

From: Lois Laczko August 5, 2008 11:25:10 AM
Subject: Design Review Board Minutes 07/22/2008
To: SimsburyCT_DesignMin
Cc:

Design Review Board Minutes
July 22, 2008
Regular Meeting

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Dahlquist called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM in Room 103 of the Simsbury Town Offices. The following members were present: John Stewart, Rita Bond, Charles Stephenson, Mark Naccarato, Kevin Gray and Bill Gardner. Also present were Mr. Hiram Peck, Director of Planning, and Alison Sturgeon, Commission Clerk.

II. APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATES

Chairman Dahlquist appointed Commissioner Bond to serve in the absence of Commissioner Schoenhardt.

III. PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE

a. Presentation by Andrew M. Yakemore, Applicant, Andrew M. & Edith A Yakemore, Trustees, Owner(s), for Site Plan Amendment for proposed new business/residential building on property located at Simsmore Square, 524 Hopmeadow Street. B-2 Zone.

Mr. Rich Correia stated he was here on behalf of Mr. Yakemore. He stated that A Touch Of Class, which is located in Simsmore Square, has grown and now needs more space. He stated that they would like to tear down the building and construct a new building because this allows for more options and because the cost is lower.

Mr. Correia showed the Board a rendering of what the proposed building would look like. He stated that the look of the building will be the same, although it will be a bigger version. The basement of the building will be used for storage. The building will be 66% commercial and 33% residential, which will be on the second floor. They are also proposing an additional 5 parking spaces.

Commissioner Stewart questioned if there would be a fountain in front of the new building. Mr. Correia stated that they were proposing a fountain.

Commissioner Stephenson questioned what the curb to curb distance was. Mr. Yakemore stated that he did not know the exact distance, although they were designed to Town standards.

Chairman Dahlquist questioned if the applicant was proposing any signage. Mr. Correia stated that the previous signage was approved; there would be no signage changes.

Chairman Dahlquist asked the applicant to discuss the types of materials that they would be using. Mr. Yakemore stated that they would be using white vinyl siding that is 4" wide with wide corner pieces for the trim. The shutters will be black. The new architectural roof will be very similar to what is currently there. He stated that this will be a modular building, which will speed up the construction process. Chairman Dahlquist stated that this Board will need to see sample of those materials; they like to see what they are approving. He also that that the Board would need to see the rear elevations.

Chairman Dahlquist questioned if any lighting was proposed. Mr. Yakemore stated that there would not be any changes. There is currently a flood light in front of the building in the grassy area; they will be keeping this light. Chairman Dahlquist stated that when this applicant goes before the Zoning Commission, they will need to supply them with more information regarding the lighting. The floodlight might need to be part of the new lighting proposal.

Commissioner Stewart questioned what the walkway would be constructed of. Mr. Yakemore stated that the walkway would be concrete. Commissioner Stewart stated that this is a charming area and he suggested that they might consider concrete pavers for a more residential feel.

The Board discussed the scheduling for the Zoning Commission, which this applicant will need to go to next. Chairman Dahlquist stated that the DRB does not have a meeting scheduled in August. The Board decided to hold a Special Meeting on July 29th.

Chairman Dahlquist stated that no action would be taken on this application tonight; more information is still needed regarding the fountain, roof, lighting and rear elevations.

Chairman Dahlquist stated that this application would be continued until July 29, 2008.

b. Presentation by Tom Martin, President, Phonon Corporation - Owner,

for proposed Site Plan Amendment for construction of an addition at the Phonon Corporation, 90 Wolcott Road. I-1 Zone

Mr. Tom Martin stated that they have already gotten approval from the Zoning Board of Appeals for the parking setback in the back of the building. He stated that they are currently proposing a 3-story addition to the rear of the building and infill over part of the roof of the existing building to link the second floor together. If they do not get approval for the infill right away, they are proposing a roof top garden that will transition later into an infill. This proposed addition will be 150' x 50'. The construction of the addition will stay consistent with the existing building; they will be using the same materials that were used on the existing building. The addition will use the same red concrete block in the exterior walls, and will use vertical windows and the metal siding in the wall and roof structure.

