



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

Design Review Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, Aug 3, 2023 at 7:00 PM

Via ZOOM

1. 7:00 PM – Call the meeting to Order – 7:09 Open meeting – Attendance: Committee - Ujwala Pawnarkr, Bill Novakowski, Kevin Mowatt, Hannah Stein, Cathy Rooney, Alvaro Esparza.
Absent: Brendan Carey, due to travel.

Applicant - Terry Morris, Charles Zammuto, Rick Salvo, Ron Bourque

Public - George Rakas, Helen Nickole, Joan Gonfrade, Julian Salvucci, Mark Dassoni, Rebeca Andrade

2. Correspondence & Updates: None
3. Minutes – any outstanding – push to the end
4. Design Review of 9-49 Homer Avenue
Continued from June 15, 2023

The Design Review Committee will hear the petition of WJK Homer LLC, 400 Waverly Ave, Newton. MA 02458, C/O Terrence P. Morris Equ. requesting a Special Permit, Design Plan Review and Site Plan Review per Chapter 282, 8.5: Par 5.2, 5.4, and 5.5-Purpose, Sub-areas and Uses; Par 8.5.6 – Dimensional Standards (# of Floors and Height); Par 8.5.11.4 – Building Design Standards (Roofs); Par 8.5.13 – Parking Requirements); 9.3-Special Permit (Roof); Section 9.4 (Site Plan Review); Section 9.6 (Design Plan Review) and 5.4 (General Landscaping Requirements) of the Ashland Bylaws. The applicant is proposing the development of a three-story mixed-use building that shall include 29 rental apartment units with approximately 9,400 sq. ft. of ground floor, street facing retail space. The project provides a total of 65 parking spaces. The project is proposed to be serviced by town water, sewer, and underground electric and gas. The property in question is identified as 9-49 Homer Street, Assessors Map 14, Lot 352, 353 & 354. The locus is across from the former train station and consists of four buildings situated on the three identified lots. The property is within the Ashland Downtown Zoning C.

The hearing started immediately after a couple of ground rules were stated regarding open microphones (shut off when you are done speaking), and that there is an order that comments will be recognized and heard by the chair.

Terry Morris - brief Intro, Rick Salvo– Engineer, Julian Salvucci- Landscape Designer, Ron Borque – Architect

Large vehicle – XL AASHTO Bus-40 per request of the Fire Dept so their biggest vehicle can get thru the back, Octagon structural H-20 rated lawn; Loam and Seed otherwise on the roof deck where no driving.

Pavers are they plantable? We want to see a sample - Hardscape area is hardscape where hatching is; landscaped with grass in the octagon clover and grass and wildflower; Snowplowing – hold plow high; O&M Plan – put shoes on the plow. Reinforced Lawn or Concrete Lawn

Chamfered curb at 45* or they will put in a piece of granite edging – they will specify

Shadow Study – S facing roofs and terraces can be done while maintaining the public facing look of Homer Avenue – He will double check the shadow studies

Applicant noted that the volume is consistent with what is on that street.

Peer Review turning radii in the garage – he says they are correct – all 24' radius – with 38 parking spaces – 9x18; with a 24' backup

How many electric - all EV Ready, How many stations will you have – some available on the 1st floor level, and some in the basement as well. LEED has minimum requirement for this

LEED – no, see below

Trash and Recyclables room – 2x week a smaller vehicle will come in and take trash off site

Bike Storage in garage, room in the lobby, Wire Cage inside on Alden Corner; Residential Lobby, outside of Residential Entrance; bike racks by pocket park off of Alden Street – can add more bike racks dependent on tenants (bike rack benches).

2d fl patio – views are not across from the bedrooms – or they are behind raised 18” planters.

3d fl – all the layouts work and meet Square Foot requirements – condensing units in flat roof sections and sloped roofs on the emergency vehicle pathway

Elevations Materials – Four were selected, removing the option of the metal panel cladding were selected by the committee for the applicant to work up.

Brick veneer on the first two insets, with siding above on the different styles shown

Julian Salvucci– Landscape Designer – the plantings are designed to be low maintenance, drought tolerant and native.

Front – Carex and Geranium, and Chasmanthium so they won't obstruct the windows, will tolerate the North side conditions; Front plantings – simple open/closing with minimal maintenance during the season

Arctostaphylos may be in too much shade – Juniper might fare better

Panicum and Chasmanthium (American Sweet Gum Trees – “slender silhouette”; Eastern Redbuds, Hornbeams possibly adding more evergreen and floral in season

Paving patterns carried across into these spaces all along Homer Ave from the pocket park to Alden Street and around to Alden Street? – Permeable pavement – discuss the plowing (use plow feet), and the salting/sanding will be less as melting ice goes into the paver cracks/gravel.

Are there additional flowering plants, or trees so the look is more vibrant.

Roots of Elms and Oaks – have to be protected.... CR send critical root zones – 12” for the driveway – Orange construction fencing on Erosion Control Plan – Julian agreed that this would be helpful and it will be in the construction documents.

Acer saccharum – a loose fastigate – 18’ wide so provide shade yet not in the way of the fire trucks
Seedling mix in between – about 10” tall – -Sheeps fescue– and Hard fescue, clovers, Johnny Jump
Ups, Alyssums, from Whiteflower Farm – seed mix – Magic Carpet Clover Vermont Wildflower
Farm. Height of wires might allow for taller trees – they will check. They will get the seeds lists of
all their mixes.

