

## WALPOLE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 2, 2020

A meeting of the ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS was held remotely via Zoom on MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2020 AT 7PM. The following members were present on the Zoom Webinar:

John Lee (Chair), Susanne Murphy (Vice-chair), Bob Fitzgerald (Clerk), Jane Coffey, Drew Delaney, Dave Anderson, Ashley Clark (Community Development Director)

Also Present: Judi Barrett (40B Consultant); Amy Kwessell (Town Counsel); Sean Reardon (Tetra Tech); Robert Woodland (Tetra Tech)

Lee opened the meeting at 7:00 PM

### **Case No. 03-20, 55 SS LLC., 51-53-55 Summer Street, Comprehensive Permit:**

Lee opened the hearing and stated that the purpose of this meeting is to hear from the applicant and his team as they present their revised plans that were submitted on October 21, 2020. Present was Dave Hale (Omni); Leslie French (Omni); Katie Enright (Howard Stein Hudson); Brent Mangel (Mangel Architects); Kenneth Cram (Bayside Engineering). The following revisions were presented;

**Katie Enright (Howard Stein Hudson)**: stated that most of the revisions to the plan are related to the reduction of the environmental footprint, with the goal of making the project more environmentally sensitive, including;

- moving the project out of the riverfront area
- reduction in the number of multifamily buildings from 4 to 2 w. bldg. height to 6 floors
- reduced overall single-family footprint by converting 14 singles to 7 duplexes
- Increased distance between buildings and increased/ redesigned amenity area
- Improved internal circulation; Reduction of 20 parking spaces on the surface, and increased underground parking
- Relocation of the vernal pool next to roadway B
- Introduced 6 studio-apartments into the multifamily area
- Adjusted driveways/ intersection to address safety concern raised by Tetra Tech
- Revised product mix with no impact to traffic (still 300 units total)

#### Revised breakdown:

-Multifamily: 6 studio; 108 one-bedroom; 78 two-bedroom

-rental town homes: 26 two-bedroom; 26 three-bedroom

-ownership: 13 two-bedroom stand alone; 29 three-bedroom stand alone; 6 two-bedroom duplex; 8 three-bedroom duplex

**Brent Mangel (Mangel Architects)**: reiterated that the change on site is an increase of open space by decreasing the footprint of the buildings from 4 to 2 and increasing the buildings to 6 floors.

- Relocation of club house creating just under an acre of greenspace
- 6 floor buildings will only appear to be 45 ft. in height due to entrance to project being 20 ft. higher in grade
- Project is more pedestrian friendly due to: decrease in footprint; properly located sidewalks; reduced pavement area for driving; a portion of the mature vegetation to remain on site and appropriately separated; majority of the housing is located to the rear of the site making it less visible from the public ways

**Kenneth Cram (Bayside Engineering)**: discussed the data he has collected and future calculations relating to traffic and vehicular circulation, which included the following;

- traffic impact & access study performed pre-COVID
- traffic counts done originally in September November 2019

- data collected for weekday AM & PM commuter peaks & avg. to max. vehicle queues; crash history; pedestrian volumes; Gillette Stadium traffic mgmt.; estimated trip generation/ distribution for development; level of service for signalized and un-signalized intersections

**David Hale (applicant):** stated the following:

- project will generate additional trips, however it will not generate significant safety issues or failures of any of the existing infrastructure.
- committed to joining the Neponset Valley Transportation Mgmt. Assoc. upon occupancy (to help arrange prominent commuter transportation to the train station, etc. that are aimed at reducing traffic)
- committed to providing funding in the amt. of \$131,625.00 (upon issuance of bldg. permits) on the same per market basis as Liberty Station and 95 West St. toward offsite infrastructure such as;
  1. sidewalk along north side of Summer St. btwn. railroad crossing and Neponset St.
  2. installation of flashing equipment at the crosswalk in front of the Boyden School-*Hale stated that there are few children that walk to Boyden School.*
  3. speed to be reduced on Washington St. (lacking traffic counts there to do that)
- concern that if Omni contributes to offsite infrastructure, it should directly relate to the priorities in the neighborhood.

