



Town of Brookline

Massachusetts

PLANNING BOARD

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

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BROOKLINE PLANNING BOARD MINUTES Room 111, Brookline Town Hall July 25, 2019 – 7:30 p.m.

Board Present: Steve Heikin, Robert Cook, Matthew Oudens, Mark Zarrillo
Staff Present: Victor Panak

Steve Heikin called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. He asked if there were any members of the public in attendance who wished to make comments on matters not on the agenda. There were none.

BOARD OF APPEALS CASES

65 Chatham Street – Replace deck off second-floor room with finished space

Polly Selkoe described the scope of work and the requested zoning relief.

Jay Foster, representing the applicant, reviewed the proposed project and noted that the neighbors are supportive.

Mr. Heikin made a motion to recommend approval of the site plan by Charette Land Surveying, dated 6/3/19 and architectural plans by EvB Design, dated 5/30/19, subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit a final site plan, floor plans and elevations subject to the review and approval of the Assistant Director of Regulatory Planning.**
- 2. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit a final landscaping plan indicating all counterbalancing amenities subject to the review and approval of the Assistant Director of Regulatory Planning.**
- 3. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit to the Building Commissioner for review and approval for conformance to the Board of Appeals decision: 1) a final site plan stamped and signed by a registered engineer or land surveyor; and 2) evidence that the Board of Appeals decision has been recorded at the Registry of Deeds.**

Robert Cook seconded the motion. The Board voted 4-0 to approve the motion.

7 Leverett Street – Create a curb cut and two parking spaces for a three-family dwelling

Ms. Selkoe described the scope of work and the requested zoning relief.

Three residents of the condo building at 7 Leverett Street were present and presented to the Board, stating that MassDOT had already approved the curb cut and that they felt they could make the parking situation work.

Mr. Heiken stated that he had visited the property earlier in the day. He asked the applicants if they could secure an easement from the neighbor to expand the driveway a few additional feet. Mr. Heikin noted that the nearby traffic signal on Route 9 would allow the residents to back-out of the driveway safely. Mr. Heikin further asked if the applicants could construct the driveway out of permeable pavers.

Ms. Selkoe briefly reviewed the necessary zoning relief.

The applicants and Board members discussed a few different configurations for the proposed parking spaces and the cost of permeable pavers. The applicants indicated that they had tried to reach out to the owner of the abutting property in the past to secure an easement but the owner had thus far been unresponsive.

Mr. Heikin stated that he might even be agreeable to 3 spaces (one more than requested).

Mr. Heikin asked if there were any members of the public with comments on the application. There were none.

Matthew Oudens opined that the presence of the traffic light made this a unique case and that he agreed with Mr. Heikin's assessment.

Mr. Heiken made a motion to recommend approval of the site plan by Green Seal Environmental, Inc., dated 4/30/19, subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit a final site plan showing 2 or 3 parking spaces subject to the review and approval of the Assistant Director of Regulatory Planning. The Planning Board recommends that the site plan show an easement secured from the abutter along the right-side property line and that the site plan show the use of permeable pavers for the driveway and parking area.**
- 2. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit to the Building Commissioner for review and approval for conformance to the Board of Appeals decision: 1) a final site plan stamped and signed by a registered engineer or land surveyor; and 2) evidence that the Board of Appeals decision has been recorded at the Registry of Deeds.**

Mr. Cook seconded the motion. The Board voted 4-0 to approve the motion.

30 Webster Street – Conversion to hotel and 8th floor addition

Victor Panak introduced the case by explaining that the applicant had made a revision to the plans to respond to the Planning Board's previous comments and had returned to the Planning Board for further feedback before proceeding before the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Bob Allen, attorney for the applicant, reviewed the revised plans and the impetus that led to proposing a ramp to a second deck of parking.

Rob Festa, engineer for the applicant, reviewed the plans for the proposed parking ramp, noting that the ramp would be signaled and that the revision would allow for approximately 50 spaces. Mr. Festa also outlined how the changes would further add handicap accessibility.

Mr. Heiken asked some clarifying questions about the dimensions shown on the plans.

Mr. Allen discussed the nature of the surrounding properties, thereby demonstrating that the added parking deck would not impact any abutters.

Mark Zarrillo expressed his support for the change.

Mr. Heiken made a motion to recommend approval of the revised plans by Mistry Associates, Inc., dated July 18, 2019. Mr. Zarrillo seconded the motion. The Board voted 4-0 to approve the motion.

1762 Beacon Street – Renovate school building into four dwelling units, demolish free-standing garage, and construct a small rear addition

Mr. Panak described the scope of work and the requested zoning relief, indicating that the Planning Department is supportive of the proposal.

Mr. Cook asked Mr. Panak to clarify the conversion of the building from an educational use. Mr. Panak stated he did not have much information on that, knowing only that the current use is educational. Mr. Heiken added that the current educational use is a Workmen's Circle school.

Jeffrey Allen, attorney for the applicant, summarized the proposal and introduced the design team. Mr. Allen additionally noted that the proposal is more accurately a restoration which does not abuse the maximum FAR under the Bylaw or otherwise maximize allowances of the Bylaw.

