



TOWN OF SWAMPSCOTT

PLANNING BOARD

ELIHU THOMSON ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
22 MONUMENT AVENUE, SWAMPSCOTT, MA 01907

MEMBERS

ANGELA IPPOLITO, CHAIR
GEORGE POTTS, VICE CHAIR
BILL QUINN
JR YOUNG

STAFF

HELEN KENNEDY, SECRETARY
S. PETER KANE, TOWN PLANNER

JULY 13, 2015 MEETING MINUTES

Time: 7:03– 9:15 pm

Location: Swampscott Senior Center, 200 Essex St (rear)

Members Present: A. Ippolito, G. Potts, JR Young, B. Quinn

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Pete Kane (Town Planner), Charles & Mary Patsios (applicant), Walter Jacob (architect), Jerusha Hall (architect), Ibrahim and Darlene Domian (abutters), Richard Smith (architect), John Picariello (resident), Naomi Dreeben (Selectmen Liaison)

Meeting called to order at 7:03 pm by Chair Angela Ippolito.

SITE PLAN REVIEW

PETITION 15-23

120 GALLOUPES POINT ROAD

Architect Walter Jacob displayed the plot plan and handed out illustrations of proposed residence to Board members. He told the Board the area of the property where petitioners want to build the new house. The existing house and driveway will be demolished.

House will have porte-cochere entrance feature and the main body will be one story with kitchen and garage. Additionally, there will be a circular driveway with parking underneath the house. The petitioner may possibly add another driveway. Renderings of the house show views of the structure from various aspects and from Juniper Road at the back of the house.

Chair Ippolito asked about elevations. Mr. Jacob displayed the survey from Faia, showing the existing house. One sheet shows the demolition plans and the other shows the proposed future features. The renderings depict the lower level and the first floor. A. Ippolito: Where is the landscaping plan?

Mr. Jacob: A landscaping plan with a buffer area of small shrubs and evergreens will be added. Additional landscaping will evolve later in the process. Petitioners Charles and Mary Patsios own a nursery.

A. Ippolito asked Mr. Jacob for information regarding a full basement under the house, noting it looks like a big hunk of concrete. Mr. Jacob introduced his associate, Jerusha Hall, telling the Board that she's done a substantial amount of work regarding the elevation. A. Ippolito requested to see the plot plan to look at the elevation. Mr. Jacob

reviewed the distance between the proposed structure and the abutting properties. The proposed structure is set back from Galloupes Point Road by 31 feet.

JR Young asked to review the plot plan. Ms. Hall explained details of the plantings and went over where some of the trees will be removed. Mr. Jacob noted that many of the trees which will be excavated are invasive species. Charlie Patsios remarked that they are unable to determine how much dirt is between the root and rock.

A. Ippolito was concerned about problems with runoff that could result from the removal of the trees. It was noted that the driveway will be pervious and pavers may be used.

Mr. Jacob mentioned that there are ridges in proximity to the house and there's not too much water storage room. Mr. Patsios remarked that the water could be collected for irrigation. Mr. Jacob also said in the low points of the yard that one water storage area could be implemented to handle run-off.

P. Kane asked if a rain garden could be considered instead. Mr. Jacob replied that they could discuss the matter.

Mr. Patsios also noted that a catch basin could be used to connect to the Town's sewer easement. He went on to say that he does not want to start digging without knowing what's under the landscaping, however, and that the landscaping will only improve.

A. Ippolito remarked that there are a number of reasons to retain the trees with moving the house to a higher point. She also said that the Board does not need to know every single plant that they put in, but it's important to understand the role and importance of buffering. Five to twelve foot trees on the existing landscape will give Mr. and Mrs. Patsios enough flexibility about what they want to do.

A. Ippolito went on to ask about the height of the proposed structure. Ms. Hall replied that it will be one foot below the ridge.

G. Potts asked about concerns regarding drainage, specifically the perviousness of the driveway. One response was to use pavers.

P. Kane noted that the planned open space is well over the required open space and the sewer easement runs along the planned site of a potential rain garden.

A. Ippolito asked if there are issues with having two curb cuts on the driveway instead of one. P. Kane noted that across the street there is a double curb cut. W. Quinn asked if there is a curb at all. Mr. Patsios says there is no curb, but he plans to construct an ornamental stone wall.

The Town Engineer made a number of comments (via letter), noting the two different lots. Mr. Patsios said that the two lots were merged together.

Mr. Jacob read off the floor area calculations, which is 5,000 gross square feet, but does not include garage space. A. Ippolito explained how height and the average grade of the building are measured. Abutter Ibrahim Domian said he's concerned about the run-off coming straight down toward his property. Mr. Jacob went on to say that state law requires that no run-off be directed toward the Domian property. Additionally, Mr. Jacob indicated that he liked the idea of the rain garden, which could provide water retention. Mrs. Domian asked about the oak trees, which provide screening, being removed. A. Ippolito asked Mrs. Domian if she had any buffer around her pool. Mrs. Domian said there is a shed.

