

Pleasantville Planning Commission

June 10, 2015

The Pleasantville Planning Commission meeting was called to order by Russell Klein, Chairman, at 8 P.M. on Wednesday, June 10, 2015. Attending the meeting were: Russell Klein, Chairman; Scott Blasdell, David Keller, Stephen Harrigan, Philip Myrick and Robert Stone, Commissioners; Sammy Suleiman, Planning Consultant; and Robert Hughes, Building Inspector. There is one vacancy on the Commission. Absent: Mary Sernatinger, Secretary.

- (1) **York Funding, LLC, 98 Washington Avenue**. Proposal to convert the existing mixed-use structure (Mercantile, Office and seven (7) Residential Apartments) into a Mercantile and Residential mixed-use structure consisting of ten (10) one-bedroom apartments and four (4) two-bedroom apartments with seven (7) apartments on each of the second and third floors. Financial overview, as submitted to the Zoning Board of Appeals; revised drawings T1 through A7 by ARQ, HT, LLC dated June 3, 2015. *Continued review*. Present: Jorge B. Hernandez, Architect, and Rose Goldfein of Coldwell Banker.

Mr. Hughes informed the Commissioners that the applicant had received all necessary variances from the Zoning Board of Appeals. He said that in granting the variances, the ZBA took into account that the coverage is existing, and they were not concerned about the density. They discussed the parking and felt that providing 19 parking spaces for 14 apartments was adequate.

Mr. Hughes said the plan had been changed to add windows and allow living areas to have natural light.

The applicant had still not arrived at 8:10 pm, and the Commissioners discussed whether the meeting should be adjourned. Mr. Hernandez arrived and apologized for being late.

Mr. Hernandez noted that he had been before the Planning Commission three times before and modified the original plan to reduce the number of apartments to 14. They were able to provide 19 parking spaces (26 spaces were originally approved, but there was not enough room in the garage to create that many spaces). Therefore, they needed parking variances and went to the Zoning Board and received a variance for 6 spaces. Mr. Hernandez said when the second floor was planned to be retail or office, the parking requirement for the building was greater (26 instead of 25) than it is for having apartments on the second floor.

Mr. Suleiman said the parking requirement for the current proposal is 25 spaces – 1.5 spaces per each one-bedroom apartment and 1.75 spaces per each two-bedroom apartment. The retail space requires 2.5 parking spaces.

Pleasantville Planning Commission
June 10, 2015

Since the second floor was converted into apartments, a variance was also needed, and granted, for density. (7,000 permitted vs 18,000 proposed)

They also got a variance for lot coverage, which was originally approved for 80% and is now 100%. Mr. Hughes said the Zoning Board granted the coverage variance based on the fact that the building is already there. They balanced the points they consider and did not consider it to be a significant factor.

Mr. Suleiman said the current parking layout reflects the review by Frederick P. Clark's traffic consultant, indicating that it is functional as designed, and they do not have any further comments on the parking.

Each apartment will have one designated parking spaces (for a total of 14 spaces), and the three parking spaces required for the retail space would be allocated for the retail use, leaving two additional spaces, one of which is the handicapped space. During the night, the retail spaces would likely be available for use by residents.

Mr. Keller asked if two handicapped parking spaces were required – one for the residential and one for the retail. Mr. Suleiman said he did not know the answer to that but would find out. Mr. Hernandez believed the requirement was one handicapped parking space per 25 parking spaces, and it did not have anything to do with the uses in the building.

Referring to Drawing E-2, Mr. Keller asked if the doorways from the street to the lobby and the lobby to the garage were kept locked and, if so, who would have the keys? Mr. Hernandez said the building's residents and business owners would have keys. Mr. Keller was concerned that people would have to walk on a ramp to get to the door, rather than a sidewalk. Also, someone coming in a wheelchair from the parking area would have to go up a ramp to get to the elevator. And if they go into the retail, how do they get back to the elevator if the doorway is locked? Mr. Hernandez thought they could have an access from the retail to the elevator. Mr. Keller said there has to be a decision as to whether the door will be kept locked and secure or if it will be unlocked and accessible.

Pleasantville Planning Commission
June 10, 2015

Mr. Keller said the ramp to the elevator is as far away from the handicapped parking space as possible.

Mr. Keller did not know how much space is required on either side of a handicapped parking space, but one side of it is too close to the turn coming down the ramp, interrupting the sight line. He suggested the space be moved closer to the column. Mr. Klein thought it would be better to have the handicapped space on the ground floor, but Mr. Hernandez said the proposed location enables access to the elevator. Mr. Klein noted that there would be no security because anyone could walk down into the garage and get access to the entire building via the elevator.

Mr. Stone asked if tenants could have more than one car. Mr. Hernandez said they would only have one reserved space. Mr. Keller suggested parking spaces on the upper level be restricted to two hours maximum during the hours of 9 am – 5 pm. Mr. Stone had concerns about the area, how many cars would be coming in and out of the building. If tenants had multiple vehicles, there could be issues with traffic and where those extra cars would be parked. Mr. Keller did not believe a lease could restrict the number of cars a person owned. This could be particularly problematic, Mr. Klein noted, during the winter months when parking is not permitted overnight on the streets. Mr. Hernandez pointed out that some residents might not have any cars, and they could allocate their space to someone else. Mr. Klein liked the idea of restricting parking during the day to two hours for the 4 non-allocated parking spaces.

Mr. Harrigan asked what would happen if one of the tenants is handicapped and uses that space full time. Mr. Hughes said the State Code requires one handicapped space per 25 parking spaces.

Mr. Keller thought it would be a good idea for the elevator to be secure such that only the residents would have access by swiping a card or using a key. Mr. Hughes said that would be possible.

