

**MINUTES**  
**DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**Monday, February 5, 2024, at 5:30 P.M.**  
**FSPL Room, Simsbury Public Library**  
**725 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, CT 06070**

**I. CALL TO ORDER** – Chair Lang called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

**Present:** Design Review Board Chair, Elaine Lang; Design Review Board Members: Joleen Benedict, Anca Dragulski, Elaine Lang, Doug McKown, and Andrew Tarpill. Staff: Planning Director, George McGregor; Code Compliance Officer, Joseph Hollis;

**Absent:** Design Review Board Vice Chair, Polly Rice.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**January 17, 2024**

**MOTION:** Chair Lang made a motion without objection to accept the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on January 17, 2024, as written. Commissioner Benedict abstained. (4-0-1).

**III. NEW BUSINESS**

**Preliminary Discussion** – 894 Hopmeadow Street for the construction of a ± 52,679 sq. ft. mixed-use building (37 residential units and 5,100 sq. ft. commercial space) at 894 Hopmeadow Street, (Assessor's Map H09, Block 227, Lot 004A) Simsbury, CT 06070, Zone SC-1.

Attorney, Charles Houlihan, Landscape Architect, John Stewart, and Project Architect at Crosskey Architects, David Goslin presented the project.

Chair Lang asked how many units are accessible. To which Mr. Goslin responded 10% (4 units) are Type A, full accessible. All reminding units need to be Type B, adaptable.

Commissioner Tarpill asked if the stone was manufactured, that Mr. Goslin validated.

Commissioner McKown recommended adding walking access to Iron Horse Boulevard.

Commissioner Dragulski recommended furnishing the side of the property facing Iron Horse Boulevard.

**Application ZC #24-01** of Ensign Bickford Aerospace & Defense, Owner, for a site plan amendment pursuant to Section 5 (Industrial Districts) and Section 11 (Site Plan Requirements) of the Simsbury Zoning Regulations for the construction of a  $\pm$  3,627 sq. ft. addition at 100 Grist Mill Road (Assessor's Map G11, Block 103, Lot 005-25) Simsbury, CT 06070. Zone I-2.

Gus Jaminski of Ensign-Bickford Realty presented the request

**MOTION:** Commissioner Dragulski made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Benedict, to provide a positive recommendation for **Application ZC #24-01** of Ensign Bickford Aerospace & Defense, Owner, for a site plan amendment pursuant to Section 5 (Industrial Districts) and Section 11 (Site Plan Requirements) of the Simsbury Zoning Regulations for the construction of a  $\pm$  3,627 sq. ft. addition at 100 Grist Mill Road (Assessor's Map G11, Block 103, Lot 005-25) Simsbury, CT 06070. Zone I-2. The motion carried unanimously. (5-0-0).

**Zoning Compliance Review** of Steven Sachs, Owner, for the installation of a  $\pm$  4 sq. ft. projecting sign and two  $\pm$  9 sq. ft. window signs at the property located at 776 Hopmeadow Street (Assessor's Map G10, Block 205, Lot 005) Simsbury, CT 06070. Zone SCZ. The motion carried unanimously. (5-0-0).

Chair Lang if there was any illumination for the projecting sign, to which Mr. Sachs responded no.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Benedict made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tarpill, to provide a positive recommendation for the **Zoning Compliance Review** of Steven Sachs, Owner, for the installation of a  $\pm$  4 sq. ft. projecting sign and two  $\pm$  9 sq. ft. window signs at the property located at 776 Hopmeadow Street (Assessor's Map G10, Block 205, Lot 005) Simsbury, CT 06070. Zone SCZ. The motion carried unanimously. (5-0-0).

**Zoning Compliance Review** of BLCR Holdings, LLC, Owner, Bryan Vasser of Archer Signs, Applicant, for the installation/resurfacing of a  $\pm$  16 sq. ft. freestanding sign with a tenant panel at the property located at 961 Hopmeadow Street (Assessor's Map H08 Block 116 Lot 044) Simsbury, CT 06070. Zone SCZ.

