

From: Lois Laczko September 15, 2008 9:32:38 AM
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To: SimsburyCT_DesignMin
Cc:

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Design Review Board Minutes
September 9, 2008
Regular 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, Anthony Drapelick, Rick Schoenhardt, John Carroll and Bill Gardner. Rita Bond arrived at 6:15 PM. Also present were Mr. Hiram Peck, Director of Planning, and Alison Sturgeon, Commission Clerk.

II. APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATES

Chairman Dahlquist appointed Commissioner Carroll 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. Proposed revision to exterior at Cal's Wood Fired Grill on property located at 4 Hartford Road.

Hilary Donald of L'ARC Architects, LLC, stated that when construction began, they ran into several issues. They took down a large roof area and when it was rebuilt, the plan was changed. The kitchen and dining areas have swapped places. The applicant is now proposing changes to the windows; they would like to add more windows. They would also like to change the type of windows. They are now proposing windows with mullions between the panes of glass. This type of window will be more viable and affordable. Ms. Donald stated that they are also now proposing to extend the wall on the back and side of the building to provide screening from the different roofs. Also, when they rebuilt a section of roof, they created a well where the cooking equipment will go through the roof. The well is

approximately 18" lower; the equipment will be even more buried than was originally planned.

Chairman Dahlquist stated that he felt the proposal for the additional windows was very overwhelming in terms of glass. He stated that this is a historical landmark building that deserves sensitive treatment. He also stated his concerns regarding the possibility of seeing the equipment on the roof.

Commissioner Carroll stated his concerns with the mullions inside the glass. Although he understands that the maintenance might be easier, he does not feel that this is an appropriate type of window for this building.

Commissioner Drapelick stated that from the plans, it is hard to tell there are mullions in the glass. He stated that with the height and façade of the building remaining the same and with the glass going twice as far back, the building now has a very commercial storefront feel to it. He stated that Simsbury desires to preserve this building as a landmark. Ms. Donald stated that although she understands the Board's concerns, this is a commercial building and she feels these windows are practical. Chairman Dahlquist stated that when looking at the site, a distinction should be able to be made between what was original and what was added to the building.

Commissioner Gardner stated that he also feels that the applicant is proposing too much glass. He suggested that the applicant look into fixing the interior arrangement to break up the windows on the exterior.

Mr. Wolf, one of the owners, stated that the proposed windows would let in a lot of light and would be more affordable regarding the electric bill. Also, tables near windows are always the first to be seated. Mr. Wolf stated that he wants the building to look good while maintaining the "old" look from the front of the building. He is proposing to give the side of the building a "new" look. He feels this works well together.

Chairman Dahlquist stated that although he understands the economics of the project, the Design Review Board does not get involved with those issues. Their decision is based upon if the additional changes are appropriate. He stated that the original plan was approved, but there are now substantial changes being proposed to the outside. This Board now needs to decide if this change is appropriate for the building; this is a design issue.

Commissioner Stephenson stated that, as a positive, the applicant has tried to maintain the front of the building and they have not tried to recreate a colonial addition on the side of the building that would not be quite right. He stated that his main concern is the intent to somehow take a

high regard for the main building and to have a rhythm to the main building and the addition without sacrificing the seating arrangements. He feels that the façade needs to be softened. Commissioner Gardner agreed that the wall of glass needs to be broken up.

Commissioner Stephenson stated that at night, when there is light inside the building, you will be aware of the mullions in the new addition as well as the in the old building. These additional windows are also much larger than the other windows. By having this much glass, it nearly becomes an interesting play of new and old. He stated that he is not that concerned about the mullion issue.

Chairman Dahlquist questioned if this application would be going to the Zoning Commission. Mr. Peck stated that it would depend on what the DRB decides.

In support of what was being presented, Commissioner Stephenson stated that the perception of the side of the building is much less noticeable than the front of the building because of the trees and vegetation. Although it is overly commercial, the Design Review Board is not here to design the project in any way. He stated that he would support these changes.

Commissioner Carroll questioned the applicant regarding their timeline. Ms. Donald stated that the trim should be done by the end of September and the glass would be in sometime during October. They also discussed colors. Commissioner Gray stated that he feels that color will help in breaking up the glass instead of having all white trim around the glass.

Chairman Dahlquist suggested that the applicant take two windows out and have only three windows across the seating area. Mr. Wolf stated that he would like to work with the Board, although he would prefer all of the windows. Commissioner Stephenson suggested that they position the windows to support a proper table layout. This might be a good compromise.

Ms. Donald suggested that they take the center window out. Commissioner Stephenson stated that with the removal of a single window, the applicant would not have to sacrifice the seating arrangement inside.

