

MELROSE PLANNING BOARD
Regular Meeting & Public Hearing
Monday, January 11, 2010
7:45 p.m.
Mayor's Conference Room

PRESENT: Mike Cassavoy, Richard Connolly, Ed Cassidy, Bob Mercado, Gerry Marcus, John Sadowski, Anne DeSouza-Ward, Tom Pawlina, and Carla Francazio

Denise Gaffey, Planner, and Matt Hennigan, Assistant Planner, were present.

The meeting was called to order at 7:50 p.m. by Mr. Connolly.

MINUTES

a) Draft Regular Meeting & Public Hearing, November 23, 2009

Mr. Cassavoy MADE a MOTION to accept the minutes of November 23, 2009. Mr. Cassidy SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

BOARD OF APPEALS

Case 09-032, 51 Melrose Street, Clearwire

Mr. Connolly observed that no one was in attendance to present the application. Ms. DeSouza-Ward MADE a MOTION to move the case to the end of the agenda. Mr. Cassavoy SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

Case 09-034, 42-44 Howie Street, Zavarella

The Applicant, Mr. Zavarella, was present to describe the application to the Board. After a detailed evaluation of the Applicant's proposal by the members, Mr. Pawlina MADE a MOTION to send a letter to the Board of Appeals that noted the Planning Board reviewed and commented on the same request in January, 2009 and have attached their letter dated February 3, 2009 in connection with Case #08-029 as the Board found these comments to be applicable to the present case. The Board discussed the safety issues involved with the application. Several members felt that safety would be enhanced by permitting the lower aluminum door that is scheduled to be removed in order to conform to the Building Code. Mr. Mercado SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

SITE PLAN REVIEW

SP-09-005, 478 Main Street & 40-42 West Foster Street, TD Bank (public hearing)

The Applicant's Representative, Patrick McAvoy, was present along the Engineer, Bill Goebel, the Architect, Chris Nowicki, and the Traffic Engineer, Bob Vanasse, to describe the application to the Board. Mr. McAvoy stated that the bank building was constructed in the 1920s and that the Applicant has tried to preserve the building's appearance in its present state. Mr. McAvoy indicated that the only change to the exterior of the building that is proposed involves signage, which is presently under review by the Historic District Commission. Mr. McAvoy stated that the proposal also includes the creation of leasable space within the building. Mr. McAvoy explained that the "Free Press" building is proposed to be demolished to make way for a parking lot and a drive through canopy. As a result of comments from the City, Mr. McAvoy stated that the "bail out" lane for the drive through has been eliminated and that the bank parking lot will offer access to the adjacent municipal parking lot (Larrabee Lot). Mr. McAvoy reviewed the zoning relief that is required for the project. Mr. McAvoy highlighted the benefits of the proposal

which include maintaining the banking use, bringing a quality business to the City, adding parking to the downtown, and creating access to the Larrabee Lot.

Mr. McAvoy turned the presentation over to the Engineer, Bill Goebel, to review the site plan with the members. Mr. Goebel explained that the drive through will include two teller lanes and offer customers the convenience of banking without having to park. Mr. Goebel, described the canopy as a clear, flat deck that will include photovoltaic cells. The parking lot will consist of twenty "head-in" spaces. Mr. Goebel indicated that a bike rack has been added to the site plan and reinforced that the "bail out" lane is no longer proposed. Mr. Goebel stated that modifications to the fencing adjacent to the Police Station have been recommended by the Police Chief. Mr. Goebel described the drainage improvements associated with the proposal that shall include the addition of catch basins on the north side of the site that will collect storm water runoff associated with the paved portions of the site that slope toward West Foster. Mr. Goebel stated that they have no issue with the comments from the Superintendent of Public Works memorandum dated January 5, 2010. Mr. Goebel expressed that the Applicant does not want to clutter the parking lot and as a result is not proposing any parking signage. Mr. Goebel pointed out that the green space along West Foster Street will not feature any fencing so as not to block the landscaping. Mr. Cassidy commented regarding the proposed drainage and was assured that oil traps will be included. Mr. Mercado pointed out that Applicant's plans lack a detail for the catch basin.

The Applicant's Traffic Engineer, Bob Vanasse, presented the Traffic Study to the members. Mr. Vanasse stated that the driveway for the parking lot is approximately 180 feet from the intersection of West Foster and Main. Mr. Vanasse stated the traffic signal at the intersection is set for a 70 second cycle and added that the Level of Service (LOS) at the intersection shall remain at an LOS C as result of this project. Mr. Vanasse shared the count information that was collected for the Study and commented that all traffic is going to be local. Mr. Vanasse stated that the drive through lanes have been designed to handle the projected queues. Mr. Vanasse shared that Fire Chief and the Police Chief expressed a need for emergency signal pre-emption at the intersection, which will be included as part of the Applicant's proposal.

Mr. McAvoy introduced Chris Nowicki to highlight the architectural elements of the project. Mr. Nowicki stated that he is sitting in for Joe Nevin and handed out plans that include minor updates. Mr. Nowicki stressed the importance of adding signage that will not permanently damage the building. Mr. Nowicki explained that the incorporation of signage as part of the proposed window improvements will accomplish this goal. Mr. Nowicki added that the signage will include small LED light fixtures. Mr. Nowicki described the drive through canopy as a light and airy steel structure that they intend to construct to LEED Silver certification standards. Mr. Nowicki explained that the drive through canopy will include photovoltaic panels that will supply 17% of the building's electricity.

Mr. McAvoy presented the proposed waivers.

Mr. Connolly opened the public hearing up to comment for the public.

Judy Clark, 106 West Foster Street.