Bryan Vasser of Archer Signs presented:

- The lettering will be applied vinyl.
- There is wood inside of the BBC.

Chair Lang asked if there was a change to illumination, to which Mr. Vasser responded no.

**MOTION:** Commissioner McKown made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Tarpill, to provide a positive recommendation for the **Zoning Compliance Review** of BLCR Holdings, LLC, Owner, Bryan Vasser of Archer Signs, Applicant, for the installation/resurfacing of a  $\pm$  16 sq. ft. freestanding sign with a tenant panel at the property located at 961 Hopmeadow Street (Assessor's Map H08 Block 116 Lot 044) Simsbury, CT 06070. Zone SCZ. The motion carried unanimously. (5-0-0).

#### IV. OLD BUSINESS

**Application ZC #23-38** of SL Simsbury LLC, Owner, Holden Sabato, Applicant, for a Type 4 Master Site Development Plan (MSDP) pursuant to Section 5.0.B.4 of the Hartford-Simsbury Form-Based Code (HSFBC) for the construction of a 432-unit residential development at 200 Hopmeadow Street (former Hartford Insurance property-south) (Assessor's Map F17, Block 154, Lot 009-2) Simsbury, CT 06070. Zone HS-FBC.

Paul Vitaliano, Civil Engineer at VHB presented the following changes:

- Removal of apartment buildings' 4<sup>th</sup> story, bringing it down by 10 ft.
- 25% reduction of units, from 580 to 432.
- Replace single family units with duplexes with attached garages on southern portion.
- Addition of neighborhood commercial zone, consisting of 27, 500 sq. ft. commercial flex space and 5,000 sq. ft. restaurant.
- Add 3 to 5 apartment units above the restaurant.
- Increase in the length of the trail to connect the north and south sites.

Commissioner McKown asked if there were sidewalks throughout the site, to which Mr. Vitaliano responded there are sidewalks and crosswalks throughout. The only area that does not have sidewalks on both sides of the street is the southern side with the duplexes.

Commissioner Dragulski asked why the commercial building was over to the side of the property, to which Mr. Vitaliano responded that taking away two residential buildings allowed this area to have room for commercial space and parking.

Commissioner Tarpill stated that having the commercial spaces on the first floors of the residential buildings would make it more of a community feel, to which Mr. Vitaliano responded that they wanted to keep the commercial segregated, because it complicated access and entrance points.

Blake Silverman, of the Silverman Group, stated that retail has not sold in their other developments, so they envisioned commercial where there was a store front that had production in the back, and residents do not usually respond well to living above that.

Commissioner Dragulski stated that she did not think it would be successful with no visibility from the road.

Laura Crosskey, President of Crosskey Architects presented the architectural elements.

Commissioner Tarpill asked if anything was done to the entrances, to which Ms. Crosskey responded they have been looking at different colors and materials so that there is more diversity.

The Commission complimented the design of the restaurant and how it would be good to see elements of it throughout the development.

The Commission was not confident in the future success of the commercial building being off to the side and would like it to have more design similarities to the residential buildings.

**MOTION:** Chair Lang made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Benedict, to provide a neutral recommendation with design suggestions for **Application ZC #23-38** of SL Simsbury LLC, Owner, Holden Sabato, Applicant, for a Type 4 Master Site Development Plan (MSDP) pursuant to Section 5.0.B.4 of the Hartford-Simsbury Form-Based Code (HSFBC) for the construction of a 432-unit residential development at 200 Hopmeadow Street (former Hartford Insurance property-south) (Assessor's Map F17, Block 154, Lot 009-2) Simsbury, CT 06070. Zone HS-FBC. The motion carried unanimously. (5-0-0).

## **V. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Chair Lang made a motion without objection to adjourn the meeting. (5-0-0).

Respectfully Submitted,

Amanda Blaze  
Commission Clerk