Commissioner Gardner made a motion that the Design Review Board approve the proposed revisions to the exterior of Cal's Wood Fired Grill on property located at 4 Hartford Road with the following conditions: that the center window of the combination being proposed be eliminated to leave four (4) windows across the west elevation in order to make it more sensitive to the original architecture. Commissioner Drapelick seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

b. Application of Louis Sperandio, Victor Carnelli and Raymond Carnelli, Owners, Kevin Kowalski, Fire Marshal - Simsbury Fire District, Agent, for a Site Plan Approval to construct a Masonic Lodge on property located at 991 Hopmeadow Street. PO Zone.

Mr. Kowalski stated that the Fire Department is in the process of modernizing the main fire station. As part of this, they needed to find property where the Mason's could move. They have now found a property next to the bank and adjacent to the Westminster School. Mr. Kowalski stated that they have already gone through and gotten the approvals from the other Land Use Boards. They have also received a variance so the building could be moved further away from the neighbors and Westminster School.

Mr. Kowalski showed the Board the Site Plan of the property. He stated that the proposal is for a 4,200 s.f., single-story building. The parking area will be located in the rear of the property. He stated that they have already talked to the neighbors and with Westminster School and have their support. Mr. Kowalski stated that they did look into the option of shared driveways with the bank, although this will not work out because of liability issues.

Mr. Kowalski stated that there is a 40' buffer in the rear, although it is not a conservation easement, that area will be left as is. There is a great deal of dense vegetation in this area, although they will be enhancing the area with Spruce trees. This will create an additional 15' buffer. The Spruce tree line will also be extended down parallel to the Westminster driveway. They will also be leaving the large Oak tree in the front of the building.

The architect showed the Board pictures of the site from several different viewpoints. After doing some research regarding the Masons, he stated that, historically, the meeting hall is on an east/west axis and the room is often square. He showed the Board his proposal, which he feels works nicely on the corner.

In order to be compatible with the neighboring buildings, the applicant is proposing a similar brown roof. He showed samples of the roof, siding and trim to the Board.

Regarding lighting, the engineer stated that they are proposing one light for each corner of the property with reflectors to keep the lights from shining on the neighbors. The lighting will have 12' high posts. Mr. Kowalski stated that they wanted to be sensitive to the neighbors and not put the lighting on the building. The lighting has adjustable reflectors so they will only shine on the parking area and not on the neighbors.

The engineer stated that they are proposing double hung, aluminum or vinyl

clad windows. This will depend on the budget.

Chairman Dahlquist questioned if this building would have the same setback as the other buildings in this area. Mr. Kowalski stated that the setbacks were the same; this building would be lined up with the other buildings. Also, he stated that there are no grade changes. The Mason's would like as much natural vegetation as possible on the property.

Chairman Dahlquist questioned if this property was part of the Center Zone. Mr. Kowalski stated that it was not part of the Center Zone and did not exceed the lot coverage. The lot coverage is at 40%.

Commissioner Gray questioned where the entrance to the building was. The engineer showed the main and back entrances. He stated that the back entrance will be used the most.

Chairman Dahlquist questioned if there would be any mechanics on the roof. The engineer stated that there may be a chimney, but all of the mechanics would be in the basement.

The Board discussed the Blue Spruce trees that would be used as a barrier on the site. Commissioner Bond stated that these would be adequate for screening, although she suggested mixed hedges because they are more of a natural looking barrier. Commissioner Stephenson stated that the Blue Spruce are very dense and there are color differences to the trees. He believes that they would be a successful buffer.

Tom Morrelli, Westminster School, stated that they are in support of this plan. He stated that the driveway entrance to the school is very important to them. He feels that this proposed building is very compatible to this area.

Chairman Dahlquist stated his concerns regarding the applicant's choice regarding the lighting fixtures that were chosen. After some discussion, the Board and the applicant agreed that lighting would be discussed when the applicant comes back before this Board for signage.

Chairman Dahlquist questioned how the applicant came up with the number of parking spaces. Mr. Kowalski stated that this is based on the square footage. They also have 2 handicapped parking spaces. Regarding the shared parking, Mr. Kowalski stated that there will be times when the bank will need additional parking and there also could be times when the Mason's might need special parking. There is an agreement being drawn up between the owner of the property and the bank.

Chairman Dahlquist questioned if this building would be used as rental

space. Mr. Kowalski stated that he was not able to answer for the applicant, although this building is not really conducive for a lease operation. The Mason's do occasionally rent out their current facility for small functions and he does not believe they would want to give up that right at their new location.

Commissioner Stephenson 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 drawings entitled, "Site Plan Masonic Lodge" Sheet 1 of 1 and "Detail Sheet Masonic Lodge" Sheet 2, both dated 9/5/08; also in accordance with a colored rendering; Sheet A-100 showing floor plans and elevations; and Sheet A-101. Commissioner Stephenson stated that the exterior lighting and signage were not included in this application. Commissioner Gardner seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

c. Application of Joseph Fine, MIJI of Avon, LLC - Owner, James Malin, Alto Sign Incorporated - Agent, for additional Signage for the Men's Warehouse retail store on property located at 6 Albany Turnpike. B-3 Zone.

