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ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

December 11, 2023

The Architectural Design Review Board held a Regular Meeting on Monday, December 11, 2023 at 6:00pm at the Stonington Board of Education Administration Building, 40 Field St, Pawcatuck. Attending were Chairman Michael McKinley and members, Breck Perkins, Leslie Driscoll, Christopher Delaney, and Elizabeth Brummund. Also present was Town Planner, Clifton Iler. Member Mark Comeau was absent.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm.

October 16, 2023 Minutes – Mr. McKinley noted that the Board had not had adequate time to review the minutes. Approval will be tabled until the next meeting; no vote taken.

ADRB 23-07 – Review of an Affordable Housing Project submitted pursuant to C.G.S. 8-30g. Proposal consists of 113 single-family housing units and associated site improvements. Properties located at 207, 215 & an unaddressed parcel on Liberty St., Pawcatuck. Assessor's Map 16, Block 4, Lots 12, 12A & 13. Zone LS-5. Applicant & Property Owner – Fair Housing of Connecticut, LLC.

Sergio Cherenzia introduced the revised plan set. The project reduces the number of dwelling units from 113 to 102 single-family townhomes. Updated site improvements include revisions to stormwater management per the Town Engineer's requirements, increased open space, a walking path between units, and sidewalk allocations along Liberty Street. The following questions were raised:

- Ms. Driscoll asked the color of the pavement and walkways. Gene Arganese, Property Owner said likely brown or grey stamped to delineate drive aisles.
- Mr. Perkins remarked that grass may not grow between the abutting rows of units. Mr. Wheeler said a shade grass seed mix will be planted. The pathways between rows will be of a pervious material or stone dust.

Josh Wheeler, Landscape Architect, introduced the updated landscape plan. In the northeast corner there is a 45x28 open space. In the southwest corner there is a 0.25 AC open space. Trees were added along the street frontage pending DOT approval. A naturalized plant schedule and shade seed mix is recommended. The following questions were raised:

- Mr. Delaney asked if there was a deterrent to stop children from going onto Route 2. Mr. Wheeler answered that no fences are planned with the project, but the HOA would be responsible for programming open spaces and could construct fences as necessary.
- Mr. Perkins asked about site lighting. Mr. Cherenzia stated an updated photometric plan will be provided.

- Mr. Perkins asked about the grading and the slope of the units on the eastern edge. Mr. Cherenzia stated that the grading varies, with some units having an at-grade exit and others having a second-story exit. The Board requested updated cross sections of that area.

The Board continued their discussion on the project. Mr. McKinley reiterated the concerns from the previous meeting and stated the updated plan set did not address functional issues with layout, massing, etc. Mr. Arganese responded stating the affordable housing process (and statute) requires all units to be designed the same, making it impossible to adjust building massing. The reduction of units was in response to the Board's request for more open space. Ms. Driscoll, Mr. Perkins, and Ms. Brummund reiterated that the project is not aesthetically pleasing and may be subject to blight, damages, and other issues after construction.

Motion by Ms. Brummund to table this project to allow the applicant to revise the application; seconded by Mr. Perkins; voted 5/0/0. Mr. McKinley instructed Town staff to provide the applicant with the recommendations from the previous meeting (see below).

At the October 16, 2023 meeting, the Board provided the applicant with the following directions on creating a revised site plan:

- There should be more green space for the residents/community members.
- The landscaping plan should be elevated to include more variety in between units and along Liberty Street.
- The building massing and building layout should be revised to address the repetitive linear configuration.
- The site plan should include a sidewalk or a delineated pedestrian space.
- The plan set should include various sections and elevations depending upon the grade/topography.

ADRB 23-08 – Review of a Neighborhood Development District (NDD) Zone Change/Master Plan application. Proposal consists of 124 multi-family residential apartments, 10,000 square feet of commercial space, and 30,000 square feet of commercial recreation space. Properties are located at 85 Voluntown Road and 455 Liberty Street, Pawcatuck; M/B/L: 18-1-36; 18-1-33-A. Properties are located in the HI-60 Zone. Applicant/Property Owner: RCP Waterford II, LLC & Readco Stonington III, LLC.

John Casey, Applicant's Representative, introduced the project and the project team. Michael Leach, Principal Owner, introduced the project's objective: A zone change application to the Neighborhood Development District (NDD) to create 124 apartment units, 10,000 SF ground-floor commercial, a pickleball and community center, relocation of the existing bank, and increased landscaping and green spaces. The project will be a joint venture with the YMCA.

Orazio Cifolelli, Architect, introduced the design style, renderings, and façade mix and design details. The following questions were raised:

- Ms. Driscoll asked for samples of siding to be provided with the Site Plan Application (SPA).
- Ms. Driscoll asked about the plans for the pickleball and community center building. Mr. Leach stated that the YMCA will do the design for the pickleball facility for the SPA, while the community center elements will be designed by the project team. The Board suggested changes to include adding more windows, continuing the entablature across the building, and redesigning the old movie theater's split pediment.

- Ms. Driscoll and Ms. Brummund recommended the applicant use a deeper color palette from the shown watercolor design rather than the renderings. Mr. Cifolelli concurred.

Motion by Mr. Perkins to approve the Zone Change/Master Plan application; seconded by Mr. Driscoll; voted 5/0/0.

Motion made by Mr. Perkins to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Ms. Driscoll; voted 5/0/0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10pm.

Respectfully Submitted By:

X

E. Jenny Brummund
Secretary

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