

THE GLASTONBURY ARCHITECTURAL & SITE DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF TUESDAY, MAY 16, 2023

The Glastonbury Architectural and Site Design Review Committee (ASDRC), with Shelley Caltagirone, Director of Planning and Land Use Services, and Gary Haynes, Planner, 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

Mr. Brian Davis, Chairman
Ms. Debra DeVries-Dalton, Vice Chairman
Mr. Mark Branse, Secretary
Mr. David Flinchum {participated via Zoom video conferencing}
Mr. Jeff Kamm
Mr. Robert Shipman
Ms. Amy Luzi

Commission Members Absent

None

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order at 5:02 P.M.

2. 769 HEBRON AVENUE – proposal for installation of a solar canopy over existing parking – Planned Employment & Flood Zones – Dick Megson, Megson, Heagle & Friend C.E. & L.S., LLC – Rob Liflander, Peregrine Renewable Energy, LLC, applicant

Rob Liflander of Peregrine Renewable Energy, LLC explained that their solar company is building the project for Gemma Power Systems. They will plant two redbud trees, which are native species, along Hebron Avenue. Mr. Branse stated that this is not listed in the plans. Ms. Caltagirone clarified that they received the plans last week and might have gotten them mixed up. Mr. Liflander showed a series of photos, explaining that three locust trees will be removed and replanted. Mr. Davis stated that this is a utilitarian feature, so it should be softened with plantings. Mr. Kamm asked about the structure. Mr. Liflander explained that it will be silver galvanized steel. There will be columns going down the middle of the median between the two columns of parking spots. Mr. Kamm asked if the photo tags will completely obscure the sun. Mr. Liflander stated that there will be full shade underneath the panels. The back of the panels will be dark gray/black.

Mr. Davis finds the landscaping to be an issue. He would like to obscure the structure from Hebron Avenue. Mr. Shipman pointed out that because the right-of-way is unknown, they must be wary of what the state will allow or prohibit for the plantings. Mr. Kamm needs to know more

about the structure's scale. He asked how high this will be above the parking lot. Mr. Liflander stated that the columns are 13.5 feet. The trees to be planted next to the parking lot will grow to about 30 feet tall, but the limbs start at about 5 feet. They will amend the plans to show one tree in the middle and another on either side. Mr. Kamm asked where the dimension is measured from. Mr. Liflander explained that it follows the grade. The 7 single columns will each be 13.5 feet tall. Proceeding north, there will be a slight pitch downward. Mr. Kamm asked about the water collection off the panels. Mr. Liflander stated that, because of the wetlands in the center median, they will excavate 24 inches, and the river rocks will be in the center median. Two lightbulbs will be removed and replaced with 8 lightbulbs below the carport. Mr. Kamm asked if photometrics have been done of the parking lot. Mr. Liflander did not have that information.

Mr. Branse has found several examples of solar canopies online which all use a post and beam look. He does not support the use of high beams here. He suggested looking for something more compatible with this town. Mr. Davis suggested using a wood structure with full cutoff fixtures, to show where exactly the landscaping will be, and to demonstrate how it can soften or screen the proposed structure. Mr. Liflander stated that there are issues with using wood. One is longevity and the other is the strength of the structure. It would also be prohibitively expensive.

Mr. Kamm noted that there is a company in Massachusetts which can galvanize any metal and add a color coating, so the structure here could theoretically be a wood color and not silver. He also suggested evergreen trees instead which are more solid. He agrees with Mr. Davis that the utility structure needs to blend in and be a part of their community. Mr. Davis noted that the plantings do not all have to be the same. Hebron Avenue is one of the most heavily trafficked streets in town, so anything planted along there should be an enhancement. Ms. Luzi asked if they ever paint the underside of the solar panels. Mr. Liflander replied no. He asked what the committee thinks about painting the columns a shade of green or brown. Mr. Branse stated painting the columns does not solve the high beam problem.

