

Arlington Redevelopment Board
February 25, 2019, 7:30 p.m.
Town Hall Annex
Second Floor Conference Room
Meeting Minutes

This meeting was recorded by ACMi.

PRESENT: Andrew West, David Watson, Eugene Benson, Kin Lau

ABSENT: Andrew Bunnell (Chair)

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

Andrew West (Vice –Chair) opened the meeting with the first agenda item, Environmental Design Review Special Permit Public Hearing for 10 Sunnyside Ave. Mr. West notified all in attendance that the meeting is being recorded by ACMi.

Robert Annese presented and introduced Christopher Cormier, the project proponent for the proposed building at 10 Sunnyside. Mr. Annese stated the development includes 26 residential units and 1 retail unit. The proposed building is 50 feet in height, and 4 stories, it is located in the B4 zoning district, and the property size is 16,500 sf. The proponent met with Michael Byrne, Building Inspector and stated that the proposal complies with the Zoning Bylaw. The Building Inspector made a determination under Chapter 40 A since this development is under have 20,000 sf and for mixed-use the developer can take part of the bonus provisions in section 5.3.6 subsections 2,3 and 4. The parapet section meets requirements defined in section 5.3.20, as an exemption for any kind of an addition that rises above the roof. The parapet fits within that definition.

Types of units proposed, there will be 7 one-bedroom units, 19 two-bedroom units; 4 will be affordable housing units , 2 of which will be two-bedroom, and two of the affordable units will be one-bedroom. 37 parking spaces would be required, but the proposal has 33 spaces because under the affordable housing provisions the developer requests a reduction for the provision of affordable housing.

Mr. Annese said the retail space on the 1st level does not require parking because it is less than 3,000 sf. Mr. Annese gave an overview of the bicycle parking which will include: a dedicated bike parking room at the entry, bicycle parking hooks, and bike racks outside. Mr. Annese said that he recognizes that being close to the bike path would like to encourage tenants and people using the retail space to use bicycles.

Mr. Cormier gave an overview of the proposal for 10 Sunnyside. Mr. Cormier reviewed his prepared slides with the proposed plans for this site. The existing site is a one-story garage and Mr. Cormier pointed out that there is no landscaping on the current site. Mr. Cormier reviewed zoning information and compared the proposed dimensional regulations with the Town's regulations.

Mr. Cormier said the number of parking spaces provided will be 13 ground level garage parking spaces and 20 basement garage spaces, affordable units will be on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th floors.

LEED checklist score of 40, which is the score to certify.

Mr. Cormier presented slides with images of similar buildings under construction in Brighton, MA and of 10 Sunnyside site plans.

Mr. West asked Mr. Cormier about the grading for the site, Mr. Cormier stated that the site is flat and there is one retaining wall on site that will remain.

Mr. Cormier continued with his overview of safety features, including mirrors and an alert system on driveway ramps to notify drivers of pedestrians and oncoming vehicles. Mr. Cormier said there will be 33 bike storage hooks and a bike storage room.

Mr. West asked about the proposed facade materials to be used Mr. Cormier said that they will be using aluminum doors and windows with black frames, Andersen windows, grey brick, and a combination of 5 and 7 inch reveal hardy plank siding. The right side elevation includes the garage door and 5 and 7 inch reveal hardy plank siding. The rear balconies will have bays to help with screening and privacy for tenants.

Mr. West asked if the bricks only at the front, what is the material at the top. Mr. Cormier brick only in the front and the molding at the top is PVC material.

Mr. West opened the meeting for questions.

Mr. Watson asked Ms. Raitt about the zoning code decisions. Mr. West asked about the 10% parking reduction, Ms. Raitt reviewed that information from her memo to the board, on page 5.

Mr. Watson asked Mr. Annese to reconfirm with Building Inspector, Michael Byrne, regarding the FAR.

Ms. Raitt informed Mr. Watson that the ARB may request more information or follow up from the applicant and the Building Inspector. The Board requested that Ms. Raitt receive an answer from the Building Inspector.

Mr. Watson stated he has additional questions about bike parking based on the new materials presented. He appreciates the efforts to provide a significant amount of bike parking based on the location where people can bike and walk, including the Alewife Greenway and the Minuteman Bikeway. Mr. Watson stated that while the proposed bike racks are commonly used and attractive, but he would like to see more functional bike racks. He also requested the bike room dimensions.

