

THE GLASTONBURY ARCHITECTURAL & SITE DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 2024

The Glastonbury Architectural and Site Design Review Committee, with Gary Haynes, Planner, 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 {participated via Zoom video conferencing}

Mr. David Flinchum

Mr. Jeff Kamm

Mr. Michael Stankov

Commission Members Absent

Ms. Amy Luzi

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order at 5:08 P.M.

2. 2610 MAIN STREET – proposal for modifications to the approved landscaping – Town Center Zone – 2610 Main LLC, applicant – FINAL REVIEW

Johnny Carrier, a principal with Carrier Properties in Plainville, explained that last year, they came before the committee for a rear line buffer change. Afterwards, they found two existing maple trees in poor condition, which were removed. They have decided to create a buffer with a combination of lower and upper story trees. Their neighbor, the condo association, is seeking additional trees for buffering on their property as well. Mr. Carrier explained that he will adhere to their request by adding another four Armstrong maples on the condo association's property.

Ms. Dalton noted that the purpose of those Armstrong maples is to provide a buffer. However, she would not choose a columnar tree for that, and strongly suggested a shade tree or something wider. Mr. Carrier stated that because of the limited distance from the building and property line, they went with a columnar tree because they feared a wider tree would grow right into the building. The two existing trees that were removed only covered a partial area of the property line so they offset the proposed Armstrong maples on the property line and the condominium property. Ms. Dalton clarified that she is suggesting replacing the trees on the condominium property with shade trees, not columnar trees, as there is more room and would provide a better buffer. She stated that the construction fence is right up against the existing tree. She suggested that it be installed along the drip line of the tree, to protect the roots of that tree. Mr. Carrier acknowledged that it is a tight site but would ensure no trucks or equipment are parked in that area to protect the root system.

Mr. Kamm is annoyed that they removed tall trees, only to plant new ones now that will take years to grow to a mature height. He is finding things here that do not ring true with previous applications; 2.5-inch calipers seem small to him, and he finds the proposed shape of the tree unappealing. Ms. Dalton noted that a smaller caliper tree will grow faster. Mr. Branse asked if the approval was that the trees remain, and they were cut down without approval. Mr. Kamm explained that, in a March meeting, a few arborists looked at existing trees and reported that the trees should be taken down. This committee approved of that removal but required that applicant return with a revised landscape plan for the rear property line. Mr. Carrier added that when construction commenced, he noticed the existing trees were in poor condition and likely to be damaged due to close proximity to the construction of the rear building. Mr. Haynes pointed out that there was original disagreement between the applicant and the condo association on a favorable landscape plan and whether it include fencing or landscape buffer, which is why ASDRC asked the applicant to return to the committee with a definitive solution.

Mr. Kamm asked whether the additions off the side of the main house were supposed to look like they did on the old house. Mr. Carrier replied that the renderings provided at the time did show it that way, and they tried to adhere to it as close to it as possible. Mr. Stankov asked about the previous varietal of trees that they are trying to mimic. Mr. Carrier replied that he does not know. Mr. Stankov explained that he is asking because the site design regulations note that they should attempt to select comparable species. He asked if a columnar maple is comparative to what was there before. Mr. Carrier answered that the columnar maples were not chosen to provide something comparable, but rather, to provide something native; he was strongly recommended to choose Armstrong maples, to provide upper story buffer between the two neighboring properties.

Ms. Dalton stated that there is a difference between a columnar tree and a shade tree, and there is a myriad of tree choices that will provide what is needed. She suggested looking at the function of the tree and replicating it, without choosing the same tree as before. Mr. Carrier would be happy to work with Town staff and the condo association to see what could fit there.

The ASDRC forwards to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission a positive recommendation for the planting plan, as shown.

Result: Motion passed unanimously {6-0-0}.

3. 148 OAK STREET – proposal for conversion of residential dwelling into professional office for Delponte Plumbing with an addition, accessibility improvements and creation of a parking lot – Planned Commerce Zone – John MacFarlane & Rick Morse, JWM Architects LLC – Mark Friend, Megson, Heagle & Friend Civil Engineers & Land Surveyors, LLC - Greg Anapol, applicant – FINAL REVIEW

Mark Friend, engineer and soil scientist with Megson, Heagle, & Friend, explained that they were before this committee in September with a different plan. The plan now is to move the driveway to the north side of the property. Rick Morse, with JWM Architects LLC, explained that the 642-square foot addition is tucked in the rear of the house. He reviewed the floor plan

and photometric plan. Tom Graceffa, landscape architect, explained that there are 12 parking spots in the rear. The existing trees provide good screening, and there is a giant arborvitae.