Ms. Clark stated that her main concern is traffic. Ms. Clark pointed out that that significant traffic is generated by St. Mary's School at the intersection of West Foster and Myrtle.

Pete Regan, Board of Directors for the Knights of Columbus, 23 West Foster Street

Mr. Regan expressed an interest in the parking plans associated with the application and how the proposal would impact the Knights of Columbus.

Mr. Connolly summarized the letter received by the Board from a member of the public, Todd Burne.

Mr. Connolly asked the members for their comments. Mr. Sadowski stated that some of the character of the building is lost as a result of changes to the windows proposed by Applicant. Mr. Sadowski questioned whether the number of signs proposed by the applicant is necessary. Mr. Sadowski stated that he felt that the Board should defer to the Historic District Commission in respect to the windows and signage. Mr. Sadowski questioned if the new roof top units would be anymore visible than the equipment that is presently in use. Mr. Cassidy stated that the loss of the full extent of the vertical windows detracts from the grand expression that the present windows have on the street. Mr. Cassidy added that he is not in favor of the proposed signage in the windows, but stated that it more acceptable than a one large sign. Mr. Cassidy viewed the Applicant's signage proposal as a late 20th century approach to an early 20th century building. Mr. Cassidy asked for additional clarification concerning the signage and the associated lighting. Mr. Nowicki explained that the signage will consist of a metal panel built within the proposed window system that will be lit with very small LED light fixtures installed at the top of each sign. Mr. Nowicki added that a warm LED color will be used.

Mr. Pawlina suggested that permeable pavement for the parking lot should be considered due to the loss of green space on the site. Mr. Pawlina expressed a concern with cars queuing up on West Foster as they turn into the parking lot as a result of congestion created by vehicles parked in the four spaces closest to the entrance to the parking lot. Mr. Goebel explained that the Applicant is interested in creating as much as parking as possible and added from a customer convenience perspective the spaces identified by Mr. Pawlina are the closest spaces to the building. Ms. Marcus expressed concern regarding vehicles exiting the parking lot onto West Foster Street. Mr. Vanasse acknowledged that the queue on West Foster Street is longer than it needs to be and shared some information regarding the splits/cycle at the signal at West Foster and Main. Mr. Vanasse expressed that he felt that the signal split could be examined more closely and possibly take a little bit of time from Main and give it to West Foster. Mr. Vanasse also suggested a Do Not Enter sign at the southern entrance to the parking lot could be installed to allow only bank customers the ability to exit the parking lot onto West Foster. Mr. Cassidy expressed that increasing the parking in the area is good news and cautioned against the urge to over-manage the access and egress to the parking lot. Ms. Francazio asked for more information concerning the Applicant's parking policy. Mr. Goebel indicated that there is no formal policy and that the proposed parking is intended for bank patrons during bank hours of operation. The Architect confirmed that the Applicant will be seeking LEED certification for the building and the canopy. Mr. Cassidy asked for the Applicant to present an alternative lighting fixture for the interior of the site that is more appropriate to the Historic District. Mr. Mercado confirmed that snow shall be privately be hauled off the site if it becomes an issue.

Mr. Connolly reviewed the requested waivers with the members.

Mr. Mercado MADE a MOTION to grant the requested waiver pertaining to parcel lot lines for the proposed project and surrounding parcels. Mr. Cassidy SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

Mr. Cassidy MADE a MOTION to grant the requested waiver pertaining to height and use of all buildings abutting the proposed project. Mr. Mercado SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

The members found the information supplied by the Applicant in respect to infrastructure analysis and transportation management to be sufficient and as a result determined the requests for waivers for these items to be unnecessary.

Mr. Pawlina MADE a MOTION to NOT grant a waiver for Infrastructure Analysis. Mr. Mercado SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

Ms. DeSouza-Ward MADE a MOTION to NOT grant a waiver for Traffic Impact Report – Transportation Management Plan. Ms. Marcus SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

Mr. Connolly reviewed with the Applicant the items to be addressed at the next meeting. These items included:

- a) Presentation of alternative light fixtures for the interior of the site.
- b) Roof top unit detail for the bank building.
- c) Notation on the Site Plan that will show access between the bank parking lot and the Larrabee Lot.
- d) Additional information to evaluate the traffic signal timing sequence at the intersection of West Foster and Main.
- e) Use of permeable pavement and/or the introduction of an infiltration system to mitigate the loss of green space.
- f) Response, as needed, to comments in the Staff Report and DPW memo.

Mr. Cassavoy MADE a MOTION to continue the public hearing to January 25, 2010. Ms. Francazio SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

BOARD OF APPEALS

Case 09-032, 51 Melrose Street, Clearwire

The Applicant's Representative was not present to describe the application. The members evaluated the Applicant's proposal. Mr. Pawlina MADE a MOTION to send a letter to the Board of Appeals that stated the Board noticed several of the same deficiencies that we identified in Clearwire's recent proposal for 340 Main Street, as noted in the attached letter. Some of the deficiencies include proposed antennas that appear to extend beyond the wall of the penthouse greater than the 12 inch maximum permitted by the Zoning Ordinance and a lack of digital imagery that would show the appearance of the installation as viewed from the street. We urge the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) to review these issues with the Applicant's Representative. In addition, the Planning Board is available to meet with the Applicant's Representative to revisit the application at an upcoming meeting. Without the benefit of the Applicant's Representative to explain the details of the proposal, we are unable to recommend this application. Mr. Sadowski SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed.

Mr. Mercado MADE a MOTION to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Cassavoy SECONDED the MOTION. All voted in favor. None opposed. Meeting adjourned at 10:30 PM.