

From: Lois Laczko August 5, 2008 11:26:22 AM
Subject: Design Review Board Minutes 07/29/2008
To: SimsburyCT_DesignMin
Cc:

Design Review Board Minutes
July 29, 2008
Special Meeting

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Dahlquist called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. The following members were present: Charles Stephenson, Kevin Gray, Rita Bond, Anthony Drapelick, Richard Schoenhardt, and Bill Gardner. Mark Naccarato arrived at 5:35 PM. 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 Naccarato and Commissioner Drapelick to serve in the absence of Commissioner Stewart.

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. Correia thanked the Board for holding this special meeting. He stated that since the previous meeting, they have tried to address the issues and concerns from this Board. He stated that the front of the building will remain the same. The building will be white with black shutters, although the building will be at a bigger scale. He distributed samples of the vinyl siding, roof materials and the pavers for the walkway for the Board's review.

Regarding the elevations, Mr. Correia showed drawings depicting the north, south and back elevations of the building. The north elevation showed the air conditioning unit, although he stated that this will be surrounded and

hidden by shrubs and bushes. The back elevation showed the egress coming down from the second floor.

Mr. Correia stated that they will be removing the spot light that is currently on the property in front of the existing building. They are now proposing splash lighting near the building in the front.

Regarding the fountain, Mr. Correia stated that they are proposing a fountain that is now closer to the building. They are also proposing a walkway around the fountain in order to make it more of a focal point. This way people will be able to enjoy it.

Regarding the coverage ratio, Mr. Correia stated that the last time they were before this Board, they were at 53.2; it is now at 53.3. Simsmore Square was originally 59%; they added an additional lot to the site which brought it down to 52.6. With these changes, it is brought back up to 53.3. Mr. Correia stated that this will need to be brought before the Zoning for a Special Exception.

Chairman Dahlquist questioned where the fence would be and also what the applicant was proposing for landscaping. Mr. Correia stated that the fence will be along the walkway and porch. Regarding the landscaping, the applicant is willing to work with the DRB as far as what they feel is appropriate. He stated that there is an existing Sugar Maple in front of the building. Commissioner Bond suggested that the applicant think about putting another Sugar Maple adjacent to the existing one. She also suggested that they put decorative landscaping around the patio and fountain.

Regarding the entrances from the parking lot into the buildings, Mr. Correia stated that the residents would go in from the back or side of the building. Also, there are currently 317 parking spaces in all of Simsmore Square. They are proposing an additional 5 spaces for a total of 322; the requirement is 266 spaces.

Commissioner Schoenhardt stated his concerns regarding a possible building code problem with the back stairs. He stated that the stairs would need to be covered. Also, looking at the south elevation and the pitch of the roof, if projected, would go out over the balcony. He feels that this would be too low unless they went further up on the roof for an easier pitch. Because this is a modular building, Commissioner Stephenson questioned if there would be any problems structurally building onto something that was designed to be a stand-alone. Chairman Dahlquist stated that the DRB does not get involved with the engineering part of this. This would be a requirement of the Building Official.

Mr. Peck stated that the applicant could come back before this Board in order for them to review the cover on the stairs prior to it going forward. Chairman Dahlquist agreed. They could approve this application as presented with the stipulation that the applicant come back before the DRB to review the roof.

Commissioner Schoenhardt stated that the applicant also needs to bring in specifics on the landscaping.

Commissioner Gray questioned where the trash receptacles would be going. Mr. Correia stated that they are already in place; the residential trash area is a designated area away from the building.

Commissioner Gray 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 on plans dated July 29, 2008 with the following modifications: 1) The applicant agrees and understands that there is a code issue with the uncovered secondary egress. The applicant will return with plans for the roof covering the stairways on the south elevation and the back elevation. 2) The new tree on the front elevation will match the existing tree. 3) The applicant will return with a full landscape plan showing the foundation plantings. Commissioner Gardner seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

As a design consideration, Chairman Dahlquist stated that the Design Review Board believes that the overall scale of the building is appropriate for this location and finds that this project will enhance the Simsmore Square development in a very positive way. The primary focus of the Design Review Board's discussion was the potential code implications of having to protect the second means of egress from the building, which is why this Board would like to see the final scheme. They are also interested in allowing this project, to whatever extent it can, to move forward, although they expect that the applicant will return in September with their final roof solution.

