



ARCHITECTURAL AND SITE DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE APRIL 27, 2022 SPECIAL MEETING

The meeting commenced at 5:00 PM in Meeting Room A, 2nd floor, Town Hall and Via Zoom.

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Brian Davis, Chairman, Debra DeVries-Dalton Vice Chairman, Mark Branse, Secretary, Jeff Kamm, Amy Luzi, and Bob Shipman; Rebecca Augur, Director of Planning & Land Use Services, Gregory Foran, Parks Superintendent/Tree Warden and Jonathan E. Mullen, AICP, Planner

Excused: David Flinchum

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order at 5pm.

400 HEBRON AVENUE – in connection with proposed change of use to specialty grocer, construct appurtenant delivery/refuse area and employee parking for grocer on west side of building utilizing 366 Hebron Avenue & 7 Linden Street – Town Center Zone – Jonathan Sczurek, Megson, Heagle & Friend, C.E. & L.S., LLC – Mark Vertucci, Fuss & O’Neill, Inc. – Andrea Gomes, Hinckley, Allen & Snyder LLP - H374, LLC (Allan Schwartz), applicant

Attorney Andrea Gomes explained that the design team tried to incorporate as many of the ASDRC’s comments from the April 17, 2022 meeting into the revised plans. Attorney Gomes stated that the some of the comments were outside the purview of the ASDRC. She also stated that the comments on matters within the ASDRC’s purview did not provide the development team with much direction. However, the applicant did make changes to the plans including increased landscaping, a redesigned addition and changes to the gate.

Project architect Carmello Rosa explained the architectural changes. He stated that the addition was stepped back from the front of the building by 2 ½ feet. The height of the addition was reduced from 19 feet to 14 feet by changing the design of the entablature. Mr. Rosa then stated that the brick water table was extended around the addition to the south side and the faux window as reduced in size and backlit. He stated that the gate for the Hebron Avenue entrance was redesigned. Mr. Rosa then stated that the rooftop mechanicals would be screened by the parapet wall.

Thomas Gracefa, landscape architect for the project explained the changes to the proposed landscape plan. He stated that each of the existing concrete patios were reduced by 400 square feet. The newly created space will be used for more landscaping. He then stated that the existing boulders along Hebron Avenue were moved to the corner of Hebron Avenue and Linden Street. Behind the boulders will be a landscaped berm that will screen the loading area. Mr. Gracefa then stated that a mix of columnar maples and “green giant” arborvitae will be planted 8 feet apart along the southern side of the loading area to provide a buffer for

the neighboring properties. He then stated that there would be a mix of multi-stem shrubs and bushes along Hebron Avenue to create three-season interest. Mr. Gracefa stated that the applicant will cut into the slope at the southern side of the loading area and install a retaining wall to save the 40-inch maple tree located there. Mr. Gracefa then stated that sky pencil holly would be planted to screen the mechanicals. Mr. Gracefa explained that the gate at Hebron Avenue will be angled away from the street.

Jonathan Sczurek, project Engineer stated that the site plan had been updated to reflect the proposed changes.

The committee discussed the changes to the project. They then drafted and unanimously approved the following motion regarding the proposal.

MOTION - The Architectural and Site Design Review Committee forwards the following recommendation to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission regarding application of H374, LLC for a Section 12.9 Minor Change – 400 Hebron Avenue, 366 Hebron Avenue
Updated 4-27-22

Findings:

The Architectural and Site Design Review Committee (ASDRC/the Committee) does not agree that the proposed project is a minor amendment under Section 12.9 of the Glastonbury - Building Zone Regulations (the Regulations). The proposed demolition of two existing buildings and the location of a parking lot and loading dock at the corner of Hebron Avenue and Linden street, and the lineal extension of what is already a long flat wall and roof line are very major changes and require the full review process of a Special Permit with Design Review. This is also the Town Plan an Zoning Commission's first application under Section 4.19, Town Center Village District Overlay Zone (TCVD/the District), which entails an entirely new level of and scope of review, which its own separate criteria and jurisdiction. Part of that jurisdiction expressly includes review of demolition of existing buildings, as well as color.

