

SITE PLAN REVIEW ADVISORY BOARD

**NOTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
Tuesday, April 29, 2014
PRINCETON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
Meeting Room A –7:30 P.M.
Princeton, New Jersey**

PRESENT: Robert Cerutti, Harry Cooke, Pamela Rew, Lydia Robinson, William Wolfe
ABSENT: James Begin, Alyce Bush, Dana Molina, Holly Nelson
ALSO PRESENT: Jack West, Land Use Engineer; Kerry A. Philip, Secretary

Chairman Wolfe called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. reading the Opening Statement as required by the Open Public Meetings Act, acknowledging that notice of this meeting was issued on the 17th day of April, 2014.

MINUTES

- a) November 13, 2013 – postponed to next meeting
- b) December 11, 2013 - postponed to next meeting

APPLICATIONS

- a) ROI Renovations & Development (continued from 4/9/14)
Major Site Plan with variance
255 Nassau Street
Block 48.01, Lots 7 & 8
File #P1414-001P
MLUL Deadline: 7/4/14

Representatives for the Applicant: Rosalind Westlake, Esq.; Larry Murphy, GreenSite Engineering & Consulting; Lou Carnevale, property owner; Alfredo Trevino, AIA; Linda Fahmie, applicant.

Mr. Wolfe stated that the applicant met with the ad hoc committee to work on some design coordination on the building. Mr. Trevino stated that changes were made to the massing, proportions and scale of the building and he presented an alternate plan for the building for consideration showing hip roofs and some alignment changes for the windows. More brick is proposed for the façade and an elevator/stairway was moved for a handicapped entrance at grade. Larry Murphy, engineer for the applicant, stated that the grade is raised 1.5 feet. Mr. Trevino stated that internal spaces were also reconfigured and double hung windows are now being considered with brick sills and trim.

P. Rew recommended a cast stone horizontal feature strip between the first and second floors around the entire building where brick is proposed. Mr. Wolfe did not recommend having balconies at the end of the building and suggested that the window be switched with the balcony for stability. Mr. Trevino stated that at the last meeting it was suggested that the windows on the west side of the building should be reviewed so they are not facing the windows of the adjacent

building. After their review it was determined that some of the windows on that side of the building should be removed and the windows that are proposed will be set back from the façade. He advised that a door for each unit on the west side is now proposed for maintenance. Mr. Wolfe suggested the removal of a portion of the hip roof on the western elevation.

L. Robinson asked how the 15 parking spaces allocated for the patrons of the bank will be monitored. Ms. Fahmie responded that signage will be in place identifying the parking spaces reserved for the residents and the bank, during business hours someone at the bank will also monitor this.

H. Cooke asked if the applicant made any change to the entry drive. Mr. West stated that the NJDOT restricts the width of the driveway at 24 feet so there is no change to the proposed entrance. Mr. West stated that he recommends a variance for the parking stall size, if a 17 foot depth is proposed then there is adequate space for a six foot landscape strip along the eastern property line. An eight (8) foot width is also recommended for the compact parking spaces. Regarding the striped islands in the parking area, board members asked that the proposed striped island at the southern end of the walkway be reduced in size to allow for adequate turn around space for the garbage truck. The island should have curbing and one ornamental tree planted. Mr. Murphy stated that the applicant is satisfied with the recommended changes in the parking lot. Mr. West stated that he is satisfied with the new design of the parking lot. Two striped spaces are shown at the southeast and southwest corners of the property and the board members recommended that these spaces be curbed and a tree planted.

Ms. Westlake stated that she spoke with Allen Porter, Esq., Planning Board Attorney about the access driveway. She said that Mr. Porter felt her argument that NJDOT regulations pre-empt any county or local municipal body from making a decision about access from a State road should be presented to the Planning Board and that he would support this. Mr. Wolfe stated that he would like to see our report reference the fact that no one liked the two driveways and recommend that the municipality attempt to get the University to grant the permission to maintain the exist drive but that we would approve this plan if a legitimate effort is made and access is denied by the University. He stated that the University should have taken more responsibility for this condition and not deny access.

R. Cerutti recommended switching the balconies for Units #12 and #3 so they will be in the stucco area. He also asked about the proposed trim around the windows in the stucco area of the façade. Mr. Trevino responded that the windows will have jambs, heads and sills.

Mr. Murphy stated that some vegetation (a hedgerow and several trees) will be proposed between this property and lot 16 but this approach results in another variance. In order to provide enough room for the plantings, the board was in favor of this approach and recommended approval of the variance. Review of the landscaping is deferred to the landscape subcommittee.

Based upon the foregoing, a motion was made by Mr. Cerutti, seconded by Ms. Rew and carried by a vote of five ayes to classify this application as a major site plan, endorse the joint Engineering and Zoning Report dated March 20, 2014, the PEC report dated April 23, 2014 and to recommend approval of the application with the following recommendations.

SPECIAL COMMENT TO THE MUNICIPALITY

SPRAB members are strongly opposed to the proposed additional driveway cut on Nassau Street, and strongly recommend that the municipality have high level discussions with Princeton University in an attempt to get the needed long-term agreement to maintain the existing site access. Approval of the proposed driveway access is only recommended as a last resort if this effort to obtain an agreement with Princeton University fails and access to the existing curb cut is denied. The applicant reports frustration with this process over several years, and should not be expected to achieve this goal on their own. Nor should the applicant be denied access to their property.