Mr. Keller also suggested a camera be installed in the lobby.

Pleasantville Planning Commission

June 10, 2015

Mr. Hughes said there are potential fire code issues regarding the retail and residential stairs both emptying into the same lobby. The steps have to go outside of the building. The stairs might have to be reconfigured, or they could seek a variance from the State.

There would not be a super on-site. There is no office for a super.

Other potential State Code issues include windows on the property line and aerial access (wires going to the building) as related to fire fighting. The front of the building has a utility pole, which would interfere with fire fighting and has to be addressed.

Mr. Hernandez said they need to determine what is in the walls. He expects there will be other items they will have to address.

Mr. Hernandez said they redesigned the apartments so that all of the living areas now have outside windows, which are fire-rated windows.

Mr. Hernandez reviewed some of the other changes they have made. They are trying to blend the exterior together to make it more aesthetically pleasing and cohesive, instead of the broken-up way it is now.

The applicant owns the building.

Mr. Keller said the stairwells with regard to fire safety should be resolved prior to Planning Commission approvals being issued. Mr. Hughes agreed this should be reviewed by New York State. Mr. Hernandez said they would discuss this with Erika Krieger.

Mr. Klein said all issues need to be ironed out before a Public Hearing can be scheduled.

Mr. Hughes said they have requested a permit to do exploratory demolition to see what is behind the walls. This will help them understand more of what they are dealing with.

Two of the units would be affordable units – one two-bedroom unit and one one-bedroom unit.

Pleasantville Planning Commission
June 10, 2015

The density with regard to traffic and safety needs to be reviewed.

Public Safety has not reviewed the application yet.

Operational characteristics of the property such as garbage (which will be more with 14 units than it would have been for 7 units).

There are trash chutes. Mr. Hernandez will provide a description of how that works. They can enlarge the mechanical room to accommodate the trash, if necessary. Mr. Harrigan noted that recycling is mandatory so separation will be required. They can't keep trash dumpsters in the basement since the garbage trucks would not be able to get to them, so Mr. Hernandez said pick-up would have to be curbside. Mr. Keller said the collection receptacle would have to be large enough to accommodate garbage from 14 units for a one-week period, because Village pickup only occurs once a week. Mr. Harrigan added that the sidewalk cannot be blocked with garbage.

Mr. Klein asked Mr. Suleiman to request that the traffic consultant look into whether it makes sense to have the handicapped parking space in the basement. Mr. Klein thought it would be better to have it on the ground floor for someone visiting the retail establishment or visiting someone in an apartment. People might not even find it in the basement where it is proposed. Mr. Harrigan pointed out that if the handicapped space were on the ground floor, then the elevator could be completely designated for the residents and could be key activated.

Mr. Klein noted that the doors have to swing out for fire exit.

Mr. Hernandez said they would indicate lighting on the plan and provide a photometrics drawing.

Mr. Hernandez did not believe the retail space would be a bank since it is too small. Mr. Klein recalled that the previous applicant planned for a bank in the ground floor space, and there were issues that had to be resolved regarding lighting for the ATM.

Pleasantville Planning Commission

June 10, 2015

Mr. Hughes said zoning would permit a building to be built to the lot line on the adjacent properties. Mr. Klein pointed out that if that occurred, it would negate the benefit of the windows.

Mr. Klein thought a second window for some of the apartment might be a good idea.

Probably, if someone has more than two cars, they would not want to rent an apartment in this building.

Mr. Hernandez believed traffic would be less intense with residential than it would have been if retail were on the second floor. Mr. Harrigan noted that intensity of use would have traded off during different times of the day if the second floor were retail.

Mr. Klein noted that if someone drives down to the basement and cannot find a parking space, he would have to back all the way out. Mr. Hernandez said they could try to figure out a way to shift the spaces to create enough space to turn around.

Mr. Hernandez believed the wall between the two ramps is solid. Mr. Hughes thought they were guardrail height. The beam is too low, so they have to relocate it to enable larger vehicles to pass under it. The ramp is 20-feet wide on both sides. Mr. Klein thought it might not be necessary to have two lanes for the top area that only has six parking spaces. That would allow for more space in the elevator area. Mr. Suleiman will ask the traffic consultant to look at this.

Mr. Hernandez summarized the issues: parking issues, turnaround, handicapped space, how to maneuver once you are at the bottom, garbage area enlargement, functional plan for garbage and recycling, stairs (he will reach out to Erika Krieger), sprinklers, access from retail to the handicapped space, the direction the doors swing, lighting and the windows.

Where would snow shoveled from the interior be deposited?

Is there ventilation in the parking lot? Mr. Hughes said it is open in the back (on the railroad side).

Mr. Klein said fumes could still accumulate because it's closed on three sides.

Pleasantville Planning Commission

June 10, 2015

Mr. Hughes thought maybe it would be better to eliminate the retail altogether, particularly since it is so small.

Mr. Klein advised Mr. Hernandez that materials need to be submitted 14 days in advance of a meeting and told him that the Commission does not meet at all in August. Once a Public Hearing is closed, the Commission typically discusses any issues brought up by the public and then, once everything is resolved, can vote to direct the Planning Consultant to prepare a resolution.

Mr. Suleiman said that on the parking calculations, where it says 250 square feet, it should say 300 square feet. Mr. Hughes said the plan had been corrected.

Mr. Hughes said the sooner they do exploratory demolition, the sooner they will know what they are dealing with.

(2) **Minutes**

The minutes of the May 27, 2015 meeting were accepted as submitted.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Sernatinger
Secretary

These minutes have been corrected according to corrections from Mr. Klein and are ready to be FILED.