

THE GLASTONBURY ARCHITECTURAL & SITE DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2023

The Glastonbury Architectural and Site Design Review Committee, with Shelley Caltagirone, Director of Community Development, 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

Committee Members Present

Mr. Brian Davis, Chairman

Ms. Debra DeVries-Dalton, Vice Chair

Mr. Mark Branse, Secretary

Mr. Jeff Kamm

Ms. Amy Luzi

Mr. Robert Shipman

Mr. David Flinchum (participated via Zoom video conferencing)

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

2. 55 NYE ROAD – proposal for a change of zone from Planned Employment to Residence A and a Planned Area Development (PAD) for 11.33± acres on the north side of Nye Road, for between 60 & 70 residential units in 8 duplex units; 6 four-unit buildings, 3 eight-to-ten-unit buildings, with 2.55± acres proposed to be dedicated as open space and .82± acres for a conservation easement – Glastonbury Housing Authority, applicant – Final/Advisory Review

Ms. Caltagirone provided an update and added that the project is still in the design refinement phase. She said that Mr. Neil Griffin, Director of the Glastonbury Housing Authority, was not available to attend and added that questions can be forwarded to him.

Mr. Tom Arcari of QA+M Architecture introduced the team and provided an overview of the changes made to the plans. Mr. Ryan Deane of Alfred Benesch & Company explained that the units were reshuffled to incorporate the changes and improvements as well as moving buildings further away from the upland review area. The location of the detention basin changed and was pointed out on the plans. Mr. Deane said that they adjusted the turning movements and islands. The proposed light fixture was displayed. Mr. Deane stated that it is a sustainable LED fixture with full cutoff. The proposed open space areas, the pedestrian walkway and the community building were shown. Mr. Deane noted that they added more trees and plantings based on the comments made at the last meeting. He also stated that they have added islands where they could and have extended the trail. Mr. Deane pointed out the retaining wall area on the plans. Mr. Arcari said that the number of parking spots was slightly reduced. He explained that they reduced the impervious area. Mr. Arcari provided information on the proposed stormwater system and rain gardens, which will be located in the southwest corner of the site.

Mr. Rocco Petitto of QA+M Architects detailed the materials that will be used, including details on the insulated vinyl siding, engineered thin stone veneers, metal roof, trim, and the windows that are proposed for each of the units. Mr. Arcari said that they incorporated the feedback from the last meeting and the plans reflect farmhouse-style buildings with clean lines that fit in with Glastonbury. He explained that the buildings have a different look which breaks up the scale and adds a unique identity to each building. Covered porches were pointed out. Mr. Arcari explained that the units would have a porch or a rear yard. The second-floor units would have exterior decks. The building renderings were displayed. Mr. Arcari said that the color palate is mostly muted, with white and grey.

He explained that they are still working out the details and added that the site is pretty tight and they would like to try to add a partial basketball court. Ms. DeVries-Dalton noted that it looks like there is room on the plans to add a basketball court. Mr. Arcari explained that they need to maintain the green spaces and added that Mr. Griffin is not a fan of the hardscape. Mr. Shipman asked for the reason. Mr. Arcari responded that there are nearby community parks and they envision it as another neighborhood. He said that making room for hardscape is not a make-or-break and they can look into adding it. There was a brief discussion on whether to add the hardscape. Committee members agreed with the suggestions Ms. DeVries-Dalton and Ms. Luzi made about a basketball court being a useful amenity for the kids who will live in the community. Committee members agreed with Ms. Luzi's comment that a basketball court is more popular than a bocce court. She said that the basketball court can be a half court. Mr. Arcari said that they will update the plans.

Mr. Branse asked about the connectivity of the trail shown on the plans. Mr. Arcari replied that the area has increased in size and that currently it is an open-ended path. Mr. Branse suggested leaving extra space in that area for the trail connectivity to be completed at a later point.