Commissioner Schoenhardt came back to the Board.

Jim Malin stated that his company does all of the signage for the Men's Warehouse stores, which usually has red-face letters. He stated that he is proposing black halo lit letters in order to comply with Simsbury's regulations. He showed the Board a sample of the lettering. He stated that the storefront is 65.6 square feet, which enables them to have 65 s.f. of signage. The monument sign and the storefront sign take up 55 s.f. of signage. Because the back of the building faces Simsbury Commons, and because they still have 10.5 s.f. of allowable signage left, they are proposing to put 20" halo lit letters along the soffit of the building. They are asking for a little bit larger of a sign in the back because it faces Walgreen's, Bed Bath and Beyond and an access road to Simsbury Commons; these stores have very large letters.

Chairman Dahlquist questioned if Town staff had any concerns with what is being proposed. Mr. Peck stated that staff calculations are slightly different than the applicant's calculations with regard to size. Town staff's calculations came out less, although still over the allowable amount. Mr. Malin stated that currently, the site has 55 s.f. of signage, leaving an additional 10.67 s.f. He stated that they are asking for 26.4 s.f., which is a difference of 15 s.f. He stated that his biggest concern is that people will not see the sign from the further parking lots.

Commissioner Stephenson stated that he believes this proposal will look fine. He feels that the proposed size is appropriate; any smaller would not work for this building.

The Board had a brief discussion regarding the entrance to the Men's Warehouse and to the Simsbury Mall. There is no access through this site to get to the mall.

Commissioner Stephenson 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 a drawing entitled, "Sign Drawing #4" with a revision date of 9/4/08. Commissioner Gray seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

As a design consideration, Chairman Dahlquist stated that the Town staff made the Board aware that the proposed sign size exceeds the allowable amount from a Zoning standpoint, however, the Design Review Board, in consideration of that Regulation, feels that the Zoning Commission might want to make an exception for this case given the location, the simple façade and the absence of other signage around this particular location.

d. Application of David Richman, DARLAR - Owner, Charlie Kaylor, Kaylor Real Estate, LLC - Agent, for placement of additional Signage on property located at 730 Hopmeadow Street. SCZA Zone.

Mr. Kaylor stated that he is proposing one sign on the side of the building, which is where their entrance is located.

Chairman Dahlquist questioned how this sign fits in with the unified sign plan on the building. He questioned what similarities the proposed sign has with the other existing signs. Mr. Kaylor stated that this proposed sign meets the sign requirements. He also showed the Board the existing signs on the building.

Chairman Dahlquist questioned if the proposed sign matched the shape of the existing signs on the building. Mr. Kaylor stated that the other signs are more oval than the proposed sign.

Commissioner Schoenhardt stated that he would like to see the colors reversed, white letters on a red background, in order to match the other signs on the building. This would make this sign more unified with the existing signs. Commissioner Schoenhardt stated that this was required of the other tenants in this building. Mr. Kaylor stated that the red lettering on the white background and the blue balloon is the trademark for

Remax.

Commissioner Stephenson stated that he felt the location of the sign was appropriate. The Board agreed. The Board also agreed that the content on the sign was fine. Chairman Dahlquist questioned why the shape of the sign was chosen. Mr. Kaylor stated that there was no rationale for the shape of the sign, although the color scheme is very important to him. He feels that the colors are recognizable as a Remax sign.

Chairman Dahlquist questioned if any lighting was being proposed. Mr. Kaylor stated that there was no lighting being proposed.

Chairman Dahlquist stated that an exception of the color of the proposed sign would be hard to justify. He suggested that the applicant have a temporary sign made while the sign maker could try to be more consistent with the existing signage on the building. He questioned if Mr. Kaylor would be willing to come back before this Board. Mr. Kaylor stated that he would need to see a sign with the colors reversed before committing to anything. He also stated that he does not want to incur the expense of a temporary sign.

No motion was taken on this application. The applicant will come back before the Design Review Board after seeing what the sign maker comes up with after reversing the red and white colors.

Chairman Dahlquist stated that this meeting would adjourn for 5 minutes and would reconvene down the hall in Room 103.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM.

The meeting reconvened at 7:05 PM.

IV. INFORMAL DISCUSSION

The applicant regarding Simsmore Square gave their informal presentation to the Board.

Simsmore Square will revise and resubmit their proposal to show proposed windows and exit doors on the enclosed stairs and also show bracing structure on the deck columns. The Board did not have any objections regarding the landscaping.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:20 PM.

