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TOWN OF NEWTOWN

DESIGN ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

February 5, 2018, 6:00 PM
Meeting Room 3, 3 Primrose Street

Present Members: Phil Clark, Kathy Geckle, Peter Cloudas, Frank Caico
Also Present: Georgia Contois, Clerk

The meeting opened at 6:04 PM

Referral 17.23, 79 Church Hill Road

Erik Zambell of Granoff Architects, and Sirjohn Papageorge, of 79 Church Hill Road LLC., came forward as the applicant. They were later joined by Tracy Lewis, L.S, Lewis Assoc. and Jim Swift, Civil Engineer.

Mr. Zambell oriented commissioners to the site and began to explain the layout. The project is for 6 residential buildings consisting of four 42 unit buildings and two 28 unit buildings. In addition; a clubhouse and pool area. He explained the design as a hint to a horse paddock. Board members discussed material choices such as vinyl siding and shingles. The buildings shown will have 3 main entrances that each serve four units to each floor. While looking at front elevations, Members asked about a color variation to break up the large buildings.

Mr. Caico asked about the site layout, noting an appearance of a 'large building wall' from the highway and overpass. He wanted to know what was being done to break up the site. Mr. Clark said landscaping will help but there are large elevation changes and small trees will not be noticeable from outside the site. They also discussed various retaining walls.

Mr. Caico requested a cross section rendering of the site and reduced plans, and Mr. Clark requested some material samples for the next meeting. Mr. Papageorge said that he may not be the one developing the residential units and did not want to lock a potential new developer into specific materials without their consent. Mr. Clark explained that the Board's duty is to solidify design details. Members then discussed utilities like HVAC units and venting with the applicant. The air compressors will be mostly on the roof in a sheilded space and Mr. Zambell mentioned hiding some vents in fake chimneys.

Discussion turned to the commercial buildings on the site which consist of two retail/office buildings of varying sizes. Mr. Cloudas noted the color and material change in the rendering that was desirable. Ms. Geckle agreed that it was 'New England' looking. Mr. Clark wanted to know if there could be more green space in between the buildings and parking area. They discussed adding in another landscaped island between parking levels. Mr. Cloudas asked the applicants to treat the backside of the larger building with the same regulations for a front façade. Covered entrances were suggested, as well as breaking up the roofline.

The Board took a break at 7:30 PM and resumed at 7:35 PM.

Mr. Clark asked for public comment, reminding participants that many of their concerns would be best discussed at Planning and Zoning.

Ken Chimileski, 22 Walnut Tree Hill Road, asked about the appearance of the site from Walnut Tree Hill Road., not just from I-84 and Church Hill. He wanted to make sure there was a vast landscape buffer. He also asked if there was a lack of frontage requirements to a main roadway. Mr. Papageorge talked about the sidewalk and landscape buffers to Walnut Tree Hill Road. He also said that the state did not want them to have an entrance/exit to Church Hill Road.

Sharon Hoyt, 28 St. Georges Place, mentioned the applicant's association to the Avalon complex, and did not want it to look like those buildings. She thought that those buildings were ugly.

Ned Simpson, 42 Watkins Drive, had some questions about the sidewalk project.

Linda Jones, 16 Walnut Tree Hill Road, asked the Board to look at the complex in comparison of the rest of Newtown. She asked them to aesthetically keep the character of the town and not a city like Danbury.

Mr. Cloudas asked about the landscape buffer for the residential areas. Mr. Caico asked to maintain as much of the existing buffers as possible. Ms. Jones came forward again asking about landscaping for Evergreen Rd. Applicants showed the landscaping pages in the plans.

The Design Advisory Board would like to revisit the application after the Inland Wetlands and Planning and Zoning meetings on February 14 and 15, 2018, respectively.

Referral 18.01, 10-22 Washington Avenue

Riverwalk is not expected to return to the DAB until after the first round at Planning and Zoning which will be March 15th 2018.

Ms. Geckle made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Cloudas seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 8:17 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Georgia Contois, Clerk