

Arlington Redevelopment Board
Monday, November 2, 2020, 7:00 PM
Meeting Conducted Remotely via Zoom
Meeting Minutes

This meeting was recorded by ACMi.

PRESENT: Rachel Zsembery (Chair), Eugene Benson, Kin Lau, Katherine Levine-Einstein, David Watson

STAFF: Jennifer Raitt, Director of Planning and Community Development, and Erin Zwirko, Assistant Director

The Chair called the meeting to order and notified all attending that the meeting is being recorded by ACMi.

The Chair explained that this meeting is being held remotely in accordance with the Governor's March 12, 2020 order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c. 30A, Section 20. This order from Governor Baker allows for meetings to be held remotely during this time to avoid public gatherings.

The Chair introduced agenda item 1A, Continued Public Hearings Docket #2717, as amended #2905, 23 Broadway. Ms. Raitt reviewed the applicant's letter to request a hearing continuation to November 16, 2020. Ms. Raitt said that since Town Meeting is scheduled for November 16, 2020 that December 7, 2020 is also an option for this hearing continuation. Mr. Lau moved to continue the Public Hearing Docket #2717, as amended #2905, 23 Broadway to Monday, December 7, 2020, Mr. Watson seconded, approved 5-0.

The Chair introduced agenda item 1B, Continued Public Hearing Docket #3633, 1500 Mass Ave. Mr. Annese introduced the Monte French, Architect, Emily Driscoll, Designer, and Darin DiNucci, one of the applicants. Mr. Annese reviewed the plans that the applicant's team was asked to provide for this hearing. Ms. Driscoll reviewed the changes she made to the site plans and to the building façade design. Mr. Lau said that he asked if a solar array and roof deck could be included and understands if it cannot be included but is glad that the team checked to see if it is possible. Mr. Benson said he also asked to look at the feasibility of the solar panels and is glad that the team checked. Mr. Benson asked if the permeable surfaces will need ongoing maintenance. Mr. French said that they did include a catch basin and trench drain to help with drainage and there will still need to be maintenance. Mr. Benson said he had questions about the open space calculation. Ms. Driscoll explained that the mechanical space and bike room are not included in the calculation. Mr. Benson said it would be nice if the applicant could work with the Tree Warden to plant some street trees in the planting strip towards the front of the building. Mr. Watson suggested removing the bike sharing portion from the TDM report, the applicant does not know if the Town will decide to have a bike sharing station at this location. Mr. Watson said that the open space is quite nice and he thinks that the maintenance of the open space should be a condition of the permit. Mr. Watson asked if the Tree Warden is satisfied with the tree plan. Mr. Annese read a letter from the Tree Warden stating that 11 native, 25 caliper rated trees must be planted on site and Mr. Annese said that the applicants plan to meet all requirements. Ms. Levine-Einstein agreed that the addition of street trees would make a big contribution. Ms. Driscoll answered Mr. Benson's answer regarding floor area calculation in section 5.3.22 Gross Floor Area section, number 4, of the bylaw. Mr. Benson agrees that the permit should include a special condition that the applicant will meet the requirements of the tree protection and preservation bylaw set forth by the Tree Warden. Mr. Lau said he agrees with the special condition for preservation of the trees but does not agree about including the open space maintenance as a special condition. Mr. Lau said he wants to avoid too many special conditions on projects as that could be daunting for developers.

The Chair opened the floor to public comment.

Don Seltzer, Irving Street, said he wanted to compliment the applicant with their response to the issues that have been raised in prior hearings. Mr. Seltzer said that he does not agree with the total floor area calculation. Mr. Seltzer said that the

applicant can ask for an exception but Mr. Seltzer said he is unsure if the Board can grant that exception. Mr. Seltzer said that this building is too large for the lot. Mr. Seltzer asked about a snow removal plan. Mr. Seltzer said that the Board pledged for no new major zoning changes without broad community involvement.

Steve Revilak, Sunnyside Avenue, said that since the first hearing the site has been reconfigured substantially and is a much nicer use of the space. Mr. Revilak said he feels it is a good improvement.

The Chair closed the floor for public comment as there were no other members of the public in queue.

Mr. Watson asked about use for the 5th parking space. Mr. French said it can be used for the commercial space or residential overflow/guest space. Mr. Watson asked about snow removal Mr. French said that the applicant would work with a private contractor snow removal who would remove the snow from the site.

Mr. Benson said that the following conditions and clarifications should be added to the special permit:

The applicant will meet the requirements of the tree protection and preservation bylaw as required by the Tree Warden. An adjustment to the lot setback as allowed by section 5.3.16 of the bylaw was granted to account for specific conditions to the permit. Pursuant to section 6.1.5 of the bylaw the Board is reduced the required number of parking spaces parking from 6 to 5. Ms. Raitt said that she will add that the final TDM plan has been reviewed and approved by the Department. Ms. Raitt said that snow removal and trash removal requirements are included with the general conditions of special permits. Mr. Benson moved to approve the special permit for Docket #3633, 1500 Mass Ave., Mr. Lau seconded, approved 5-0.

The Chair introduced the second agenda item, Draft Report to Town Meeting. Ms. Raitt and the Board reviewed each article of the draft report and updated some of the wording. Mr. Lau moved to approve the report to Town Meeting as amended, Mr. Benson seconded, approved 5-0.

The Chair introduced the third agenda item, Meeting Minutes (8/17/20, 9/14/20).

Mr. Benson moved to approve meeting minutes for 8/17/20 as amended, Mr. Watson seconded, approved 4-0 (Ms. Levine-Einstein abstained as she was not yet a Board member at that time). Mr. Lau moved to approve meeting minutes for 9/14/20 as amended, Ms. Levine-Einstein seconded, approved 5-0.

The Chair introduced the last agenda item, Open Forum. The Chair opened the floor for public comment.

Barbara Thornton, Park Avenue, said she has some process suggestions in regard to the major zoning articles that will come up at next Town Meeting. Ms. Thornton said she would like the process to run more smoothly. Ms. Thornton said she has identified the following 4 types of issues: 1) Technical issues, Ms. Thornton said that if the Board is really interested in the ADU issue, for example, the Board should look 10 weeks out and make sure the Board has internally reconciled the zoning and what the petitioner would like to do. 2) Organizational issue, Ms. Thornton said questions need to come up early to address technical issues that don't reconcile well with zoning. 3) Political, Ms. Thornton said that she met with the citizens in her precinct to discuss ADUs. 4) Personal issues, Members of the Board have to know their role as a Board member versus what they would like to see happen personally for any zoning article that comes up.

Steve Revilak said he would like to offer constructive criticism regarding the Board's process. Mr. Revilak suggested perhaps adopting the Select Board's policy for conducting warrant article hearings. Mr. Revilak said that petitioners present their warrant article ideas directly to the Select Board. Mr. Revilak said that if the Select Board has issues with the warrant article then the Select Board asks if the petitioner would like to present again next year or address the issues and come back before the Select Board. Mr. Revilak said as someone who would like to collaborate with the Board he would like to have

more opportunity to for back and forth to help solve some of the land use challenges we have.

Jennifer Susse said that when she joined the School Committee she pushed for more public engagement which helps citizens see the diversity of views that exist and feel heard. Ms. Susse suggested the Board conduct public outreach before any particular articles are put forth. Ms. Susse said that ultimately it will make people comfortable with change.

The Chair closed the floor for public comment as there were no other members of the public in queue.

Mr. Watson moved to adjourn, Ms. Levine-Einstein seconded, approved 5-0.

Meeting adjourned.

DRAFT