Mr. Cormier said that the room is 6x11.5 feet, Mr. Watson said that he does not feel that that space is not large enough. Mr. Watson also is not sure that the ceiling mounted bike mechanisms and is not sure if they are robust enough for ongoing day to day use, Mr. Watson is not sure if they are an appropriate solution.

Mr. Watson said he likes the individual bike racks at the back of each space but he is not sure if people will be comfortable with those types of racks. Mr. Watson would like to see a larger roll-in bike room and people must be able to bring their bikes up to their units, which is feasible with the building elevator.

Mr. Lau noted that all Group 2 units happen to all be in the affordable units and asked if one of the Group 2 units could be changed to a non-affordable unit.

Mr. Lau asked if the parapet and the roof are internally drained, which Mr. Cormier confirmed. Mr. Lau asked the Mr. Cormier please show the leavers and exhaust plans in the schematics for the enclosed parking. Mr. Lau also requested more detailed landscaping plans including how to get to the rear patio. Mr. Cormier said that you have to walk around to use the patios in the back. Mr. Lau requested that a walkway be added and shown in the plans to indicate how people will use it. Mr. Lau asked to add an indicator/alarm at the base of the one-way driveway so that if a car is on the ramp other drivers will be notified.

Mr. West asked for a more detailed site plan and 3 dimensional drawings to understand 2 views. Mr. West asked that Mr. Cormier note materials and bring samples of materials to the next meeting. Mr. West said that he would like to see a sample of the PVC molding product as he is afraid the material may not look good and will be too shiny. Mr. West would also like a cross-section detail of the building to show what is above and below grade.

Mr. West summarized follow up required by the applicant:

- 1) The Board would like a letter from the Building Inspector
- 2) Bike parking in general, indoor and outdoor
- 3) Group 2 units not always an affordable unit and accessible bathrooms are shown on plans
- 4) Garage vents within 10 feet of an operable window included on plans
- 5) Landscape plans
- 6) Driveway alarms on the ramps
- 7) Driveway width to be discussed with the Building Inspector
- 8) The Board would like the Mr. Cormier to strive for Silver LEED certification for this site.
- 9) Sampling of the materials, 3D view, and a real site plan

Mr. Benson mentioned the Board did not see a drainage report for this site. Ms. Raitt said that developers usually consult with the Town Engineer. Mr. Benson said he would like a review from the Town Engineer since the site is so close to the Alewife Brook. Mr. West added this last point to the list for the developers.

10) Drainage plan for the site

Mr. West recommended that the hearing be continued. Mr. West then opened the meeting to questions from the public. Mr. Annese said he did not object to a continuation of the hearing based on the amount of follow-up required.

Miguel Munoz Cabre of 44 Michael St. had a question about sound and light. He asked about the light and sound mitigation plans for the building and during construction. Mr. Munoz Cabre brought a sample of the tarp that is littering neighboring yards and the Millbrook from the existing site.

Mr. West asked to include the lighting plan for the site.

Mr. Lau asked that Mr. Cormier add mechanicals to the plans.

Don Seltzer of Irving Street said that zoning requires a ramp to the garage with a 15% slope or less and zoning encourages transition zones at each end. Mr. Seltzer said that Mr. Cormier did not present the elevation details with the plans. Mr. Seltzer said he figured on the current plans that the ramp slope to the garage is 21% slope. Mr. Seltzer said that 21% slope is unsafe and there is not a decent field of view for exiting cars.

Mr. Watson said that this issue will be added to the list for the building inspector.

Mr. Seltzer also commented on the 4 ft. parapets, Mr. Annese read the details from section 5.3.20 again.

Asia Kepka of 17 Silk Street said that this area floods all the time from the runoff from the brook. The bike path is raised because the ground is unstable. Ms. Kepka said that a garage below grade will flood and be unstable. There is a small and delicate ecosystem in the area and the area is a very congested already. The road is very small and narrow filled with single-family homes.

Mr. Benson asked Ms. Kepka if the Alewife Brook has overtopping or general flooding in the area. Has Alewife Brook and flooded this particular site? Ms. Kepka said she did not know about that particular site.

Steve Revliak of 111 Sunnyside Ave. said his property is in a flood plain district and there are 2 FEMA claims on his property from 2001 and 2010. There is a 7 foot dip to the green way the worst flooding he had was 16 inches in his basement from the Alewife. Mr. Revliak said the Board could check the US Geological gauge at Broadway Bridge 3/21/2010. Mr. Revliak said he could provide a floodplain survey, Mr. Lau and Mr. West said that Mr. Cormier will get a floodplain survey from the Town Engineer.

Mr. West asked that if all of the public comments are flood related if they could be consolidated.

