

LAND USE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of February 4, 2016

Members Present

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Haak, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joyce Lenhardt
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ned Mitinger	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jean McCoubrey
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cynthia Brey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Andrew Moroz
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Gendler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Larry McEwen, VP Physical Div (ex-officio)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Larry Goldfarb	<input type="checkbox"/> Will Detweiler, CHCA President (ex-officio)
<input type="checkbox"/> John Landis (on leave)	

Others Attending:

Sean Whelan, Attorney 2 East Chestnut Hill Avenue
Stuart Udis, Patriot RE Capital, developer 2 East Chestnut Hill Avenue
Michael Stamm, Patriot RE Capital, developer 2 East Chestnut Hill Avenue
Jeremy LeCompte, architect Harman Deutsch, 2 East Chestnut Hill Avenue
Various community members
Patricia Cove
Lori Salganicoff, CHHS
Melissa Nash, recorder

John Haak, chair, opened the meeting at 8:05 p.m. It was moved that the minutes for the January meeting be approved. The motion was seconded. The minutes were approved.

2 E. Chestnut Hill Avenue

•Presentation: Sean Whelan, attorney for the project, began the presentation. There were elevations from Germantown Avenue showing both the existing building and the proposed. There would be no changes to the exterior of the existing building. The first floor unit is about 1800 sqft. Access will be through an existing side door. The second unit will include the second and third floors and will be about 2300 sqft. The new building will have two units, attached by a connector. Each unit will have ±2500 sqft plus 800sqft in the basements. They will have 4 bedrooms and 3½ baths each. A homeowners association will manage the taxes, maintenance, etc. The proposed 2 parking spaces in front of the existing house on Chestnut Hill Avenue have been omitted. The existing garage will be demolished. There are a few refusals: multifamily use, sideyard/front yard setback on Germantown Avenue (required 25', proposed 10'-5") parking in the rear yard and multiple structures on a site.

•Committee Discussion/Questions: Cynthia Brey suggested the two new units be twins instead of being separated by the common entry space to reduce lot coverage. The developers did think of twins. Both units have entries and covered porches. They also have elevators to allow easier access to the master suites. C Brey noted that retaining the existing building is supported. Larry Goldfarb noted that having large, luxurious houses with no private exterior space seems undesirable. In general, there is too much construction on the site. Steve Gendler asked if the units would be for sale or be rentals. Stuart Udis responded that they would be for sale. The market is for downsizers as last homes. Realtors have said this is a market in this area. L McEwen questioned that this was downsizing. He also suggested the design of the new building reflect the massing simplicity of the old building. New porches are overexposed to the street. Joyce Lenhardt commented about the proximity of parking to the porch. In response to a comment about the different color of stone on the old and new in the drawings, it was noted that the stone color for the new building would match the existing stone. The roof is intended to be a composite material, but slate would be considered.

The second unit in the old building will have an exterior space on the roof of the addition. The first floor unit has the front porch. Andrew Moroz noted that the units may be intended for downsizers, but who might come after them? Does there need to be so much added space? S Whelan responded that a single is hard to take care of, especially the common areas. Ned Mitinger noted that many people, even singles, want extra rooms. C Brey noted the old house has a blocked window in the master bath on the entry porch. This porch is the second unit entry and does not have access directly from the first unit. L Goldfarb asked about the possible price tag. They units may sell for \$850,000. Issues are materials, massing of building and parking.

- Audience Comments: A neighbor asked if the developers had done similar projects in Chestnut Hill. They have not but have worked in Mt. Airy. The developers do own this property. Another neighbor noted that this area is a gateway to Chestnut Hill; there cannot be a generic fit. John Romano stated that a design for a landscape barrier should be shown. Agnes Richardson, the adjoining neighbor, stated she opposes the construction absolutely. The new three-story buildings would be very close to her property and would overlook her backyard. The proposed buildings are only 7' from the property line. Lori Salganicoff stated that the preservation of the old building is good and suggested that a subcommittee is needed to work to refine the design of the new. There will be 3 HDAC volunteers. An audience member suggested the developers look at various sites in Chestnut Hill – Roanoke Court, Winston Court and Navaho Court – to for inspiration. J Romano suggested explaining the economic rationale. The massing of windows and entrances also need work. He will meet with the sub-committees.

- Committee Action: It was moved that the LUPZC form a subcommittee with the HDAC and Streetscape Committee to work out issues discussed tonight. They would make recommendations about how the design might be modified to meet concerns, particularly massing of the new buildings (height is good; twins should be considered), minimizing square footage to achieve a better mix of open space and built areas. The motion was seconded. The goal is for the revised designs to be presented at the next LUPZC, not at DRC later this month. There needs to be an opportunity for LUPZC and HDAC to review the changes. The motion was unanimously passed.

Updates

- Bells Mill Road Report: Larry McEwen reported that there was a walk-through with Streets and that there was an opposition to sidewalks. Streets presented a new proposal for the road. There could be a bike lane on level with the cartway that would accommodate pedestrians. Streets is moving forward and exploring the project. The Jersey barriers would be replaced with steel guardrails.

- Possible New Member: J Haak said he has spoken to a potential new candidate for the committee.

- Large Lots/Community Planning: L Salganicoff of the Historical Society introduced the subject of large properties. Conservation and preservation are priorities. She showed a subdividable properties map and a partial map showing demographics and construction waves. Often there is a reactive position, but there should be a proactive position. PrenPraxis will do a study for \$25,000, a steep cost. Some of this is a reaction to the proposed tear-down of 30 W. Chestnut Hill Avenue. C Brey asked about the economic forces that trigger tear-downs. At present there are only 90 buildings in Chestnut Hill on the Philadelphia Historic register. L McEwen noted that at the last August meeting a spreadsheet was presented that categorized lots using street frontage and zoning as a predictor of lot splits. There are multiple tools that can be used to help prevent the loss of valuable buildings and properties, including easements and zoning. The inventory needs to be updated and is being

updated. Chestnut Hill will be remapped by the City at some point. The community needs to participate and possibly suggest a new zoning category. The District Planner needs community input. Many rules are needed to deal with automobiles in Chestnut Hill. FOW is needed to work on tree heritage.

- Jenks School Wall on Ardleigh: Patrick Jones of Cindy Bass's office has spoken with the School District of Philadelphia about the Jenks wall. The SDP will send drawings.

- Subcommittee Volunteers for 2 E. Chestnut Hill Avenue: Andrew Moroz will join the subcommittee. Another person would be good. Other committee members can work on residential preservation and the community development plan. Some non-residents might be good to include.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m.