**Sean Reardon (Tetra Tech) Peer Review:**

- in favor of consolidating the units into less bldgs. that are taller.
- 4 traffic related issues still outstanding:
  1. impacts of the project on the triangle intersection (analysis of intersection fails in the AM and PM; going from a C to an E in level of service)
  2. concern re: people leaving site onto railroad
  3. needs a more pro-active approach to solving pedestrian issues relating to children walking and traffic other than a sidewalk installation
  4. general concern re: single access point onto site

**Robert Woodland (Tetra Tech) Peer Review:**

- vehicle queue spillage during peak PM times on Summer St. will prevent vehicles from clearing out of other side streets, creating a cascade effect ;level of service projected to go from a C to an E (pushing capacity of system while resulting in longer queues)
- proposed installation of traffic signal by applicant is not an ideal solution
- suggests:* striping and signing at intersections to prevent vehicles from blocking the intersection
- other solutions: rethinking of geometry- up to and including closing off streets to simplify the flow, or creating a circulation movement such as a round-about to better handle the flow, or one way directionality at the triangle
- need:* solution to solving the capacity constraints at triangle intersection and alleviate flow; w. enhanced pedestrian access to Boyden school

Lee asked the Board for their comments based on the presentation, the following comments were made;

Murphy: concern re: timing of traffic counts as they do not include the start time of school; stadium event impact still not addressed. -*Hale stated he is not responsible for stadium events.*

Fitzgerald: concern re: lack of pro-active traffic mitigation measures; warrant analysis questions; MEPA review; question re: contribution to offsite mitigation regarding how much the total cost of the 3 mitigation measures applicant is proposing will cost altogether, and how much does he anticipate the municipality

contributing.- *Hale stated that he is unsure of how much the municipality will contribute and also how much the 3 mitigation proposals will cost in its entirety, however believes that his contribution would cover ¾ to 2/3 of the total cost.*

Coffey: concern re: impact of development; lack of pro-active safety mitigation

Delaney: concern re: construction traffic & sequence; safety mitigation re: construction of development; no lighting plan; no photometric study

Lee: bldg. elevations; below grade parking; elevator rooms & HVAC on top of bldgs.; wetland crossings

**Sean Reardon (Tetra Tech)**: 1. At no time did peer review request that a warrant analysis be done, and did not recommend or suggest that a signal be proposed. Clarified that peer review specifically asked for mitigation solutions. 2. Asked applicant to submit construction phasing plan that has not submitted to date.

**Judi Barrett (40B consultant)**: concern re: disconnect btwn. Applicant & their consultants and peer review; suggests more cohesive collaboration.

**Amy Kwessell**: agrees w. Judi Barrett and Sean Reardon; traffic mitigation needs to be addressed further; lack of 3-bedroom apartments; project is still in front of Conservation; has reached out twice to applicants counsel and has not received a reply

Murphy motioned to continue the hearing to **11/5/20 at 7PM via Zoom**, seconded by Coffey, roll call vote: Lee-aye; Murphy-aye; Fitzgerald-aye; Coffey-aye; Delaney-aye. The motion carried 5-0-0.

**Minutes**: Fitzgerald motioned to accept the 10/28/20 minutes, seconded by Murphy, roll call vote: Lee-aye; Murphy-aye; Fitzgerald-aye; Coffey-aye; Delaney-aye; Anderson-aye. The motion carried 6-0-0.

Murphy motioned to adjourn, seconded by Coffey, roll call vote: Lee-aye, Fitzgerald-aye, Coffey-aye; Murphy-aye, Delaney-aye, Anderson-aye, the motion carried 6-0-0.

**The meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM**

Accepted 11/9/20