

## **THE GLASTONBURY ARCHITECTURAL & SITE DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 2023**

The Glastonbury Architectural and Site Design Review Committee, with Shelley Caltagirone, Director of Planning and Land Use Services; Gary Haynes, Planner; and Greg Foran, Tree Warden/Parks Superintendent, in attendance, held a Regular Meeting at 5:00 P.M in the Council Chambers of Town Hall at 2155 Main Street with an option for Zoom video conferencing. The video was broadcast in real time and via a live video stream.

### **1. ROLL CALL**

#### **Commission Members Present**

Ms. Debra DeVries-Dalton, Vice Chairman

Mr. Mark Branse, Secretary

Mr. David Flinchum {*participated via Zoom video conferencing*}

Mr. Robert Shipman

#### **Commission Members Absent**

Mr. Brian Davis, Chairman

Mr. Jeff Kamm

Ms. Amy Luzi

Vice Chairman Dalton called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

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### **2. 45 CANIONE ROAD, HERBERT T. CLARK HOUSE – proposal for a new tree garden – Planned Area Development (PAD) – Linda DeGroff for Hill and Dale Garden Club – Greg Foran for the Town of Glastonbury**

Neil Griffin, Executive Director of the Glastonbury Housing Authority (GHA), stated that the GHA has partnered with Hill and Dale Garden Club (HDGC) on this project. Linda DeGroff, a member of the HDGC, explained that they seek approval for additional plantings on a garden bed at the Clark House, which is an assisted living/congregate community. In 1998, they planted three gardens, which members maintain. After COVID, extra funds were available, so they decided to add another garden along the entrance wall. However, the extra funds were not enough, so they applied for a grant, which they received. Their goal is to add visual interest while keeping maintenance at a minimum. The proposal will have a positive impact on residents.

Mr. Shipman thinks that the beeches will be a great addition. Ms. Dalton likes the color scheme and the columnar look of the trees. Mr. Flinchum stated that the Brandywine Viburnum should be at least 6 to 8 feet from any foundation and the Blueberry Delight should not have wet feet, but there are several downspouts along this area. Mr. Griffin said that they have never experienced puddling of water, but he is unsure about the downspout installation which was done before his time. Ms. Dalton added that the stone area keeps the trees away, and there will also be a root guard, which helps. Ms. DeGroff remarked that they landed on the Brandywine because they liked the color.

**Motion by:** Mr. Branse

**Seconded by:** Mr. Shipman

MOVED, that the Architectural and Site Design Review Committee forwards a favorable recommendation to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission for the proposal of the Hill and Dale Garden Club for new plantings at the Herbert T. Clark House at 45 Canione Road.

**Result:** Motion passed unanimously {4-0-0}.

**3. 55 WELLES STREET, THE SHOPPES AT FOX RUN – proposal for façade and landscaping changes – Town Center Zone (TC) – Jeannot Pelletier for CoorEp Inc. – Meg Hope for Alter & Pearson**

Attorney Hope explained that this project was approved in 2020 as a Section 12.9 Minor Change; this approval has expired. The applicant did receive an extension, but that too, has expired. That proposal is almost identical to tonight's proposal, which hoped to achieve three things:

- Unify the multiple building spaces;
- To reduce the existing double-lane, one-way circulation on the east side to 20 feet and allow two-way traffic. This paved reduction could be used for substantive landscaping improvements next to the building; and
- The complete renovation of the second story office.

Mr. Branse asked, when the construction drawings were submitted, did they comply with the approval in 2020. Ms. Hope replied no, which is why they are here today.

On the west facade, the proposal is to remove the upper leaf trim and to keep the existing base of the engaged pilaster. The biggest change is the siding color from the approved khaki to the proposed gray. The trim at the top of the windows will be white instead of brown, and they will remove the wood pergola canopy detail off the six windows because of cost. She clarified that the biggest change from the 2020 approval to the current proposal is to the easterly building. Before, they were proposing to eliminate the canopy. Now, the canopy will stay as is, but the siding will be updated so that it matches the other portions of the building.

The landscaping plan has not changed at all. In 2020, the Beautification Committee wanted additional trees for shading, which they included, with benches. Mr. Branse stated that there used to be a row of shade trees in that courtyard area, directly in front of the building, which reached maturity and blocked the signs, so they were taken down. This was inappropriate because those signs were meant for pedestrians, not drivers, who could see the signs once they entered the shopping area. To remove trees again would be to make the same mistake. He does not support cutting down any more trees.

Mr. Shipman would like more trees even if they are shorter in height. Mr. Flinchum is a strong proponent of keeping every tree, especially if they were part of the original proposal. He has not heard a good justification for those trees to be removed. He agrees with Mr. Branse that signage is better served at the street and that it can be scaled down once one comes into the shopping center. He is concerned with the changes he is hearing now versus the changes that were proposed in 2020.

Ms. Hope said that there are four existing trees at the plaza. When they started this project in 2020, there were four trees, which they proposed cutting down, then replanting. Mr. Foran stated that linden trees are not native and tend to have issues. He suggested a better alternative for the streetscape. Ms. Hope's recollection is that the Littleleaf Linden is what the Beautification Committee approved, but the applicant is open to more native species. Regarding the tree the applicant intends to put in, Ms. Dalton recommends something with more shade than a columnar tree. Mr. Branse believes that the architectural details are being cheapened and reduced to save money. He has no issue with keeping the canopy on the east side, which the applicant stated is the biggest cost-saving measure.