Mr. Patsios remarked that the trees there now are very scraggly and thin and that he's committed to planting a beautiful line of trees. He went on to say they're willing to spend a tremendous amount of money for hopefully their last home and the house will be a great improvement to the neighborhood.

A. Ippolito mentioned that the house will be a little higher and at some point Mr. and Mrs. Patsios may want to plant lasting trees. She went on to say that they should try to respect the thoughts and feelings of the neighbors and the Planning Board recommendations will be sent to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Mr. Jacob remarked that maple trees could be mixed in with arbor vitae. He also mentioned to Mr. Patsios that they should talk in more detail about the rain garden. W. Quinn asked if Mr. Patsios has spoken with any of the neighbors. Mr. Patsios replied that he talked to everyone that was home and that no one had any concerns.

A. Ippolito announced that the Zoning Board of Appeals is the permit granting authority. She said that most of the houses are non-conforming. P. Kane noted that the Domian lot (abutter to applicant) actually exceeds the size requirement for that district.

A. Ippolito: I'll entertain a motion to send the Planning Board recommendation to Zoning Board of Appeals. This will include specifications about landscaping, general recommendations, adding to the screening along the property line, and retaining mature trees. Additional comments from the Department of Public Works will be included. It's also noted that every effort will be made to ensure the driveway material is semi-pervious as opposed to solid asphalt.

W. Quinn asks if there is a fence around the pool and if trees are the only screen.

W. Quinn made motion to provide several recommendations to ZBA, including provisions for run-off, screening in pool area, and a semi-pervious driveway. The motion was seconded by G. Potts and unanimously approved.

Ibrahim Domian made several requests regarding the location of windows in the proposed structure. The petitioner agreed to most, except for a widow attic, which should remain as shown in the plans.

PETITION 15-24

324 ESSEX STREET

Architect Richard Smith told the Board that his client's property has always been zoned as a commercial area. The site is 7,884 square feet and is adjacent to an MBTA right-of-way.

His client is seeking to obtain a Special Permit in order to make the property residential. Because there is no space for a yard, they are also seeking a rear yard setback. Additionally, due to the property being undersized, a Special Permit Review process is needed.

The existing building covers 4,970 square feet between the building and the garage. With paving, there is approximately 6,137 square feet of impervious area on the existing lot. 3,600 square feet of impervious surface runoff ends up on Essex Street. The petitioner is proposing a four-unit building.

P. Kane remarks that this site is zoned B-1. Zoning bylaw does not require side setbacks but does require at least 20 feet of rear setback.

There is room for six car parking. The entrance to the property is sixty to seventy feet back from the intersection. With regards to grading, because there is only about an eighteen inch differential, no engineering feat is required.

Mr. Smith reviewed layout of interior units. Units are roughly 2,000 square feet and there are two units above the garage. Units on the second floor, with three bedrooms, have a square footage of roughly 2,000 square feet. There will be roof decks for each of the four units. Amount of storage space will be determined. The units at the building ends will be about three feet above grade for privacy from street level.

G. Potts commented on fire egress. Mr. Smith noted that because the garages will be enclosed, carbon monoxide detectors will be needed. The developer is talking with modular home builders; the site is in close proximity to train tracks (12 feet).

Mr. Smith displayed renderings of building. He noted that there is roughly thirty-three feet to top of parapet. They are in the process of calculating drainage figures. This construction would reduce the impervious area by 31%. He commented on the piping of rain water into a leaching area and overflow, which will make the drainage situation much more manageable.

A. Ippolito indicated that because of the indoor parking, proximity to train and schools, and having six parking spots for four units, there will be no parking on the street. She went on to raise questions regarding the impact of construction on traffic,

P. Kane said that the developer will work with the Police Department on modular delivery. Mr. Smith went on to say that there is a place on the Lynnway from which to stage the boxes and the heavy stuff can be done quickly.

A. Ippolito replied that the weekend would be best for this undertaking because of the train schedule and notes how busy the adjacent intersection normally is. She went on to ask about the price point and whether there could be any problems with construction. Mr. Smith replied that the applicant has had a site inspection done in the building.

JR Young asked if the MBTA will install a fence. No, the developer will do that.

G. Potts asked what materials will be used for the basement. Mr. Smith replied that Hardie Board will be used.

A. Ippolito asked whether the owner considered mixed use, specifically, having commercial interests on the first floor and residential spaces on the upper levels. She remarked that it's something to be seriously considered and draws upon examples from Humphrey Street. The owner hadn't looked at a mixed-use option.

Mr. Smith commented on the six parking spaces for the four units. W. Quinn expounded upon this by talking about the size of the proposed parking and its implications on turnaround. Mr. Smith noted that the sidewalk is relatively wide.

