



**TOWN OF NEWTOWN
DESIGN ADVISORY BOARD**

MINUTES

Special Meeting

Monday, December 16, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.
Activity Room A, Community Center
8 Simpson Street, Newtown, CT

Board members: Phil Clark, Peter Cloudas, Frank Caico

Presenters: Phil Clark, Claris Construction; Warren Freedenfeld, architect from Rauhaus Freedenfeld Associates

Staff: Christine O'Neill, Clerk

Mr. Clark recused himself, as he was presenting on behalf of Claris Construction. Mr. Cloudas called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. as acting chairman.

Application

(Continuation) Application by Prithvi Real Estate Management, Inc., for a property located at 94 South Main Street, as demonstrated on a perspective drawing titled, "Pleasant Paws Pet Center," dated 11/22/19.

Mr. Clark explained that as per the request of the Board at the 12/9/19 meeting, Claris Construction updated the latest rendering to reflect actual as-built construction. The changes were: 1) the windows on the second floor to the south side of the east gable have been removed; 2) the roof gutters and downspout are now shown; 3) the first floor window at the southeast corner of the east elevation depicted at the last meeting as wrapping around the corner is now shown to be consistent with the elevation approved by the Board and later by the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZ) in April; 4) the window at the northeast corner of the east elevation depicted at the last meeting as wrapping around the corner is now shown to be consistent with the elevation approved by the Board and later by PZ in April; 5) the width of the east gable was enlarged extending to the south such that the emergency exit door on the first floor on the south side of the east gable area is fully under the gable; 6) a round gable pediment was added to the north elevation; and 7) the gable-overhang on the north side has been added.

Mr. Caico stated that he visited the site over the weekend and stated that the window on the second floor to the south side of the east gable was present. He did not see any stone "water table" installed yet, only the mesh. He said that the fieldstone that appears on the current and past renderings is not the same as the faux brownstone sample that Mr. Clark brought to the meeting. Mr. Caico expressed that the faux brownstone looks manufactured and all blocks are the same size, whereas the fieldstone appears natural and varied. Mr. Clark explained that the faux brownstone has already been ordered, but it's possible that it could be sent back and fieldstone ordered in its place.

Mr. Clark explained that the window has been filled in. Mr. Cloudas confirmed that he visited the site earlier today and the window was in fact filled in. He further confirmed that the rendering appears to reflect field conditions. Mr. Cloudas presented the Clerk with his field notes on a copy of the rendering presented at the 12/9/19 meeting.

Mr. Clark invited Mr. Freedenfeld of Rauhaus Freedenfeld Associates (RFA), the project's architect, to speak.

Mr. Freedenfeld of RFA stated that normally, a change order is submitted for each alteration to a construction project's plan, but no such change orders have been submitted for Pleasant Paws. Therefore, RFA has not been aware of many of the changes that have happened during the course of the project, especially because when Dr. Vali is on site he makes some changes then and there. Mr. Freedenfeld felt that although changes have been made piecemeal, the essence of the building that he designed - and that DAB endorsed - is still present.

Mr. Cloudas expressed that the regulations call for buildings of a New England character. He said that the horizontal division on the southeast part of the façade has disappeared, but he would have liked to keep it to break up the two stories. Mr. Freedenfeld agreed. Mr. Caico felt this could be easily achieved with some kind of material or trim, with minimal extra cost.

Mr. Caico asked what was going on within the north side upper floor of the building volume. Mr. Freedenfeld said that in terms of fenestration, it appeared to be the same as the original rendering. Mr. Freedenfeld responded that there are mechanicals in that area.

Mr. Cloudas expressed his belief that the biggest issue is the stone veneer "water table." Mr. Freedenfeld asked Mr. Clark if there were a fieldstone to replace what had been ordered, that would not be much different to the cost; Mr. Clark replied that there is.

Mr. Caico asked about the coloration of the shingles. Mr. Clark confirmed that the sample of the dark-colored hardiplank ("evening blue") and the light-colored hardiplank ("Navajo beige") he brought to the meeting accurately represent what was purchased, delivered, and will be put on the building, but that these products could be painted.

Mr. Freedenfeld pointed out that the original rendering had the darker-colored hardiplank on the two outer wings of the building and the lighter-colored hardiplank in the center; this current rendering has that aesthetic reversed. Mr. Freedenfeld suggested switching it back to get it closer to the original rendering. Mr. Caico said his larger concern was the stone material for the base of the building, and that he wasn't so worried about the coloration. He would like to see fieldstone more in keeping with the rendering, which demonstrates stones with size/shape/color variety.

The Board and Mr. Freedenfeld looked at photos of different stone options online. They settled on recommending "Beacon Hill Ledge" distributed by O&G as the stone for the project.

Mr. Caico revisited the retaining walls discussed at the previous meetings of the Board. He reiterated the DAB previous opinion that we sought to soften the hard appearance of the precast

concrete blocks. Mr. Clark asked if the Board would prefer to have ivy to hide it. The Board was amenable to this suggestion.

Mr. Caico and Mr. Cloudas agreed that there did not need to be any further discussion of the color scheme, as they found what was on the rendering reasonably acceptable.

Mr. Cloudas summarized that the biggest issue at the last meeting was that elements in the rendering presented did not line up with what was in the field. He felt this had been adequately addressed in tonight's presentation.

Mr. Caico made a motion to recommend to the Land Use Agency that the applicant make the following changes to the latest proposal.

- 1. That the southeast portion of the front elevation incorporate a horizontal break between the two floors.**
- 2. That the stone veneer material be changed to Beacon Hill Ledge distributed by O&G, or material deemed comparable by this Board.**
- 3. That the block retaining walls around the perimeter of the site incorporate ivy or other natural material to screen and soften the visual impact of the concrete.**

Mr. Cloudas seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Mr. Caico made a motion to recommend that the Land Use Agency require the above changes before the Land Use Agency signs off on the Certificate of Occupancy. Mr. Cloudas seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Minutes

Mr. Cloudas submitted a document dated 12/16/19 with edits to the minutes. Mr. Caico indicated that he had reviewed the edits. Mr. Cloudas moved to approve the minutes of December 9, 2019 as amended based on the document dated 12/16/19. Mr. Caico seconded. All were in favor and the minutes were approved as amended.

Adjournment

The first regularly scheduled meeting for 2020 is January 8, 2020. The Board discussed moving it from 7 p.m. to 5 or 5:30 p.m. so that both Rob Sibley and George Benson of the Land Use Agency could come right after work to discuss the draft application and Board responsibilities going forward. It was decided that if that date/time combination wouldn't work, Mr. Sibley or Mr. Benson could suggest a time and the Clerk would schedule a special meeting.

Mr. Cloudas made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Caico seconded. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Christine O'Neill, Clerk*