Mr. Kamm said that a retention basin was mentioned in the presentation and that a retention pond was shown instead. Mr. Deane explained that it is a recharge basin designed to hold water which will be gradually released. Mr. Kamm asked if there was a raised berm on-site. Mr. Deane replied yes and provided an explanation of the stormwater system, which includes an outlet control structure with the runoff discharging into a level spreader and plunge pool with the overflow ending up in the wetlands. Mr. Kamm asked if the area would be fenced off. Mr. Deane replied yes and explained that they do not want people falling or risk damage to the system. Mr. Kamm wanted to confirm that there are two dumpsters on-site. Mr. Deane replied yes and pointed them out. There was a brief discussion on detention ponds and mosquitos. Mr. Kamm asked about the grade change on-site. Mr. Deane responded that the site is fairly flat and the grade change is gradual. Mr. Kamm asked if there was a clear demarcation for the front porches. Mr. Dean replied that the porches are not walled off. He noted that the door is in the center and the porches are to the side.

Mr. Davis remarked that he preferred the more traditional light fixture used in the town center. He said that he is not a fan of the transitional light that was shown on the updated plans. Mr. Deane remarked that he also thought the transitional light did not fit and stated that they can replace it with a traditional LED full cutoff light. Mr. Davis asked the applicants to look into mixing up the windows to provide more depth to the buildings. Mr. Deane responded that they

will look into it. Mr. Davis asked the applicants to provide more detailed renderings on the columns. Mr. Deane agreed to provide more details. Mr. Davis asked the applicants to look into a risk assessment about the fence and added that the site would look better without it. Mr. Deane suggested putting in a split rail fence. Mr. Davis said that he would like to see this on the updated plans. Ms. DeVries-Dalton asked the applicants to put in more shade trees on the site, especially the western side. She explained that the quad area will be very hot in summer and suggested for shade trees to be planted near the proposed court and the quad area. Ms. DeVries-Dalton also suggested adding picnic tables near the proposed court area. The applicants agreed.

Ms. Luzi asked the applicants to provide renderings that show all four sides of the building. She directed the applicants to a column on the rendering which blocks the view of a window on one of the units. The applicants noted that they will look into this. Ms. Luzi asked the applicants to identify an area on the plans that was not labeled. Mr. Petitto replied it is outdoor storage and added that this component of the plans has not been finalized yet. Mr. Shipman remarked that he is disappointed that the plans do not include trees and added that he would like to see a lot more trees in the plans. Mr. Shipman said that the plans look institutionalized with everything lined up and all the same distance from the street. He asked the applicants to add in different trees of different sizes to break up the uniform look. Mr. Shipman also asked the applicants to add more trees along the areas near the street to give the site a more residential look. Mr. Deane replied that they plan to add many more trees. Ms. DeVries-Dalton noted that smaller trees can be utilized and added that it is better to have more smaller trees than fewer larger trees.

There was a brief discussion on PADs and the next steps. Ms. Caltagirone said that the application will go before the Town Plan and Zoning Commission and Town Council after the final ASDRC review. There was a brief discussion on the floor plan layouts.

Mr. Kamm said that one of the one-bedroom units has a door in an awkward spot. Mr. Deane remarked that he knows which unit it is. Mr. Davis explained that this is a planned multi-family community, not a single-family residence community, and some compromises have to be made in the design layout. Mr. Arcari said that they are grateful for the feedback and will continue to improve the plans. Mr. Davis remarked that a nice balance has been achieved and added that they would like to see the plans updated to ensure that the buildings do not look the same.