The Committee finds that the entire site is under review per Section 12.9, and not just the proposed building addition and its surrounding area. While the ASDRC realizes that it would be unreasonable to require substantial change to a completed site, there are improvements that can and should be made to the site to bring more into conformance with the objectives of the TCVD and Section 12.

The applicant has excluded signage. The Committee shall review a sign package when proposed.

Recommendations Concerning Applicable Zoning Regulations Sections:
Town Center Village District Overlay Zone Criteria:

4.19.4 Objectives.

All development in the TCVD shall be designed to achieve the following objectives:

- a. The building and layout of buildings and included site improvements shall reinforce existing buildings and streetscape patterns and the placement of buildings and included site improvements shall assure there is no adverse impact on the district;
- **The proposal is inconsistent with existing buildings and streetscape patterns and the placement of buildings and proposed site improvements adversely impact the District.**
 - Commentary:

The demolition of 366 Hebron Avenue, and the substitution of a large gate, 3 large curb cuts, and parking; plus the linear extension of the flat wall and roof of the existing does not reinforce the desirable building and streetscape patterns, and it will clearly have an adverse impact of the District. This ASDRC was formed in part due to the public reaction to this “gateway” location that welcomes residents and visitors to the Town. This building could be located anywhere in the country and is not in keeping with what we would have wanted if we were reviewing it in advance. This is an important corner on an important street, and one of the most important locations in Town, with a marginal design. Now, the applicant seeks to take another corner site and turning it into a loading dock, trash storage area, and parking lot. This is not the kind of architecture or planning that would be allowed in any traditional village in New England. What’s done is done as far as what exists, but this proposal will make it worse. To add vibrancy to the Hebron Avenue streetscape windows shall accommodate displays (but should not simply become a vehicle for signs).

- **The Committee supports the architectural changes to the building as proposed.**
- **The applicant should reevaluate the proposed site access and configuration from Hebron Avenue and Linden Street.**

- *Commentary*

The grades will be such that adjacent residential properties will be looking down into the proposed commercial loading area.

A commercial loading facility is a completely inappropriate use for this important location and runs counter to the design criteria so clearly defined in the TCVD. Recommend smaller size delivery vehicles be used for the proposed .29 acre area to facilitate circulation

The applicant's own presentation shows the façade of Highland Park Market, which is far more compatible with Glastonbury's traditional architecture. The existing and the proposed building display none of that. This is a strip mall building in a town that is not a strip mall town. While recognizing that the building exists, it is not appropriate for its location, so the challenge is to make a small addition compatible with a building that is not compounding a mistake that has already been made. The house at the corner of Linden Street and Hebron Avenue could be a gem of a retail use, and it provided interest for the westerly side of the site. Two things that this site had going for it was the corner building and Linden Street and the street life that restaurants could provide, but now both of those elements are proposed to be removed. The Committee notes that the landscaping has been a focus because we are trying to screen something that should not be at the corner to begin with. A gate is not welcoming and we question if it will remain functional

- **A sightline study shall be performed to illustrate motorist and pedestrian views from public spaces, particularly from the traffic circle, and in terms of not only rooftop HVAC but also the Linden Street/Hebron Avenue corner, the Route 2 off ramp and other key locations.**
- b. Open spaces within the proposed development shall reinforce open space patterns of the district, in form and siting;
- **The proposal is inconsistent with the open space patterns of the District in form and in siting, and proposed site improvements adversely impact the District.**

- *Commentary*

The site essentially has no open space at all, and the small yard areas of the two homes to be demolished will be destroyed and occupied by a parking lot and a loading dock/storage area. The applicant stated that the site is very tight for a grocery store, but applicant needs to design in accordance with the District Objectives and the criteria of Section 12.

- c. Locally significant features of the site such as distinctive buildings or sight lines of vistas from within the district, shall be integrated into the site design;
- **The proposed improvements do not reflect locally significant features of the site such as distinctive buildings or sight lines of vistas from within the district, and are not integrated into the site design.**

- *Commentary*

The removal of the existing building at 366 Hebron Avenue will erode the fabric of the street, i.e. traditional rooflines, scale, rhythm, texture and character. It opens the loading and parking area to public view despite the proposed landscaping.