Mr. Martin stated that they are also proposing additional landscaping. They are adding plantings on either side of the entrance and Norway Maples between the airport and their property along the existing buffer. The landscaping around the building will remain. Commissioner Stewart suggested that the applicant not use the Bradford Pear because they split easily. Mr. Martin agreed. He also suggested using Green Mountain Sugar Maples in place of the Norway Maples; this is a plant that will maintain themselves and they will stay contained.

Mr. Martin stated that they are proposing 2 light poles that will be located on each side of the parking area and also some lighting on the existing building in the rear.

Mr. Martin distributed pictures of the property for the Board's review.

Chairman Dahlquist stated that, in the past, the DRB has been very supportive of the expansion of this building. He feels that all of the proposed changes are sympathetic to the original building. He questioned if there were any entrances on the rear of the building. Mr. Martin stated that there are no entrances on the rear of the building, although he showed the Board where the entrances and exits would be on the proposed addition.

Commissioner Stephenson asked Mr. Martin to explain the type of work that Phonon is involved in. Mr. Martin stated that they are a design and manufacturer of surface acoustic wave microcircuits for the defense and space industries. Their parts are made using the same methods as semi-conductors, which are made in their fabrication labs in the existing building.

Commissioner Stewart made a motion that the following referral be made to

the Zoning Commission. That the Design Review Board finds this application in its current form to be generally consistent with the Guidelines for Community Design and recommends approval by the Zoning Commission with information as presented on July 22, 2008 entitled Landscape Plan, drawing L2, dated 7/22/08, with the following amendment in reference to drawing L2, that in lieu of the Bradford Pears as shown on the plan, the applicant plant Aristocrat Pears of the same size and condition and in lieu of the Norway Maples, the applicant plant Green Mountain Sugar Maples. Commissioner Stephenson seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

As a design consideration, Chairman Dahlquist stated that the recommendation for the planting schedule was for maintenance reasons for the owner to recommend species that are more suitable.

IV. INFORMAL PRESENTATION(s)

a. Presentation of Simsbury Garden Club, Town Volunteer Group- Discussion of the proposed statue to be placed in the ornamental garden located at the entrance to Simsbury Meadows, Iron Horse Boulevard.

Jane Hannah showed pictures of the circle garden on Iron Horse Boulevard to the Board. She stated that the Garden Club had made an agreement with the Town to present this in recognition of their 75th anniversary, which is in 2009. She stated that they have already installed the garden, the benches and the plant material; the statue will be the centerpiece. A local artist has designed the statue.

Regarding the planting materials, another member of the Garden Club stated that they wanted plant materials that would be beautiful year round. They feel that they have accomplished this with daffodils, roses and grasses. Regarding the statue, she stated that they spent several years reviewing possible artists and have chosen a local artist. Although they have considered many different centerpieces, including a fountain, they opted to go with this statue because it related to them as a Club and as individuals. The statue will be made out of bronze with a brownstone base. The statue will stand 6' tall. The center area of the garden is approximately 10 foot square with the plantings all around. The intent of this is so people cannot touch the statue.

Commissioner Stewart suggested that if the statue rises out of the plantings, possibly a sea of roses, this might imply that the statue is there, but people should not be touching her. He stated that he feels the statue works well in the way they have proposed. Ms. Hannah stated that she liked the idea of the roses because it might also discourage vandalism.

Regarding the lighting, Commission Stewart suggested low level lighting in order to set an atmosphere. The right lighting would make the statue that much more beautiful. Chairman Dahlquist stated that prior to approval, the Board would need to know the direction they would be taking regarding the power of the lighting, the color, etc. Mr. Peck suggested that as the lighting is talked about, they consider using LED lighting.

Commissioner Stewart questioned that once the statue is gifted to the Town, who would be maintaining the statue and the area surrounding it. Ms. Hannah stated that the Garden Club was hoping to have a fund set up for maintaining the flowerbeds.

The Board discussed waiving the formal application in order to take action tonight. The Board members agreed they would like to act on this application.

Commissioner Gardner made a motion to change this discussion from an informal to a formal presentation. Commissioner Stewart seconded the motion, which was approved.

