

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
July 29, 2019

The Architectural Design Review Board held a meeting on Monday, July 29, 2019 at 6:00PM at Stonington Town Hall, 152 Elm Street, Stonington, CT.

Attending were members, Mark Comeau, Susan Cullen, Christopher Delaney, Leslie Driscoll and alternate, Elizabeth Brummund. Members, Michael McKinley, Christopher Thorp and were absent. Also present was Town Planner, Keith A. Brynes.

Acting Chairman, Susan Cullen called the meeting to order at 6:05PM.

Discussion of PZ1916ZC Mystic Seaport Museum (C. Frost) – Master Plan / Zone Change application for changes to current Maritime Heritage District (MHD) properties/structures, including construction of 2 buildings for a Science & Exploration Center and demolition & reconstruction of a restaurant with a boutique hotel. Properties located off Greenmanville Ave., Rossie St., Williams St., & Bruggeman Pl., Mystic. Zone MHD.

Chad Frost, landscape architect, gave an overview of the application which would update the Seaport's existing Master Plan with several individual projects. The Seaport has been part of the Maritime Heritage District (MHD) since 2005 when its initial Master Plan was approved. The applicants are looking for preliminary feedback from the Board prior to their Planning and Zoning Commission hearing. This Master Plan Amendment involves 12 separate projects of varying size. The most significant of these will require additional information regarding building design and other features. It is expected that these will need to return to PZC and the Board for Master Plan approval. Only conceptual approval and preliminary feedback is sought at this time for these projects.

The first of the significant projects consists of demolition of the Latitude 41 restaurant building and replacement with a maximum 45' tall restaurant / 26 room hotel building. Gross floor area will not be much larger than the current building. The existing restaurant was built in the 1960's and is not a historic structure. The building needs substantial repairs which will trigger current FEMA requirements. The new building will be setback further from Rt. 27 with small 1 or 1.5 story liner buildings closer to the road to continue the streetscape. Vehicular access to the new building will be from the existing easement over the Town's Mystic River Boathouse Park property. This driveway is currently the loading area for Latitude 41.

The second significant project is construction of a new Science and Exploration Center adjacent to the existing Williams Mystic Building in the south parking lot. Buildings will house the non-profit Global Foundation for Ocean Exploration and will not be open to the public. Construction will include two 1.5 story buildings with a footprint of 6,000SF. Preliminary building designs mirror the appearance of the Williams Mystic Building. Ample buffers, landscaping and grade changes make the buildings mostly hidden from the surrounding residential area.

Other smaller projects include:

- Signage will be updated with a net reduction of square footage.
- Expansion of the Galley food service building.
- Interior renovations to the Rossie Mill to create additional exhibit space.
- Temporary relocation of the Mayflower tent to be behind the Rossie Mill for artifact storage during construction. The tent will be smaller than its current height.
- Handicap ramp for Clift Block building.

- 14' x 24' Catboat Shed expansion for exhibit space / boat building classes.
- Gazebo demolition – previously removed due to safety issues.
- Sale of 41 Greenmanville Ave. – Plan acknowledges sale; property remains in MHD under private ownership.
- Additional solar panels on roof of Rossie Mill (not visible).
- Relocation of North & South Heads (restrooms); north heads to be demolished and incorporated into new restaurant/hotel building. South heads to be relocated and reconstructed to be more usable to visitors.

Attorney John Casey, representing the Seaport, asked the Board for any initial feedback. Mr. Comeau stated that the Town should not be overly concerned with height. 45' should be acceptable for the hotel/restaurant with good design. Ms. Driscoll stated that the new hotel is in unique setting surrounded by the Thompson Exhibit Building, Rossie Mill, proposed Boathouse Park building and the river and the design should reflect these. Mr. Frost stated that the new hotel / restaurant building will likely require less parking due to fewer restaurant seats and the small size of the hotel. Ken Wilson, Facilities Manager for the Seaport, stated that the new Science and Exploration Center will have approximately 10 employees. Mr. Delaney stated that the existing restaurant building is imposing on Rt. 27 and the recessed location of the new building will improve the north entrance to the Seaport and possibly offer additional river views. Mr. Comeau stated that traffic calming measures could be used to slow traffic. Mr. Frost stated that street trees will be added in this area.

Mr. Comeau motioned to endorse the Master Plan as submitted; the Board looks forward to reviewing the application as it comes back in pieces. Motion seconded by Ms. Cullen and unanimously approved.

Review of Meeting Minutes

Ms. Driscoll motioned to approve the draft 6/10/19 minutes; seconded by Mr. Delaney. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Comeau motioned to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. Delaney. Motion was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 7:14PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Susan Cullen, Secretary