Robert Morgan of 37 Sunnyside Ave. said his property between the Alewife Brook and this proposed development has never flooded he says back to 50 years, based on his neighbors accounts, including 2010.

Leah Broder of 44 Michael Street Site plan and landscape character associated with the development. She said there is minimal landscaping along the Sunnyside frontage and she would like to see more details. The rear patio is north facing and between a parking lot and the next building. She requested if it would be possible to include more trees, possibly in the front of the building, which would be transformative for the area. Ms. Broder notified the Board that near the proposed site there is poor drainage. There is standing water at Michael and Sunnyside also at the Broadway and Sunnyside intersections after storms. She asked to include possible catch basins and look into environmental impacts of the project.

Kim Alexander of 77 Sunnyside Ave. stated that traffic on Sunnyside during the morning rush hour and at night cannot make a left turn to Broadway. Silk Street and Gardener Street are used for that turn to Broadway. Ms. Alexander said she is not opposed to an apartment building, especially with green space, but would propose to the Board that no

parking be allowed on Sunnyside to allow for 2 lanes of traffic. Ms. Alexander also said that it is not possible to cross the street at that location to get the bus stop. Ms. Alexander also proposed a new crosswalk by the proposed site to get directly to the bus stop.

Mr. West asked about speaking with TAC before the next meeting, Ms. Raitt said she can bring the issue to the DPCD Transportation Planner. Mr. West commented that he would like to tie the streetscape along with this issue to address the general street character.

Monique Chaplin of 35 Michael Street said she is concerned about congestion, including large trucks from a body shop and Arlmont Oil, using side streets if they cannot turn into Sunnyside from Broadway. Ms. Chaplin is concerned about additional traffic in an already congested street. Michael Street is very small with children playing in the street a lot of diverted traffic is worrisome.

Wendy Vander Hart of 60 Silk Street asked how the additional students will impact the schools. How is that measured to find what the schools can absorb.

Ms. Raitt said that a recent inventory of the Thompson district population shows only 11% of the children come from apartments with 4+ units, a majority of students from one-family, two-family, and three-family homes. These are proposed one-bedroom and two-bedroom units and so the DPCD is not sure of the correlation there.

Christopher Loreti of 56 Adams Street asked Mr. Annese if there are any other members of the development team. Mr. Annese stated that Mr. Cormier is the sole developer.

Mr. Loreti asked about the relief under 5.3.6 to increase the floor area was not requested as part of the special permit application. A lot less than 20,000 feet only qualifies if the principal use is residential, what are they doing to qualify for the bonuses? Mr. Loreti also asked about the patio plans.

Mr. West said that a letter will be provided by the building inspector to address all zoning questions. Mr. West said that they would also like a proposal with the building pushed back instead of the rear patio to allow for street trees.

Mr. Loreti asked for an analysis of height regulations for this building. Mr. Benson said that the proposed building does not abut any other building.

Mr. Loreti agreed that parking should not be allowed in front of the proposed building as there is only a 40 ft. right of way.

Mr. Revliak asked about the inclusionary zoning provision is that 80% or owner occupied units required 70%. Ms. Raitt confirmed that the plans were changed to ownership units and that does need to be updated.

Ms. Alexander asked what the proposed pricing is for these units would be, including the retail unit. Mr. Cormier said the pricing will be market driven. Construction is not expected to be completed for a few years so it is not possible to answer this question right now.

Ms. Broder said she is concerned about the street character dramatic difference between the façade and other sides of the buildings. Since the height of this building is much taller than surrounding buildings that the same materials should be used on all sides of the proposed building.

Mr. West said the developer will get a civil site plan.

Ms. Broder assumed that work would have been done already. Mr. Annese stated that there are usually multiple hearings to bring all information requested to the board. Mr. Annese said he has heard from the Board and neighbors. Mr. Benson asked for a summary of what Mr. Annese has heard. Mr. Annese said that he hears that there is concern about flooding, traffic, and parking. Mr. Annese said that this is a blighted area where a sole developer to come in and supply housing to improve the area.

Mr. West motioned to continue the hearing to after Town Meeting, which will be May 20th.
Mr. West motioned to continue the hearing to May 20th. All approved.

Members of the public attending the 10 Sunnyside public hearing exited the meeting.

Mr. West turned the meeting to the next agenda item, Board discussion about proposed 2019 Annual Town Meeting Zoning Bylaw amendments as submitted by the ARB.

Ms. Raitt stated all materials posted were draft amendments and FAQ sheets for proposed amendments including signs and mixed use amendments.