Commissioner Stewart motioned that the following referral be made to the Zoning Commission. That the Design Review Board finds this application in its current form to be generally consistent with the Guidelines for Community Design and recommends approval by the Zoning Commission with information as presented in a photograph of the statue on July 22, 2008 and the Photoshop Sketches prepared by Doug Muller, with the following suggestions relating to the lighting: Although at this point no samples have been submitted, the DRB understands that it will be low level lighting that will not provide any glare in keeping with the Town standards and that a lighting designer will most probably be brought into the project to appropriately light the statue. The recommendation of the DRB is that ground mounted lighting with low voltage be used, with the lighting level to be determined by a lighting designer at the appropriate time. Commissioner Gardner seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

b. Application of Maryanne Strindberg, Owner, for a Site Plan Amendment to construct a driveway and also a sign proposal for property located at 558 Hopmeadow Street. B-1 Zone

Ms. Strindberg stated that they have recently purchased this property. She stated that they are a small psychiatric consulting practice. They will not be practicing out of the building; they have in-home counsel in the area. This building will be strictly for keeping records, billing, etc. They are not looking to change the building in any way. She stated that they will be doing mostly cosmetic work. Ms. Strindberg stated that they have recently taken down several trees because of electrical issues. They

are also wanting to put in small evergreen plantings in the back; there are already many perennials on the property that they will be keeping. Currently there is no driveway on the property. They would like to put the driveway in the back because of how the lot is situated.

Chairman Dahlquist questioned what the parking requirements are for this site. Mr. Peck stated that there is a portion of the Regulations that allows for sharing of parking facilities between abutting commercial uses. That is why this configuration is being proposed. Mr. Peck stated that although he is not sure how many spaces the applicant will need, he would like that area to be as small as possible. Commissioner Stewart stated that the configuration that is being proposed will not work.

Chairman Dahlquist suggested that the applicant work more with the contractor to design the parking area and also look at the requirements of the Zoning Regulations to better know what they can do on the site. He asked the applicant to also consider minimizing the asphalt and possibly locate it to the side or rear of the property. A walk should also be constructed from the driveway to the building.

Chairman Dahlquist stated that if the applicant is proposing any lighting or signage, that would need to be discussed when they come back before this Board. Regarding the numerical sign, Ms. Strindberg stated that they are proposing a square shaped sign with a navy blue background with silver numbers.

Chairman Dahlquist stated that the Board will not be taking any action on this application tonight and it will be continued to the Special Meeting on July 29th.

V. DISCUSSION

a. Design of Town Gateway Signage

Chairman Dahlquist distributed handouts regarding the two sign options that the Sign Committee has decided on. They were unanimously in favor of the vertical, which went on to the Board of Selectmen. He stated that the final stonework still needs to be determined. Chairman Dahlquist stated that the service organizations wanted identification somewhere on the sign, although they were told that they could not have that on the Gateway signs. They settled on having a wall segment at Schultz Park. The wall will have a curved end to it that identifies the park in letters on one end with the Club signs on the other end. He stated that this is consistent with the street scape using wall segments in different parts of Town. Chairman Dahlquist stated that this also has gone to the Board of Selectmen and they are currently getting prices for creating these signs.

b. Identify recently built projects to evaluate the quality of DRB past recommendations and to suggest possible changes

Chairman Dahlquist suggested that the DRB look back at some project that are now completed in order to assess what was done, what success was had and what was not successful, etc. He feels that this would be very useful. He asked the Board members to think of any projects that they would like to consider. It would also be helpful to better convey to the Zoning Commission what the processes and details are that the DRB goes through for each application.

Mr. Peck stated that this would also be a very helpful tool for him. It would also be helpful for him to know if there are certain things that the Board feels that were implemented incorrectly so he can be sure he is clear when writing memos to the Zoning Commission.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

There were none.

VII. STAFF REPORTS

Chairman Dahlquist stated that Mr. Peck has done the RFQ and RFP. There is a Committee being established to evaluate the RFPs that will be coming in for the Charrette. Chairmen, or their designees, of each of the Land Use Commission will make up this Committee. Mr. Peck stated that the RFPs are due to be received back from the firms by August 18th. Prior to that, this Committee will meet.

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of June 24, 2008

Commissioner Stewart made a motion to approve the June 24, 2008 minutes as written. Commissioner Bond seconded the motion, which was approved. Commissioners Gray and Gardner abstained.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Stephenson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Commissioner Bond seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