2nd floor patio area

Steel and Corten planters – seed mix do the plantings provide privacy – 18” planter, seed mix is 18”
Change out the artificial turf for Eco-Grass or pavers. They will get the seed mixes lists, and
consider taller plants in the containers.

Permeable pavers for rooftop – probably Bison wood paver

Lighting – Bollard Lighting along the path in the back entrance residential park;

Egress needs at least 1fc;

Path lighting needed in the back

Signage lighting in the signs at the front, businesses will be lit from the windows

They are going to engage a lighting design for those lighting issues

Staircase for residents – controls are at entry doors into the building; how does the patio stair get
secured

We are looking for seeing all the options, but not #5, but see the other options in the rendering 3D
views – from both the train tracks and the full front elevation

Type 1 – brick might not need to be continued up to fl 2 – but show both options –

George Rakas – is the rendering to scale? Yes, the photographs are a function of Sketch-Up and a
montage of photos put together.

It’s more of a representation as the photographs are different than the building itself – the building
looks short - line up the buildings that are existing and then move the rendering up so it looks more
in keeping of the actual height of what we are looking at. It wasn’t equal to the surrounding
buildings – the rendering the building looks much smaller than it actually looks like in comparison
to the other buildings to the street.

That apartment 2d fl entrance needs to be secure so that someone from the public can’t get up their
after hours.

What are the charging stations, and will the building owner pay for them?

Sidewalks are 5’ wide at the narrowest

How would tables and chairs space up in the patio spaces

No public funds will be used to build this.

Mark Dasoni – How realistic is this rendering to the site. Security and lighting for the site. Small
pocket driveway off of Homer – how controlled traffic wise? Two way traffic, can turn around in
there w/o doing a 3 pt turn. A Blinking light on the utility pole nearby the entrance on Homer to let
folks know that cars are exiting the parking lot. Beacon on the backside of the sidewalk on their
property, and it would trigger as the cars came from the curve in the back driveway.

“Caution driveway ahead”. For the town to provide.

What is the success story here? Ron Borque – the Success story is to look like it has always been there, provides benefits to the city, enriching your town, producing the best product they can produce.

Joan Gonfrade – on the Historic Commission but speaking as a private citizen – She would like to see separate buildings and 2 buildings on the site, to re-create a more “Village Feel” to this project. She doesn’t like the below ground parking. Downtown Falmouth – separate buildings – different colors and fronts; got built at different times etc.

Different treatments on different buildings would break the façade up better.

Helen Nickole – People are currently renting out the spaces and there are two historic structures on the site, and you haven’t been before the Historic Commission. The two buildings are built in 1840 and 1900. So you would have to come before the HC for a demolition delay. If the project is viable – then they will go forward with the Historic Commission and their hearing.

Charlie – they have every single parking spot ready for a charger. In the larger scale projects, Tesla will install their chargers. Charlie will look into that.

120V or 240V drop for power. Every electric vehicle comes with the charger options and charging systems. Ford and Dodge have gotten together with Tesla. And the Germans and the xxx have also gotten together to make compatible systems. The town doesn’t want to see the panels on the front of the building.

Solar awning on the parking spots to provide solar. Can’t do it due to the fire department?

Solar shingles – he says they can’t do...

They were told they couldn’t put the solar panels on the front side of the street? They will crunch the numbers again on the solar canopy – the structural engineering of the thing.

They are taking all the snow out when it snows – there is no place for snow storage.

The presentation showed the fire trucks and the turn-around for the longer vehicles- can they make those turnarounds without using the parking spaces?

They will get Boring Information tomorrow – regarding water table and ledge etc.

We are now asking for the following:

Rendering of the paver surface –

Rendering of the pocket park as if you are seating in it.

The financing couldn’t be done without the 21E report done and no contamination in the soil –the bank wouldn’t give them the financing without it.

Shadow renderings as discussed earlier in the meeting.

Paver Sample

The committee reviewed open items from Report #1.

To provide more information on how stormwater is treated? Report in the Peer Review responses – deep sump subsurface infiltration facility.

Residential Building signage – there is signage – and it is differentiated between the commercial and residential.

Constructability of elevation

Motion to close the hearing UJ, KM, Cr, Bill N unanimous.

The applicant introduced the notion of what the the City of Newton is about to adopt, a vibration ordinance. System whereby licensed vibrations control person would sign off on it. City Council is

the permitting authority for Newton – and they fashion these amendments and their Planning dept manages this.

None of the below was discussed.

5. Reports (not discussed)
 1. AFM – Report from event, Tabling Survey final editing, publicize
 2. Comprehensive Plan: BN - updates
 3. Reporting Documents for Reviews by DRC (Template): ongoing
 4. Plate Glass windows and building sides stanchions (sent to DRC) HS & CR - photos
 5. Signage: HS
 6. Scenic Roads: BC
 7. Other Reports

6. Discussion of parking lot bylaws and design – minimum parking spaces for trigger. (not discussed)

7. Discussion of proposed bylaw changes and comments from the Planning Board (not discussed)
 - i. Changes to the design review triggers (section 9.6)
 - ii. The site plan review application requirements (section 9.4)

8. Discussion of proposed guideline changes and presenting changes to Planning Board (not discussed)
 - i. Planting intro and guideline fact sheets
 - ii. Parking guidelines

9. Other Business
None.

10. Adjournment. Ujwala Pawnarkr motion to adjourn, Kevin Mowatt 2d, Unanimous 10:49pm.