G. Potts asked if there is any way to make the garage door a little less "garage-looking."

N. Dreeben asked if there is an entry way into the units; there is access from the sidewalk and garage. Mr. Smith also noted that public transportation, train, and bus can be used.

A. Ippolito asked if the owner is amenable to doing anything else. Mr. Smith replied that he does not believe she has any other ideas. A. Ippolito remarked that she disagrees with the use and the proposed residential spaces do not make sense to her. W. Quinn added in that the effects of the train should not be underestimated and the fence must be extremely secure.

A. Ippolito says that if the building were commercial, there could be parking space on each end. Mr. Smith mentioned that they need a forty foot wide space in order to have a car turnaround on the property. P. Kane

commented that two lots could be merged together. This underutilized building has been in foreclosure and they owe significant back taxes to the Town.

A. Ippolito declared that she doesn't want to see a residential building in this space. She went on to say it would be a disservice and if the Board doesn't start making the right decisions, we'll continue to have knee-jerk reactions. She liked the idea of utilizing the space but the use concerns her. It does not fit in. JR Young agreed with A. Ippolito, as did G. Potts, who mentioned that he would rather keep the space commercial. A. Ippolito also noted that if they were looking to put in residential units, they would have to look at special building material.

P. Kane said there is no co-working space in Swampscott. If it becomes a parking lot, a "real" traffic light would have to be installed. He also added that the Building Reuse Forum from the past winter showed that residents are interested in shared work space.

A. Ippolito asked Mr. Smith if the owner would be willing to consider something else. She mentioned that the Clock Shop next door has been there for years and would connect with commercial use on this property. It would all feel commercial.

W. Quinn proposed putting in a smaller but taller building and to avoid maximizing the size of the building. Mr. Smith responded, saying, whatever way it goes, they can only get six parking spaces.

A. Ippolito noted that she would like to reach out to the owner of the site. She does not want to have a flat refusal, but would be willing to engage the owner in some constructive conversation. A. Ippolito says she's not amenable to this idea, but would like Planning Board to talk in future about mixed use or adjoining lots.

G. Potts made motion to recommend unfavorable action on the application. The motion was seconded by JR Young and unanimously approved. The Board noted that it's opposed to a change from commercial to residential, recommended a development plan that considers mixed-use to retain commercial aspect and tax benefit, and encouraged applicant to consider development that includes adjoining lots like the garage to the south.

MASTER PLAN

P. Kane and A. Ippolito gave an update on the process for the new master plan. P. Kane read from "Vision Statement". He said the purpose of the statement is to set the vision for what the community wants it to look like in ten years to set up the plan. It incorporates information gained from the first master plan forum and online forum.

A. Ippolito remarked that they should think about drainage (?) and that she will make some notes. She goes on to mention the need for a timeline and determining what needs to happen first. P. Kane noted that the plan may not be completed until November/December but it will be done before the end of the year.

N. Dreeben stated that the Master Plan Committee got started a little later than originally intended. She stressed the need to push the Master Plan to different departments and gather public input. Additionally, she mentioned spreading these ideas and plans via Twitter and having a moderator. The Board of Selectmen would participate. N. Dreeben also recommended that the fall is better for the fourth forum and that early November should be targeted. She went on to list ways of spreading the word, including phone calls, flyers, newspapers, phone trees, and reaching out to friends. She proposed the idea of having each committee member call ten people and having a wine and cheese gathering by Sea Glass. Non-alcoholic beverages and wine could be offered to attract the widest audience.

A. Ippolito proposed the idea of having a bocce tournament.

RESUMES FOR PLANNING BOARD VACANCY

There will be a timeframe for making a selection. Chair Ippolito and BOS Chair Dreeben will meet top two candidates. Planning Board members and Town Planner used criteria template to narrow selection.

N. Dreeben asked the Board what backgrounds are missing. The Board determined that someone in the architectural field would be a good addition. Some of the present Board members listed their respective backgrounds.

Chair Ippolito said Board is lucky to have a lot of highly qualified applicants.

N. Dreeben: Meet with BOS, thinks Planning Board should select top three, then she and Chair Ippolito meet with top three and make recommendation to BOS.

JR Young: It might be important to have another female voice. He thought another female should be considered, possibly Ms. Purdy.

A. Ippolito: It's important to have someone who's willing to engage with other people inside and outside the community. What can they do to contribute to what we are doing right now?

G. Potts: Breadth of experience, including community involvement and awareness.

After reviewing the criteria and ranking, the Board determined their top four choices (third choice was a tie) were: Giard, Walker, Isler, Purdy.

The group agreed that the two chairs would next interview the four candidates and then make a recommendation to both boards. The boards could meet jointly at the Aug 19 Board of Selectmen meeting to vote on the new member.

JR Young moved to adjourn, George Potts second, unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM

Helen Kennedy
Planning Board Secretary