The recommendations are to explore the examples that Mr. Branse shared for different structural options; to not replace, one-for-one, the trees at Hebron Avenue to provide better screening; to explore using a heartier tree, such as evergreen; to reach out to the state about restrictions for the plantings; to ensure that the plantings are obscuring eye level views; and to amend the lighting plan. Mr. Flinchum would like to have a variety of planting materials and heights to get an undulating look on Hebron Avenue. This would close the gap while enhancing the structure and even framing it. Mr. Davis asked for the advantages of a single post versus a double post. Mr. Liflander stated that it is the amount of space they have in the rows of parking spots.

Mr. Liflander will incorporate the comments made tonight and meet again in a month.

3. 115 SEQUIN DRIVE – proposal for construction of a ±2,750 warehouse building for material storage with office space for landscaping contractor – Planned Commerce Zone – Matt Stephan, PE for BSC Group – EDI Holdings, LLC, applicant

Mr. Stephan of BSC Group presented on behalf of the applicant. About 2,000 square feet of the proposed construction will be the warehouse and about 750 square feet will be designated

outdoor storage space. The building will be a pre-fabricated metal structure. Mr. Branse finds it odd that there is no landscape plan for a landscape contractor. Mr. Stephan explained that it is a small operation, and the applicant does not want to overextend himself. Mr. Branse cannot think of a building in Glastonbury that is like this and does not have landscaping. He could never support such a plan. Mr. Kamm summarized that the applicant is clearing the entire front of the site ten feet from the property line and regrading from edge to edge. He asked if the retention basin in the front deals with the runoff because of the site clearing or the paving. Mr. Stephan stated it is because of building and paving. Mr. Shipman agreed with Mr. Branse, adding that there is a difference between landscaping and vegetation, so a lot could be done with just a few trees on the property. Ms. Luzi agreed with vegetating the site to a more natural state. Mr. Davis explained that this committee is actively elevating the design components of the town on all levels. There are ways to show that they care about the site aesthetics without spending a lot of money.

Mr. Branse asked about the segmental retaining wall. Mr. Kamm asked what is actually being retained. He does not understand why the site lighting is there because there are no operations on the building. He also does not know the pole fixture height and the kelvin temperature of the light, which need to be detailed. Mr. Davis stated that if a chain link fence is required, he suggested making it black vinyl, and putting it along the retaining wall. Mr. Branse wonders why the whole site is being regraded. Having a retaining wall and then deleting everything around it makes no sense. Mr. Branse asked if there is an architect involved in this. Mr. Stephan replied no. Mr. Davis would like to see something tailored to the site and to the committee's expectations. Ms. Luzi would like to see the materials and the colors used.

Mr. Flinchum has looked at the website and agreed that the applicant does have segmental walls, which gives a good opportunity to minimize the amount of clearing that is necessary. He agrees that they cannot just have typical metal buildings submitted. It must not look so much like a metal box. He agreed with Ms. Luzi on the elevation. By the time this is done, it will be 40 feet above the street entry point, which is about two thirds being cleared on the site plan. The landscape stone masonry company could showcase what can and should be done with tree preservation, especially using retaining walls creatively on the property.

Mr. Kamm agreed that it would be nice for the landscaper to show off their landscaping work on their project. There are foundational blocks for a future landscaper. He noted that the clearing might be for a business reason, but the committee does not know. He asked to clarify this. Mr. Davis finds it a challenge is to reconsider the site to creatively show off the retaining wall and some trees, while also not making the building a purely metal block.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Luzi has sent an email about a prior application that was reviewed by the committee, which has two tones of beige, but the applicant was limited to one beige tone. She would also like to have a compliance system in place to check in on previous applications. Ms. Caltagirone stated that it was in process prior to her arrival to town. Weekly permit compliance meetings have begun. If committee members come across any issues they would like addressed, they can email

Town Staff. She also announced that Seon Altius is the Planning Technician working with the Zoning Enforcement Officer. Mr. Branse asked the Town Attorney to check the bond format because there is a lot of variances in practice.

With no further comments or questions, the Chairman Davis adjourned the meeting at 6:30 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lilly Torosyan

Lilly Torosyan

Recording Clerk