Mr. Flinchum said that he sent comments to the staff. He remarked the he appreciates the renderings. Mr. Flinchum asked if the bus pick-up or mailboxes were discussed. Mr. Arcari responded that they were not discussed and added that the mailbox location is not finalized yet. Mr. Flinchum agreed with the comments made about bocce courts being rarely used. He agreed that a half basketball court is better and added that most people can get a basketball and play a quick pickup game. Mr. Flinchum suggested adding numbered squares to the court to encourage people to play other games. The applicants agreed. Mr. Flinchum brought up the issue of handicap spaces and asked if the parking was assigned. He remarked that handicap spots need to be included in the community building area. Mr. Flinchum suggested putting in benches around the site, including at the major crossing points, to encourage the neighborhood to come out. He asked the applicants to think about putting in dog stations and remarked that it could be a pain for maintenance. Mr. Flinchum noted a fountain is a nice feature in recreation areas. He asked the applicants to add different types and sizes of trees. Mr. Flinchum asked the applicants to add

a protective cover over the doors and explained that it does not look like all the units have this. Mr. Branse remarked that he thinks this affordable housing development will be very attractive. He added that the image of affordable housing is pretty bad design-wise, but such projects can look very nice.

3. 2941-2951 MAIN STREET – proposal of Shops on Main for a revised landscape plan for patio areas – Planned Business & Development Zone – Meghan A. Hope, Alter & Pearson, LLC – Preliminary/Advisory Review

Attorney Meghan Hope of Alter & Pearson, LLC explained that they have proposed changes to the patio and landscape areas. Ms. Hope offered to provide a side-by-side comparison of the plans. Mr. Branse said that the proposal was already approved and asked why there are changes. Ms. Hope responded that the numbers were different when the project was sent to bid. She stated that the approved project went way over budget. Mr. Branse explained that the project was approved based on certain plans. He said that the applicants went ahead with the construction and added that one of the buildings has already been occupied. Mr. Branse asked if the Certificate of Occupancy (CO) has been revoked. He said that the CO should not be issued without completed site work and asked what they were planning to do. Ms. Hope replied that a bond might have to be taken out. She explained that there was a change of use due to a change of tenants. There were also changes to the building 3 façade. Ms. Hope said that former Planner Jonathan Mullen advised them to rerun the calculations based on use and informed them that everything had to be done before the final CO. Ms. Hope stated that, if this does not get approved, they will take a bond out for the full amount of the remaining site work. She added that they will be ready in the spring and they have some time to figure it out.

Ms. Hope said that they are using the same paving materials, and will go over the changes. She remarked that they will look to see if there are any changes that are palatable and can be agreed on. Mr. Davis made the suggestion to focus on the design that is being presented. He said that the fact that there is an approved design should be irrelevant. Mr. Davis asked the Committee to look at the merits of the new proposal. The patio area was pointed out with two tones, a lighter color and a darker color outline. Ms. Hope said that they propose a mix of seating, tables, and benches. She added that large shade trees, evergreens and different shrubs are proposed. Ms. Hope pointed out the light fixture in the center. She said that the plan maintains the sidewalk connection. Ms. Hope asked if there were any questions and offered to display a side-by-side comparison of the plans.

Mr. Flinchum said that this plan comes with a reduction of grass area, a reduction of benches, and reductions in amenities and plantings. He added that, when the proposal was presented, a nice public amenity was proposed to encourage people from the hotel to walk over, sit down, and eat out. Mr. Flinchum noted that the current plan is cut off and only serves the adjacent tenants with no invitation to the public for this space to be pedestrian-friendly. He stated that this plan is a bait-and-switch and said that more connectivity to the adjacent sidewalks is needed. Mr. Flinchum said that, looking side-by-side at the plans, the current plan is a reduction. He added that it looks nothing like the plan that was previously shown. Mr. Flinchum stated that he would not support what is currently being shown.

Mr. Kamm remarked that Mr. Flinchum made some good points. Mr. Kamm said that the area looks closed off and added that he prefers ground cover to grass. He remarked that he hates the 12-foot pole and noted that an 8-foot pole fits the pedestrian scale better. Mr. Kamm said that the entrance is too narrow and suggested a wider entrance. He explained that the way the plans are designed, the green space looks like it is owned by a tenant. Mr. Kamm said that it is a public space and needs to be gracious and welcoming.