- **Any gate solution should not look like a fence.**

- *Commentary*

The rolling fence will not screen the view from Hebron Avenue and the two overly wide curb cuts on Linden Street will not allow screening from that street for west-bound traffic on Hebron Avenue. The view from Hebron Avenue will be of a gate and not the existing retail building that was an adaptive reuse of an existing home that is part of the Hebron Avenue streetscape that leads people to the Town Center. But basically, there shouldn't be a curb cut in that location at all.

- d. The landscape design shall complement the district's landscape patterns;

- The proposed landscaping does not promote pedestrian friendly use or activity or a village feel.

- *Commentary*

Consider adding rhythmic shade trees to the ornamental planting scheme proposed. The modular block retaining wall has no landscaping, though it could support some kind of climbing plant material; and the striped area at the southerly area of the parking lot could and should be landscaped.

- e. The exterior signs, site lighting and accessory structures shall support a uniform architectural theme if such a theme exists and be compatible with its surroundings;

- **The applicant has yet to submit a sign application package.**

- f. The scale, proportions, massing and detailing of any proposed building shall be in proportion to the scale, proportion, massing and detailing in the district.

- **The proposed project is not of appropriate scale, proportion, massing and detailing for the District.**

4.19.5 TCVD Design Guidelines

The Town Council shall develop Village District Design Guidelines for review by the Commission and ASDRC, and adoption by the Council. Such Guidelines may establish sub-districts. The Guidelines shall include design criteria to achieve the compatibility objectives stated in Section 4.19.4.]

- **Not applicable yet**

4.19.6 General Requirements

The following shall be considered in all development proposals requiring a zoning permit, site plan approval or special permit and in accordance with Section 4.19.3 within the TCVD:

- a. That proposed buildings or modifications to existing buildings be harmoniously related to their surroundings, and the terrain in the district and to the use, scale and architecture of existing buildings in the district that have a functional or visual relationship to a proposed building or modification;
 - **The proposed buildings and modifications are not harmonious with their surroundings or the terrain of the site.**
- b. That all spaces, structures and related site improvements visible from public roadways be designed to be compatible with the elements of the area of the village district in and around the proposed building or modification;
 - **The lack of a Hebron Avenue building entrance also discourages pedestrian circulation, and that is something that should be added.**
- c. That the color, size, height, location, proportion of openings, roof treatments, building materials and landscaping of commercial or residential property and any proposed signs and lighting be evaluated for compatibility with the local architectural motif and the maintenance of views, historic buildings, monuments and landscaping;
 - **See comments above.**
- d. That the removal or disruption of historic traditional or significant structures or architectural elements shall be minimized.
 - **The proposed design removes a traditional structure from a very visible corner at the gateway to the District. The applicant has surplus parking and it is possible to retain the existing Hebron Avenue house while providing a driveway and perhaps limited parking to the rear, especially if the Linden Street building is removed.**

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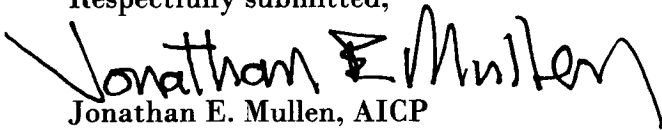
OTHER COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Illuminated awnings shall be reviewed as part of the signage package.
- Screening should be composed of a mix such as Vanderwolf Pine, American Holly, White Spruce or Blue Spruce. All plant materials should consider salt and wind tolerance.
- The applicant should develop a maintenance plan for all landscaping.

- Eliminate some of the parking spaces along the block wall and plant large trees.
- Invasive plant species shall not be included in the project plant list (such as Vinca).
- The Committee recommends a tree assessment for the existing maple on Linden Street to determine the most appropriate course of action.
- The residents across the street will shop here, but they will have to walk entirely around the building because there is no door on Hebron Avenue.
- The island along Linden Street; the Committee is not addressing traffic flow, but is addressing the inability to screen the loading area because of the curb cuts to accommodate truck deliveries.
- Changing from a restaurant use to a grocery store is a change that triggers design issues, and that is why the Committee is addressing it. This change of use will change the feel along Hebron Avenue.

Meeting adjourned at 9:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jonathan E. Mullen, AICP

Planner