

**ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
September 14, 2020**

The Architectural Design Review Board held a virtual meeting via WebEx on Monday, September 14, 2020 at 6:00PM. Attending were members, Michael McKinley, Mark Comeau, Christopher Delaney, Leslie Driscoll, Breck Perkins and Alternate, Elizabeth Brummund. Also present was Town Planner, Keith A. Brynes. Member, Christopher Thorp was absent. Chairman McKinley called the meeting to order at 6:02PM. Ms. Brummund was seated. Mr. McKinley welcomed new member, Breck Perkins, to the Board.

ADRB20-05 Review of Planning and Zoning Commission application PZ2018SUP & CAM - Special Use Permit and Coastal Area Management Review applications for the redevelopment (change of use) from Automotive Service/Gas Station to Restaurant. Proposal includes demolition of existing structure, parking, stormwater management, utilities, and associated landscaping. Property located at 32 Broadway Ave., Mystic. Assessors Map 174, Block 19, Lot 1. Zone LS-5. Owner/Applicant: G Development, LLC.

Discussion was continued from the 7/13/20 meeting. Mr. Comeau recused himself from this application. As was discussed at the last meeting, Mr. Comeau would not present the application but would be available to answer any questions. Project engineer, Sergio Cherenzia, presented changes to the site plans. Mr. Delaney asked about changes to the architectural plans. Mr. Comeau described changes to the building design which incorporated the Board's previous recommendations and simplified the design. The main exterior material is revised to white ship lap siding, rather than brick or Prodema wood siding. Ms. Brummund stated that she preferred the brick in the design. Mr. Delaney stated that the 3D renderings may distort certain dimensions and that some additional color would be welcome. Mr. Comeau replied that the scaled elevations are a more accurate depiction. The 3rd floor height is slightly lower than the other levels. Brushed concrete at ground level will utilize anti-graffiti treatment. The elevator was moved to the rear of the building. Ms. Driscoll stated that the new design lacks an intuitive public entrance. Mr. McKinley added that it is important to develop a sense of pedestrian scale at the ground level and connect to the street. Elevated building construction in flood hazard areas is the new reality and designers should make the best of it. The Board discussed using white brick as a design element. Mr. Delaney recommended adding interest to the tower with a wall sign. Mr. Comeau stated that the planted screen proposed for the rear of the property could also be used on the tower along with banners. Mr. Perkins asked about ADA accessibility and lighting the understory of the building which might spill out excess light. Mr. Comeau stated that the handicap parking space will be located close to the elevator.

Mr. Comeau described the proposed planted buffer screen which is a tall wire fence with ivy grown up throughout. This will mask the rear adjacent building. Mr. Cherenzia described other landscaping proposed. Ms. Driscoll noted that the screen would block the windows of the adjacent building. Mr. Comeau responded that it could be designed to not block windows. Mr. McKinley asked about the lack of plans prepared by a landscape architect which was requested at the last meeting. Plans should reflect the mature trees on the street and reinforce site edges. A landscape architect will be brought on board. Mr. Perkins noted that trash receptacles under the building might cause odors.

Mr. McKinley summarized the Board's main points and stated the Board would like to see modifications return for review. No motion on the application was taken.

1. Plans prepared by a landscape architect are required along with a presentation of landscape design concepts.
2. The Board encourages the architect to add a front facing entry and enclosure wall at the ground floor.
3. The Board would like the architect to consider brick, perhaps white, for the 1st floor exterior material.

4. The Board recommends adding height to the 3rd floor.
5. The Board encourages the Planning and Zoning Commission to give some relief to parking because of the unique attributes of this site.

Ms. Driscoll motioned to close discussion on this application; seconded by Mr. Delaney. Motion was approved 5-0.

ADRB 20-06 Review of Planning and Zoning Commission Application #PZ2017SUP - Special Use Permit application for the development of an 82-unit residential apartment building with 70% of the units leased as affordable housing pursuant to CGS 8-30g. Proposal includes parking, stormwater management, utilities, and associated landscaping. Properties located at 27 West Broad St. & 15 Coggswell St., Pawcatuck. Assessors Map 1, Block 4, Lots 18 & 19. Zone PV-5. Applicant: Winn Development Company LP. Owner: Frank DeCiantis, Trustee & Frank DeCiantis.