Mr. Benson asked about the next public hearing. Ms. Raitt suggested to email any edits or comments as the Zoning Bylaw Working Group is submitting feedback.

Mr. Benson said regarding articles 6,7,8,11,13 would vote as density bonuses in exchange for more affordable housing. Mr. Benson agreed that sending grammatical, typographical changes would be best via email.

Mr. Benson and Mr. Watson said that density bonus is something that the Board should have a conversation about.

Mr. Benson said he would like the affordable housing limit moved to 5 from 6 in order to get the density bonus.

The Board continued to discuss this issue.

Mr. Lau said he would like to address working class units to try to give the middle-class or working class people have an opportunity to rent as well as having affordable housing.

Mr. Benson suggested that can introduce a new category of 120% of AMI which is not as strict as the 60% of AMI for affordable housing to create a working class housing level.

Mr. Benson would like further amendments to the bicycle parking and accessory dwelling units.

Ms. Raitt updated the Board with the up Mr. West opened the meeting for comments.

Syrl Silberman of 40 Oakland Ave asked what percentage of income qualifies for affordable housing.

Ms. Zwirko said this is defined in the Zoning Bylaw and depends on the type of unit. For an ownership unit, income cannot exceed 80% AMI, housing costs cannot exceed 30% of a household making 70% of the AMI. \$81,100 is the currently 80% AMI for a family of 4.

Rental unit income cannot exceed 70% of the AMI and housing costs cannot exceed 30% of the income of the household at 60% AMI.

Ms. Silberman wondered if this formula really provides enough affordable housing.

Mr. West stated that inclusionary housing is part of our bylaw and the Board does look to HPI Committee for feedback.

Elise Sellenger of 37 Thorndike Street stated that a family of 4 spending 30% of their income at 80% of AMI is between \$1,900 and \$2,000 and cannot find a 1 bedroom in Arlington for this price and forget a unit at that price for a family of 4. Groups typically not in need of affordable housing are in need of affordable housing in Arlington. Ms. Sellenger said Arlington needs public and state resources for assistance like 40B permit or tax credit program that comes with vouchers for a deeper level of affordability. Ms. Sellenger suggested hiring a consultant for assistance.

Benjamin Rudnick of 40 Webcowet is a commercial real estate analyst. He explained that typical condo or multifamily developments incur significant loss for every affordable unit, it usually takes 1-3 market rate units to off-set cost for 1 affordable unit for a profit for the developer. Increased density is not necessarily a higher profit for the developer, it typically may be higher profit for the landowner instead. Mr. Rudnick said his concern is affordability of housing for young families like his to live in Arlington. Mr. Rudnick said an increase in affordable units usually comes at the cost of the affordability of the market rate units. He suggests putting a cap on the affordable units and increase the number of the market rate units. Mr. Rudnick said that Boston area is about 3,000 units short.

Jo Anne Preston of 42 Mystic Lake Drive asked about the inclusionary housing bylaw. She stated the developer of the town houses at the corner of Mill and Mass Ave. have no affordable housing there. Preventing an owner from dividing a lot is only covered by the bylaw only works for 2 years. Mr. Benson said that this is another issue. Ms. Preston said that some loop-holes need to be changed or Arlington will end up with no affordable housing.

Wynelle Evans of 20 Orchard Place commented that new construction is more expensive and she is concerned about people being pushed out due to renovation and those tenants being unable to afford new units are at the market rate. Ms. Evans asked if it is possible to link affordably requirement to the developer instead of the development then the developer would be required to provide more after.

Mr. Lau said he thought about that and is concerned that the developer would change their LLC for each development/project so there is no carry-over between projects.

Mr. Benson asked if within the framework of the warrant articles Arlington can fit in additional affordable housing.

Steve Revliak stated that housing is expensive in Arlington because apartment building development was halted in the 1970s.

Ms. Raitt asked for comments to be sent by mail or email.

Mr. West asked for graphics or site plan to better picture the proposed developments. Ms. Raitt said that the DPCD is waiting for buildout analysis, visualizations, and the shadow studies from MAPC by 3/11. Ms. Raitt said the DPCD will forward documents from MAPC to the Board as soon as they are received.

Agenda Item 3 Organizational Meeting – ARB Rules and Regulations Rule 2 – Board Officers -This item was moved to the next meeting.

Agenda Item 4, Meeting Minutes – This item was moved to the next meeting.

Motion to adjourn. Board voted all in favor. (4-0)

Meeting Adjourned.