SPRAB is very concerned about the safety of pedestrians in this neighborhood as a result of the proposed configuration and believe that the proposed additional curb cut would worsen already congested traffic on this narrow stretch of Nassau Street. Increased traffic could also spill over onto Pine and Chestnut Streets. Newly leased commercial uses on the former West Coast Video site can be expected to add more traffic not anticipated in the applicant's traffic study. Left turns into and out of the existing curb cut would interfere with left turns into and out of the proposed new driveway, which is between it and the vehicle entrance to the large building to the west. Left turns into Pine Street and the frequent double parking of delivery trucks already congest the area.

SPRAB believes that an access easement from Princeton University to the applicant over the northern fifty feet of the existing driveway would be sufficient for the applicant to access the existing curb cut. We believe that this would be in the best interest of the town, the general public, and all parties who might share this curb cut.

SITE PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The PEC report dated 4/23/14 was received in the Planning Office on 4/28/14 and was distributed to SPRAB without adequate time for review. Therefore the applicant was instructed to enumerate any exceptions to this report to the Planning Board.
2. The applicant should review the Engineering and Zoning Report dated March 20, 2014 and all other staff and professional reports, and inform the Planning Board of any exceptions or interpretations. Otherwise it is assumed the applicant agrees with the reports.
3. The applicant should state the operating hours of the bank.

Site Layout

4. SPRAB recommends approval of a variance to reduce the depth of the parking stalls along the easterly property line from 19 feet to 17 feet to allow for a 6 foot wide landscape strip.
5. The curb should be no higher than four inches.
6. SPRAB recommends approval of a variance for the compact parking stall width to be 8 feet.
7. All compact spaces should be grouped together rather than alternating with regular spaces.
8. The applicant should present the access/egress route for delivery trucks and trash pickup to the Planning Board. Restrictions on the size of trucks should be noted within all leases.

Landscape Design

9. All proposed landscaping should be reviewed by the Landscape Subcommittee.

10. SPRAB recommends a variance be granted to allow a three foot high hedgerow of boxwood or other evergreen shrubs between shade trees along the eastern side of the property rather than the required tall evergreen hedge.
11. The proposed striped area at the south end of the sidewalk along the east façade was recommended to be reduced in size, curbed, and an ornamental tree planted.
12. The revised site plan shows two striped spaces at the southeast and southwest corners of the property, and it was recommended that these spaces be curbed and a tree planted.
13. The applicant should discuss the design components and operation of the front plaza. The Planning Board may wish to approve this plaza in concept only, and require final approval after a kiosk lessee is found and more specific detail can be proposed.

BUILDING DESIGN COMMENTS

There were extensive comments on the building design at the first SPRAB meeting. An ad-hoc design subcommittee subsequently met with the applicant and their architect on April 17, 2014. Design comments from the original application were discussed in a work session. The applicant made subsequent revisions to the building design and returned for a second SPRAB meeting with an alternate plan.

Building Design Comments on the original submission:

1. Several small building indentations along the west wall present access and maintenance issues. The applicant should consider doors to the small courts for tenant use and maintenance.
2. The building code may not allow windows directly on the west property line. If they are retained, the applicant may wish to coordinate their location with windows of the adjacent building to the west.
3. The accessible route from the handicapped parking spaces to the elevator is long and circuitous. SPRAB members suggested using the side door for the accessible route and to locate handicap parking spaces adjacent.
4. The applicant should show the outline of the building to the west on all floor plans; and show sidewalks on the first floor plan.
5. A revised design for the building façades was requested to address multiple questions on scale, rooflines, and use of materials.
6. The applicant presented a rendering of the building. This rendering may be presented to the Planning Board for comparison, but a rendering of the alternate design, should be presented to the Planning Board for consideration.
7. The applicant was asked to redesign the interior space to locate the stair, elevator and side entry to a location more central in the floor plan.
8. Hip roofs should be considered on the side elevations in lieu of gable roofs, specifically the two gable roofs on the western elevation. It was felt that the scale of the front gable pediment and the typical cornice trim was too large and should be reduced.

Building Design Comments on the Alternate Plan presented at the second meeting:

1. The applicant presented much improved plans and elevations. These revised architectural drawings should be presented to the Planning Board and should be considered amendments to the application. The revisions should also include consensus suggestions from this 2nd SPRAB meeting.

2. A cast stone horizontal feature strip is recommended at the second floor line along all north, east, and south walls. The feature strip shown occasionally at the third floor line should be eliminated.
3. Head, sill, and jamb accent trim are recommended around all window and door openings.
4. The east wall of the southeast stair tower on the roof should be set back from the east façade about two feet.
5. A rooftop enclosure for the HVAC units is recommended to address any potential noise from the equipment. The applicant should address compliance with noise regulations for all exterior equipment.
6. Details of the rooftop guardrails, and other visible roof and parapet components, should be presented.
7. Stucco is preferred in lieu of brick for the west side of the street façade, adjacent to the building on Lot 6. The stucco should be offset from the brick by at least 6".
8. The applicant should consider continuing the one-story brick base of the east facade across the southern façade.
9. The hipped roof on the southern side of the front section should be extended further west to maintain a consistent appearance to the front part of the building as seen from the south.
10. It was suggested that balconies for Units #3 and #12 be moved so that they are in the stucco area to the left - (see East Elevation). Since the brick side-entry wall is similar to what is proposed to the right it was suggested that brick pilasters be considered.
11. The rendering of the building should be updated and presented to the Planning Board.
12. The drawings should be corrected to show roof level rather than "loft level."

Vote on motion:

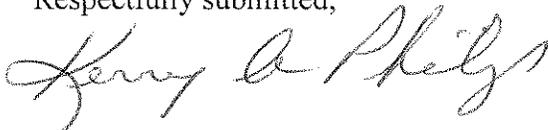
For: Cerutti, Cooke, Rew, Robinson, Wolfe

Against: None

Abstain: None

With no further business before the Board, motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kerry A. Philip
Secretary