Mr. Comeau rejoined the Board. Attorney, William Sweeney, introduced the development team and the application. The applicants are proposing a 5 story, 82 unit apartment building on the site of the former Campbell Grain Elevator in Downtown Pawcatuck. This mixed-income development is proposed under Section 8-30g of CT General Statutes which allows affordable housing developments to be exempt from normal zoning requirements. The lower level will include a parking garage. A total of 93 parking spaces are proposed inside and out. The proposal will revitalize this blighted and underutilized site.

Project engineer, Paul Vitaliano, presented an overview of the site. The building is built into the hillside along the railroad tracks. Pedestrian connections are extended from Coggswell St. to the riverfront and the building. Landscape architect, Eric Bednarek, presented landscaping plans. Plantings are mostly native with others chosen for durability. Small trees are located directly in front of the building. Public riverside walkway will include benches and a lawn area. An upper level patio for residents will utilize the former railroad track abutment as an overlook terrace. Existing boulders will be reused to support the terrace. A public access easement will be granted to the town which will accommodate future plans for a pedestrian bridge across the river and any future greenway plans.

Architect, Jay Szymanski, presented the building plans which were informed by the previous structure and mill buildings in the area. The building's location was based on site constraints and amenities. A goal was to break up the long façade with a progression of colors towards the river and subtle cornice lines. Rooftop mechanicals will be largely hidden from view due to the building height and placement on roof. Main exterior material is fiber cement lap siding with varied exposure by section. White accent panels break up the design. Metal panels will be used on the ground floor level. The building is not very visible from W. Broad St. despite its size.

Ms. Brummund praised the development and its reflection of area mills. Vehicular speeds should be slowed down in the alley way to protect pedestrians. Ms. Driscoll stated the exterior material should be brick if the design is referencing mills and that the design appears institutional. The project is too big and dense for the site. Mr. McKinley stated that despite the proposal's affordable housing status, the Board should review and offer comments to the Planning and Zoning Commission like it would for any project. Mr. Perkins asked for a building cross section and is concerned with the overall height. Mr. Comeau stated that the building has a hospital appearance and could use articulation around the windows more variation in materials. Mr. Delaney stated the cornice could be continued or developed more. Mr. McKinley recommended enhancing some of the building jogs and asked whether some of the exterior sections could be varied in height. The main exterior materials could be extended down to reduce the grey material on the ground floor. A covered walkway could also enhance this area. Mr. Sweeney noted that the Campbell Grain Elevator building tower was up to 70' tall. Mr. Szymanski stated that a design goal was simplicity. Windows can be revisited. The building was designed to conform to FEMA floodplain requirements. They can consider extending down the siding material to break

up the ground floor elevation. Brick might be used instead of the metal panels. Mr. Sweeney stated that the applicants were open to revisions to the ground floor façade.

Mr. McKinley summarized the Board's comments. No vote was taken. The Board requested that the application return with revised plans to their 10/19 meeting.

1. Recommend using brick material to get closer to referencing historic mill construction.
2. Recommend introduction of simple window trim and/or cornices.
3. The Board felt that the design needed more work to avoid an institutional character.
4. Request building cross sections.
5. Recommend further study of the entry façade to provide pedestrian scale and aesthetic introduction of brick at that level.
6. Recommend studying roofline variations, especially where mechanicals are located, and adding articulation along the entry façade.

Ms. Driscoll motioned to close discussion on this application; seconded by Mr. Delaney. Motion was approved 6-0.

Review of Meeting Minutes:

Ms. Brummund motioned to approve the 6/8/20 and 7/13/20 meeting minutes; seconded by Mr. McKinley. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. McKinley stated that developments and/or subdivisions featuring duplexes should also be reviewed by the Board. These are not under the Board's purview in the Zoning Regulations. The Board will draft a letter to the Planning and Zoning Commission requesting this change.

Mr. Perkins motioned to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Ms. Driscoll. Motion was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 9:27PM.

Respectfully submitted,


Keith A. Brynes, Town Planner