



TOWN OF NEWTOWN

DESIGN ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES

Special Meeting

Monday, December 9, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

Conference Room, Community Center

8 Simpson Street, Newtown CT

Please note that although the agenda stated the location would be "Activity Room A," due to a scheduling conflict the Board was moved down the hall to the Conference Room. The building's receptionist was informed and a sign was posted on the door.

Board members: Phil Clark, Peter Cloudas, Frank Caico, Agni Kyprianou

Presenters: Phil Clark, Claris Construction

Staff: Christine O'Neill, Clerk

Mr. Clark called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m.

Mr. Clark recused himself from the "Application" portion of the meeting in order to present.

Application

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 the structure for Pleasant Paws Veterinary Hospital is essentially the same as the last time it came before the Board, but the coloration has changed. Claris Construction, Mr. Clark's company, is the contractor but not the architect. When the owner and architect wanted to make some modifications, Director of Planning George Benson and Mr. Clark both decided it was best to come before the Design Advisory Board.

Mr. Clark expressed that the fieldstone has not changed and is already on the building. He distributed samples of the material, including Nichiha. The siding is hardiplank shingle. Architectural shingles will be on the top of the roof, which had already been approved.

Mr. Caico asked about the northeast facing second floor. Mr. Cloudas noted that the angle difference in the previously-approved and new proposed renderings reveals large area of blankness, and he was also bothered by the roofing and eaves on that side. The orientation and fenestration of the upper northeast portion of the building wasn't sitting well with him.

Mr. Caico shared that he liked the new color scheme.

Mr. Cloudas said that in the original approval, the east side of the building on the south end had a horizontal line between the first and second floor, which he liked, but seems to have been lost in this iteration.

Mr. Caico asked what exactly has changed. Mr. Clark responded the color and some of the materials. Mr. Caico asked if Mr. Benson was looking for the recommendation of the Board before he administratively approved the

modifications, or if it was going back to the Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z). That had not been decided yet.

Mr. Cloudas mentioned that the Board had recommended last time that the retaining wall be stained. The retaining wall was not shown in either rendering. Mr. Caico chimed in that this was a bigger concern to him than the color change.

Mr. Cloudas commented that the building does seem to have somewhat of a New England feel, which was subordinated somewhat by the color change.

Mr. Caico made a motion to recommend the approval of the changes as presented (motion later withdrawn). Mr. Cloudas did not feel they were ready to make a motion, and invited Ms. Kyprianou to share her thoughts.

Ms. Kyprianou felt that the building did not look Colonial at all. She liked the addition of the stone. She inquired about the positioning of the north gable, but Mr. Clark replied that it had already been built. He suggested that the Board could postpone this meeting and make a site visit, so that they could see what has already been built.

Mr. Cloudas and Mr. Caico felt that these new modifications coming before the Board once parts of the building have already been built was almost a token gesture since it is too late for some of the changes the Board would like to suggest. Mr. Clark reiterated that it might be a better idea for the Board to do a site visit.

The Board revisited the minutes from the April 16th meeting of the DAB and the April 18th meeting of P&Z. The minutes reminded them that P&Z had made it a condition of approval the applicant had to return to the Board with an interpretation of the Board's suggestions before construction began. This never happened. At first it was thought that the Zoning Officer who signed off on the building permit must have overlooked those conditions of approval; however, Ms. O'Neill pointed out that the April iteration of the project was a modification, which means the building permit had already been issued. Therefore the condition of approval that referenced "before construction begins" was flawed.

A discussion ensued about the Board's role in both P&Z and administrative approvals.

The Board ultimately wanted the architect and the owner to come back to present the changes and answer questions, which would give the Board some more control over the final product. They felt the whole process had gotten away from them, especially because the applicant never came back to the Board with their interpretation of the comments, as was a condition of their approval.

Mr. Cloudas was concerned that the photo Mr. Clark brought of the construction site did not seem to match up with the rendering that was being presented.

Mr. Caico made a motion to recommend that the project proceed with the application of exterior finishes on the west and south sides (the sides that do not face the road) of the building, but that the owner and architect return to present the new modifications before the rest of the work proceeds. Ms. Kyprianou seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Mr. Cloudas made a motion that what will be presented to the Board be a true representation of what is out in the field. Mr. Caico seconded. All were in favor.

The Board wished to have the next meeting on Monday, December 16th at 7 p.m., location TBD, depending upon the availability of the architect and owner.

With the “Application” portion of the meeting complete, Mr. Clark rejoined the Board.

Minutes

Mr. Clark moved to approve the minutes of September 24, 2019. Ms. Kyprianou seconded. Both were in favor and the minutes were approved.

Mr. Caico moved to approve the minutes of November 12, 2019. Mr. Cloudas seconded. Both were in favor and the minutes were approved.

Adjournment

Mr. Cloudas requested that at a future meeting (not next week), the Board discuss the state of the DAB application draft. Mr. Caico added that he would like Mr. Benson or Deputy Director of Planning Rob Sibley present.

Mr. Cloudas made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Kyprianou seconded. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Christine O’Neill, Clerk*