

## WALPOLE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 5, 2020

A meeting of the ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS was held remotely via Zoom on THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 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: Cliff Boehmer (Davis Square Architects)

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 hearing is to hear comments from the Towns Peer Reviewer regarding the revised plans submitted, and also to hear from the public regarding the applicants presentation on 11/2/20. Applicants Leslie French and David Hale from OMNI Properties were present.

Peer Reviewer Cliff Boehmer reiterated to the board that the original site plan submitted by the applicant was too constricted, as large buildings were tightly placed together with no organizing element, along with an unideal internal pedestrian environment, with building views were overlooking parking lot. Boehmer then gave a breakdown of his review of the revised plans submitted by the applicant, which included the following comments;

- revised plans have made strides with the pedestrian path, making the development more pedestrian friendly
- there's still an absence of a landscaping plan, landscaped roadways and parking lots are important and would benefit from trees. Extra space could provide a more inviting and pleasant place to live
- development is isolated, and proposed height of the 6 floor building and architecture could work as long as it worked internally within the development
- a lighting plan is important, a redistribution of open space would be ideal, such as larger portion of the open space dedicated to public use
- overall: *most* of the large issues have been addressed

Lee opened the hearing up to the Board re: Cliff Boehmers review of revised plans, the board had the following questions and comments;

- Delaney: how is the 6 story building vs. the 5 story building relevant to the neighborhood?  
Boehmer: 6 floor buildings are disconnected and discreet from the rest of the neighborhood of buildings of less height. Therefore, if the layout and architecture can work internally within the development, it could be acceptable.
- Lee: how does this 300 unit development fit into South Walpole? Since the South Walpole community currently has a total of 312 residential addresses.
- Boehmer: outside the realm of his expertise, however stated that it puts a strong emphasis on infrastructure, and whether the local infrastructure can support the proposed development.
- Fitzgerald: what percentage of the project should be dedicated to useable open space? Is there a general design standard you would apply regarding to the quantity and usability?
- Boehmer: no set standards unlike traffic, etc. one metric is looking at the population and how many people you think will be living there, the ages, and the housing type.
- Murphy: 3-D model would help facilitate the ZBA and the public grasp the development layout and visualize what it would look like.
- Boehmer: 3-D models are extremely common to submit by the Applicant to the ZBA and Town and are advisable

Lee opened the hearing up to the public for comment, which included the following;

- JoAnne Mulligan: recommendations from Conservation are outstanding and public hearing is still ongoing; there was no presentation to S&W by the applicant; the development is too dense and the safety of the development itself is less than ideal with multiple hazards; South Walpole is rich in history; proposed 6 floor multi-family buildings are not aesthetically pleasing; concerns over Fire Dept. having adequate access to tall buildings; development is unique in a problematic way; questions regarding hearing on Monday; would like to see the project downsized due to density and safety concerns.
- Bill Hamilton: the one access point to the development, along with increase in train activity will increase the probability of life-threatening accidents; Hazardous cargo can cause a safety hazard; area is sensitive relating to the watershed; concerns of the possible use of pesticides and fertilizer.
- Erica Burdon: how is making duplexes with a shared living space giving families more living space?
- Boehmer: it creates more open space, and since they are side by side houses it creates the option of the residents to privatize and create their own space.
- Erica Burdon: Boyden school drop-off times has existing traffic; traffic study done by applicant is inaccurate; stresses that the proposed mitigation by the applicant is insufficient.
- Becky Litvak: triangle intersection, stadium traffic and railroad traffic will be majorly impacted due to the possibility of 600 cars being added from the development; would like the two 6 floor buildings to be eliminated to decrease the impact of the development on the surrounding neighborhood.
- Mark Major: major concerns about traffic and safety; traffic study presented on Monday was skewed and does not accurately reflect reality; proposed sidewalk will be cutting into his front yard.
- Julie Lowre: major concerns with one entrance/exit; fire safety concerns.
- Rosemarie Pileski: concerns about water contamination; traffic safety and backup concerns around the Boyden School area.
- Lori Swafford -Falter: development will have an impact on the entire Town relating to traffic.
- Marissa Falcone: size and scope of the project does not fit South Walpole; wildlife impact; impact the project will have on Boyden School; questioning specific dates the traffic studies were done- believes one of the studies was done on Veterans Day of 2019; concern over the other projects that have been built in Walpole not being filled to capacity.
- Robyn Link: questions about stretch building code and passive housing.
- Fergal Gildea: traffic study presented on Monday is inaccurate; safety concerns related to the railroad.

Murphy motioned to continue the hearing to Monday 11/9/20 at 7PM via Zoom, seconded by Coffey, roll call vote: Lee-aye; Murphy-aye; Fitzgerald-aye; Coffey-aye; Delaney-aye; Anderson-aye. The motion carried 6-0-0.

**Minutes:** No minutes were accepted at this time

Murphy motioned to adjourn, seconded by Delaney, 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 9:00 PM**

**Accepted 12/2/20**