Ms. Dalton likes that they are saving the existing trees, however, Oak Street is bereft of shade trees. Instead of putting in dogwood, she suggested a shade tree; Mr. Kamm agreed. He asked whether the regulations require screening between a residential and commercial property. In which case, there should be some understory plantings proposed there. He also asked what the distance is from the back of the parking lot to the front of the garage doors. Mr. Friend responded that no customers would park in front of that garage because that parking is intended for employees, and the shortest distance is 40 feet.

Mr. Haynes noted that the applicant will return to discuss the signage plan. There is also a residential-style dumpster enclosure on the south side of the building. Mr. Davis finds the 22-foot driveway to be overkill. While he believes that the building remains on a residential scale, he highly recommends some relief on the width of the driveway; Mr. Branse agreed. He asked whether 22 feet is the minimum required in the zoning regulations. Mr. Friend replied yes. Mr. Branse does not believe that it makes sense on this site. Mr. Davis finds the light fixture to look commercial. He asked to investigate a residential-style light fixture. Mr. Morse responded that the owners want to play both sides of commercial and residential in their aesthetics, so they will look at other options.

Mr. Flinchum agreed with keeping the residential look of this site, which is not a public showroom with a lot of outside traffic. He would like to additional screening of the parking area and a narrower width to the driveway. He also does not support big delivery trucks. Mr. Stankov asked whether the lights were dark sky compliant. He also does not like the driveway, stating that the curvature is weird to him, but he likes the proposed plantings. Mr. Kamm explained that he has ignored the lighting plan because he has not seen it. When it comes in, he will provide his feedback.

Mr. Haynes stated that, at the last meeting, a comment was brought up about providing ornamental buffering. The applicant has tried to do that. He asked if there is still a desire to have a tree to block the second story. Mr. Branse agrees with all the comments expressed tonight. Regarding the driveway, he suggested narrowing the width of the driveway and adding reinforced shoulders which would help give residential scale. He also agrees that they need more parking there. He asked to see if the applicant can connect the parking lot with the parking lot next door, to increase capacity and flexibility.

4. 140 GLASTONBURY BOULEVARD – proposal for window replacement – Planned Area Development – Michele Aponte & Joseph Szerejko for Somerset Square LLC, applicant - FINAL REVIEW

Attorney Joseph Szerejko of the law firm Murtha Cullina represented the applicant, Somerset Square LLC. He noted that Michele Aponte attended a special meeting of the committee last August. Their takeaway was that the committee was not in favor of the preliminary proposal because the proposed replacement windows deviated too much from the wood frame windows

that were designed and installed by Robert Stern. Since then, they have looked at all the available options.

Michele Aponte revamped the presentation from last year's to clarify a few things. She showed examples of the current windows which are no longer energy-efficient. In the front of the office building, the replacement windows are only on the second floor. On the rear of the building, there are a few on the office level. Twenty-four windows are identified for replacement on the second floor of the retail viewing area, with sixty-three additional units in the back of the building, all facing the parking lot, for a total of eighty-seven units. She explained that the aluminum framed windows would be the same but they are not casement. She has also looked into other windows and provided handouts of those to committee members.

Mr. Kamm stated that the old windows had a sense of rhythm and scale, which the new ones lack. Mr. Davis suggested approaching the original manufacturer to provide a window that is very close to the original, which was a beautiful window design; Mr. Branse agreed. Ms. Dalton feels that the original had more depth and believes that the newer version has a cheaper look. Mr. Kamm said that the proposed windows open. He asked how tenants feel about that. Ms. Aponte does not want them to be operable at all. Mr. Stankov stated that the weightiness of the original windows is missing in modern construction. He noted that while the applicant can make the frames as thick as they would like, if it does not create that depth and shadow, and therefore impacts the overall look and quality of the design.

5. Staff Report

Mr. Haynes stated that they held their first ASDRC subcommittee meeting for the application of 3039 Main Street; those plans will be reworked and return. A preliminary plan was also added for 121 Pratt Street for a small addition. Those two applications will come before the ASDRC shortly. He then noted that Town staff is working on a draft ASDRC checklist for the application process.

6. General Discussion *None*

With no further comments or questions, Chairman Davis adjourned the meeting at 7:16 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lilly Torosyan
Lilly Torosyan
Recording Clerk