Mr. Davis remarked that he does not mind the grass and stated that the light pole in the center is just wrong. He suggested two shorter poles instead. Mr. Davis noted that the area looks somewhat enclosed and added that the area could be confused for a tenant space. Mr. Kamm suggested to double the width of the entryway. Mr. Davis remarked that the space should not be too wide and explained that the plantings maintain a buffer from the parking area.

Ms. Luzi agreed with making the entrance area wider. She suggested for another tree on the western side to shield people from the sun. Ms. Luzi discussed the possibility of signage or something to signal to the public that they are welcome. Ms. Hope said that they are open to this. There was a brief discussion regarding whether signage is needed. Ms. Luzi agrees with the comments regarding the singular light and lack of connection. Ms. Luzi asked if there was paving in the area where the picnic tables are proposed to which Ms. Hope replied yes. Ms. Luzi asked if the bench areas were paved; Ms. Hope responded yes. Ms. Luzi asked if the site would have any walls. Ms. Hope replied that there are no walls, just plantings. Ms. Luzi noted that it was previously discussed that the design would not include colors that the tenants use for their business. She explained that the Fresh Monkey uses yellow and reminded the applicants to avoid this; Ms. Hope agreed. Ms. Luzi suggested adding another tree to the island and putting an additional picnic table on the grass without added pavement.

Mr. Shipman said that he likes Ms. Luzi's idea of adding tables in the grass area. He remarked that he has seen this in other places and it works. Mr. Shipman asked about the maintenance five years from now. Mr. Branse agrees with the other comments regarding the light pole. He also agrees with Mr. Flinchum's comments and added that it is problematic to present different plans to get a quick approval and changing them later in the CO part of the process. Mr. Davis said that the Committee came up with a list of comments and asked Ms. Hope to incorporate them in the plans. He asked if this was a final review. Ms. Hope replied that it is not.

4. 14-18 PARKER TERRACE, 83 & 97 NAUBUC AVE – proposal for demolition and construction of three banquet facilities –Town Center Mixed Use Zone – Corrine Crocker- Luby applicant – Preliminary/Advisory Review

Ms. Crocker-Luby distributed plans and stated that she has owned the Tiffany Juliet House for 10 years. The existing house with blue doors was displayed. Ms. Crocker-Luby stated that the existing shape of the building is rectangular and noted that she would like to keep this shape because it is affordable to build. A historic photo of the building was shown. Ms. Crocker-Luby explained that she plans on removing the addition and displayed the proposed new design. She said that the sidewalk will be retained and displayed the site plan that details the parking and driveway. Ms. Crocker-Luby remarked that she is fond of wraparound porches and pointed out the proposed structure. She noted that a square turret will be added to enhance the Queen Anne

Victorian-architectural style. Ms. Crocker-Luby provided a photo of the existing porch and said that it will be demolished. A balcony overlooking the barn is also proposed. Ms. Crocker-Luby explained that the plans were designed to provide privacy from neighboring structures.

Mr. Davis asked who is doing the design work. Ms. Crocker-Luby responded that she is working with an architect consultant. Mr. Davis said that the plans are a great start and explained that there is a collision of architectural styles and overly majestic elements being proposed. He asked the applicant to re-work the design because a lot is going on. Ms. Devries-Dalton noted that the site is lacking greenery and explained that, fast forwarding 10 years, they do not want other properties to follow the approach of asphalt in front of the house. She asked the applicant to scale back the plans, add more shade trees, and asked if the 6-foot privacy fence is necessary. Ms. Crocker-Luby said that it is actually an 8-foot fence. Mr. Branse asked the applicant to re-work the plans and include information on the intended functions of the space. He remarked that the proposed structure is too much. Ms. Crocker-Luby thanked the Committee for their time.

With no further comments or questions, Chairman Davis adjourned the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nadya Yuskaev
Recording Secretary