Ms. Caltagirone noted that this proposal lies in the village district, so it requires a recommendation from the ASDRC. Mr. Branse read a motion for denial as a heads up for the applicant to make changes before meeting with the TPZ next month.

**Motion by:** Mr. Branse

**Seconded by:** Ms. Dalton

The ASDRC recommends denial of the proposed minor amendment to the Shoppes at Fox Run Mall as currently proposed for failure to conform with the standards and criteria in the Village District Overlay Zone, Section 12 of the Glastonbury Building-Zone Regulations, for the following reasons:

1. The ASDRC is aware that plans were approved by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission in 2020, but despite being described as a minor amendment, the application is now subject to the heightened review of the village district criteria.
2. This property has repeatedly been required to plant shade trees, which upon reaching maturity, have been cut down. On at least one occasion, cutting was without approval by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission and included both trees in the plaza in front of the building and trees planted in islands in the parking lot. In the most recent incident, new trees were planted but take years to approach maturity. This application again proposed to cut down large mature trees in front of the building and replace them with cherry trees that will be very small when planted and will remain small even at maturity. Trees that have died or been removed along New London Turnpike have not been replaced. The applicant indicates maples or oaks will be planted, if not already there, to establish a row of street trees forty-foot on-center, but this is not shown on the plans. The addition of trees is encouraged, and not one more tree should be cut on this property. The applicant says that trees block the signs, but those signs were never intended to be viewed from Welles Street. They are pedestrian-scale signs to be viewed once a patron is already in the parking lot.
3. Businesses are intended to promote their location in the Shoppes at Fox Run Mall, which has a road-oriented sign along Welles Street and at the intersection of New London Turnpike.
4. In terms of architecture, the applicant's proposal is confusing as to what was originally approved when Whole Foods entered the plaza; what was approved in the 2020 minor amendment application; and now the current proposal varies from those earlier proposals. For example, the plans submitted for review indicate that the clock is to be removed from the clock tower but verbally the applicant stated that it would be retained. The numbering

system utilized to show changes from previously approved to what is proposed are inconsistent and confusing.

5. Overall, the committee finds the proposed changes are inferior to the most recently approved plans: deleting facade details, such as the clock in the tower, per the plans but not the presentation, the removal of granite facing on the pilasters, elimination of the top window pergola trim features, elimination of the wood pergola at the office entrance and other details. The applicant's explanation for these changes is to reduce cost, but this is a commercial facility at the core of the Town Center and should be a focal point of the Town Center's character. The Town Plan and Zoning Commission has never accepted cost as a reason for inferior design before the village district, with its heightened level of review, was adopted. Developers must accept costs that are associated with ownership of retail commercial property. Each of the individual changes are not by themselves substantial. The committee is not committed to any single one, but cumulatively, they appear to reduce the architectural detail of the building.
6. The committee supports the change from two one-way driveways on the east side of the building to two-way driveway movement.
7. The committee supports the retention of the portico at the Mattress Firm as proposed.
8. The committee is optimistic that the applicant will give due consideration to these recommendations and allow the commission to approve the modified proposal.

**Result:** Motion passed unanimously {4-0-0}.

**4. 2815 MAIN STREET, PEOPLES BANK – proposal for a new building and site work – Flood Zone and Planned Business Development (PBD) – Kathryn Mease for Tecton Architects – Meg Hope for Alter & Pearson**

Attorney Hope explained that this is the site of the former Raffa's Restaurant building and has been vacant since it was Chikurin, the roof caved in and the building was demolished. Part of the site is in the Planned Business and Development Zone (PBD), and the rest is in the Flood Zone. Current flood zone regulations require the applicant to move the building out of the flood zone and raise it above the 500-year elevation. This stretch of Main Street has been unable to be re-developed because of this regulation. She showed the area in the back that needs to compensate for the flood storage. They propose a curb cut directly across Spring Street. Some trees will be removed for the grading.

Kathryn Mease, Architect and Project Manager, explained the architectural components of the proposal. The siding is white, and the trim is soft gray with blue accents to tie into the bank's branding. Part of the roof is standing seam metal and the other part is asphalt. The canopy will be extended a little to ensure enough coverage for the person using the ATM machine.

Ryan Deane, Landscape Architect from Benesch, explained the planting mix at the building foundation. The site will be lifted, and the southern border will have arborvitae. They are using a New England wetland seed mix. Ms. Dalton likes the selections but would like to mirror the plantings on the north side of the driveway. Mr. Shipman suggested adding a couple of evergreens instead of just grass. Mr. Branse thinks that the southeast corner is a nice location for

additional material. Landscaping along the north side should come farther along the slope. There are three wall signs but only two are allowed, and all three signs are over the 25-foot maximum.

Mr. Flinchum said that all the committee members that are architects are excused tonight, so they will offer their comments on the architecture at the next meeting. The ASDRC's charge is to ensure that the building looks like it belongs in Glastonbury, and he believes that this building looks like it could be anywhere in the US. The wall signs appear too high, and the monument sign is out of scale with the building. He asked if the six-foot chain link screen fence in the back is black vinyl-coated. Mr. Deane replied yes.

## **5. OTHER BUSINESS - *None***

With no further comments or questions, the Vice Chairman Dalton adjourned the meeting at 7:00 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

***Lilly Torosyan***

Lilly Torosyan

Recording Clerk