. The roof deck shall be reduced to a capacity below 50 with the perimeter of the deck stepped back from the perimeter of the roof and one of the two stair headhouses removed.**
- 2. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall electronically submit a landscape plan, subject to approval by the Assistant Director for Regulatory Planning. The counterbalancing amenities which shall include at least one tree must be executed in accordance with the approved plan.**
- 3. Prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy, the applicant shall comply with the Affordable Housing requirements in accordance with Section 4.08 of the Zoning By-law and guidelines regarding Cash Payments in Lieu of Affordable Units, approved by the Planning Board on January 7, 2021, with the choice of the applicant to make a cash payment in lieu of providing affordable units.**
- 4. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall electronically submit to the Building Commissioner for review and approval a) the site plan, floor plans, and elevations displaying the approval stamp of the Assistant Director for Regulatory Planning; and b) evidence that the Board of Appeals decision has been obtained from the Town Clerk's office by the applicant or their representative and recorded at the Registry of Deeds.**

The meeting was adjourned.