Steven Sousa, architect for the applicant, provided the Board with a presentation of the project plans. Mr. Sousa and the Board briefly discussed the egress requirements for the building. Mr. Sousa noted that the project had already been reviewed by the Preservation Commission and that the project had undergone some changes to respond to the comments of the Preservation Commission, including reducing the size of the rooftop deck, preserving more original windows, and adding windows to the rear elevation.

Mr. Heiken asked about how Board members felt about the attempted replication of the stained glass windows on the left-side elevation. Mr. Oudens said he would be concerned about the applicant's ability to find the correct materials for a faithful replication.

Mr. Sousa showed drawings that demonstrated that the rooftop deck would not be visible by pedestrians and also showed shadow studies that demonstrated the de minimis change from current conditions.

Mr. Oudens asked about whether the applicant had considered the possibility of adding an entrance that would allow residents to enter through different access points and better preserve the front-side porch. Mr. Sousa said that it had been considered but that other factors made it impossible.

Mr. Heiken asked if there were any members of the public who wished to comment on the proposal.

Arjun Mande, a resident of 1768 Beacon Street, who identified himself as an architect said he found the addition to be well designed but that the space between the buildings was insufficient for such additional massing. Mr. Heiken pointed out that the proposed work was well within the allowable setbacks under the Bylaw. Mr. Allen added that the same is true with regards to the height and the FAR.

Sharon Slodky, a resident of 1768 Beacon Street, started by noting that a number of people would have attended the meeting if they could. She expressed her opposition to the proposal noting the narrowness of the alleyways surrounding the building and the noise and privacy impacts of the project.

An immediate abutter from 1760 Beacon Street stated that she found the project to be well-designed and expressed her strong support.

Mr. Zarrillo stated that he understood the abutter's comments about proximity and privacy but said that the zoning allowed it and he felt the manner of development of this site was better than most alternatives.

Mr. Oudens agreed with Mr. Zarrillo's comments, noting that the project is being designed in a way that's sensitive to its surroundings, unlike many other similar projects that have previously been reviewed by the Board. Mr. Oudens expressed his support for the proposal although he maintained his recommendation that the roof be revisited to be more "slope-style" instead of mansard.

Mr. Heikin expressed his support and agreement with other Board members.

Mr. Heikin made a motion to recommend approval of the site plan and architectural plans by Sousa Design Architects, dated 7/25/19, subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit a final site plan, floor plans, and elevations subject to the review and approval of the Assistant Director of Regulatory Planning.**
- 2. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit a final landscaping plan subject to the review and approval of the Assistance Director of Regulatory Planning.**
- 3. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit to the Building Commissioner for review and approval for conformance to the Board of Appeals decision: 1) a final site plan stamped and signed by a registered engineer or land surveyor; and 2) evidence that the Board of Appeals decision has been recorded at the Registry of Deeds.**

Mr. Cook seconded the motion. The Board voted 4-0 to approve the motion.

199-201 Boylston Street – Final design review of site plans, floor plans, elevations, materials, and landscaping

Ms. Selkoe provided the Board with brief update on the project, noting that it had already been approved but was required to return for final design review.

The applicant provided a brief overview of the project and the final design. Mr. Heikin asked about the paving materials, to which the applicant responded that it would be permeable except at the parking spaces where the paving would be asphalt.

Mr. Zarrillo stated that he was not present when the project was first presented, but does not find the current design and materials to be acceptable.

Mr. Oudens stated that he really liked the final design, as did Mr. Heikin.

The Board asked a few more clarifying questions about the design.

Mr. Heikin made a motion to approve the final designs. Mr. Cook seconded the motion. The Board voted 4-0 to approve the motion.

Discussion and Possible Vote on Support Letter for Brookline to Join CHAPA Municipal Engagement Initiative – As a CHAPA MEI community, Brookline would receive, at no cost, a team to implement education, outreach, and coalition-building to expand support for affordable housing and housing production – per the Town’s Housing Production Plan

Mr. Heikin summarized the purpose of the discussion, notably to consider whether Brookline should join the Initiative, thereby availing itself to resources that would assist in educating Brookline residents about affordable housing issues and expanding support for affordable housing. Mr. Heikin noted that this proposal has been championed by the Housing Advisory Board and most recently considered by the Select Board (supportive).

Robert Blood, Chair of the Housing Advisory Board, spoke to the Board in favor of the Initiative. Mr. Blood noted that the CHAPA MEI has a positive track record and that they are seeking new participants. Mr. Blood also pointed out that the Town is likely to reach its 10% SHI minimum in year 2020, and that this Initiative might help encourage the creation of housing beyond that milestone.

The Board and Mr. Blood discussed how joining this Initiative may impact the Planning Department staff’s workload.

Mr. Heikin pointed out the abysmally low level of housing production in Brookline since 2013, and emphasized the importance of this issue.

Mr. Heikin made a motion to support the submission of an application for Brookline to join the CHAPA Municipal Engagement Initiative. Mr. Cook seconded the motion. The Board voted 4-0 to approve the motion.

Minutes of July 11 were approved by the Planning Board.

Materials Reviewed During Meeting: Staff Reports, Zoning Texts, Site Plans, Elevations

The meeting was adjourned.