IV. INFORMAL PRESENTATION(s)

a. 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 thanked the Board for holding this special meeting. She stated that they are no longer putting up a sign; they will only be putting numbers on the house. She then distributed handouts showing the outline of the driveway and the 3 proposed parking spaces. She stated that the

parking area will be 30' x 35', which will abut the pavement from the deli. They are also proposing small berms or curbing in front of each parking space so that cars cannot hit the house. The driveway is on the side of the building, which still leaves a lot of green in front of the building.

Commissioner Bond stated her concerns regarding the depth of the parking area. She feels that this area should be approximately 10' smaller in depth. Commissioner Schoenhardt suggested that each parking space be 9'. Chairman Dahlquist questioned if they were proposing any handicapped parking. Ms. Strindberg stated that they were not because the building will not have any public access.

Chairman Dahlquist stated his concerns regarding the cars having to back up into the adjacent property in order to get out of the parking spaces. He feels that this puts a restriction on where people can park at the deli. Ms. Strindberg stated that this is a very difficult site with not a lot of opportunity.

Regarding the berms or curbing for each parking space, Commission Bond suggested that they put potted plants there instead. Chairman Dahlquist stated that the DRB discourages curbing in that area because people could trip and fall over them. Commissioner Schoenhardt stated that the snow plows in the winter can also do damage to them.

Chairman Dahlquist questioned if Zoning required the applicant to have 3 parking spaces. Ms. Strindberg stated that she thought 3 spaces would be best because there are 3 employees at her business, although they will not be in the building at the same time. Mr. Peck stated that the 3 spaces do meet the Zoning requirements with the number of employees. He believes that a 27' x 20' parking area would be adequate with screening in front of that area.

Ms. Strindberg stated that there are many beautiful plants already on the premises, although they are mostly located in the backyard. She stated that some of the evergreens that are in the back might be brought up front to screen the parking, although she stated her concerns of those plantings blocking people's view who might be coming out of the deli.

Commissioner Stephenson suggested that since the owner has expressed interest in relocating existing plant materials from other parts of the property, they should be positioned between the street and the new parking area for screening. Chairman Dahlquist stated that they would be far enough back so they would not interfere with the site lines.

Regarding the walkway, Ms. Strindberg stated that although she would like to have pavers, financially, they are not able to do this now. She stated

that there is currently a slate walkway there. She is proposing to keep the slate, although she would clean it up by putting down gravel under the slate to make it look more presentable.

Chairman Dahlquist questioned if any lighting was being proposed. Ms. Strindberg stated that they would be keeping the existing lighting.

Commissioner Stephenson made a motion to make this informal application a formal application. Commissioner Gardner seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Commissioner Stephenson 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 on the packet of drawings entitled, "Revised Driveway Plans, 558 Hopmeadow Street", as submitted, with the following modifications: 1) that the parking area, as currently being proposed, be reduced in size to a minimum of 27' wide and 20' deep with the edge of the parking area furthest from the street being that edge which is held and the front edge being moved back away from the street; 2) the owner intends to relocate existing plant material from elsewhere on the site, if possible, or install appropriate new planting material to be located on the property to screen the paved area from Hopmeadow Street. Commissioner Gray seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

V. DISCUSSION

a. The Dorset Crossing Zone Change and Text Amendment Applications.

Mr. Peck stated that based upon the fact that this application is in the middle of public hearings with the Zoning Commission, it is the Town Attorney's opinion that the Design Review Board, at this time, not get involved in the design aspect of the plan. If the application does get approved, the DRB would then become involved in the design of the structures and buildings of that site.

Regarding the Charrette process, Mr. Peck stated that they have sent out RFPs to 8 different firms. Those RFPs are due back by August 18th. He stated that he has heard from several of those firms that they would like to visit Simsbury to take a tour prior to submitting their proposals. One smaller firm stated that they might work with another firm because this is a large job.

A Committee will be set up to help review the RFPs. It will consist of 2 members from the Board of Selectmen, Chairman of the Board of Finance, and Chairmen of the Land Use Commissions, or their designees.

Mr. Peck stated that he was disappointed to learn that the Board of Finance did not choose to set up the special revenue fund that would allow people to deposit money to help fund the Charrette. He feels that funding is a critical issue going forward.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

VII. STAFF REPORTS

There were none.

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of July 22, 2008

Commissioner Gray made a motion to approve the July 22, 2008 minutes as written. Commissioner Gardner seconded the motion, which was approved. Commissioners Drapelick and Schoenhardt abstained.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Gardner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m. Commissioner Stephenson seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.