

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of June 19, 2024

The DRC meeting was held via Zoom

Members Present

- ✓ Larry McEwen, Co-chair
- ✓ John Landis, Co-chair
- ✓ Chris Linn, LUPZC
- ✓ Steve Gendler, LUPZC
- ✓ Patricia Cove, HDAC
- ✓ Sam Filippi, Business Association
- Matt Rutt, Parking Foundation
- , Streetscape Committee
- Matt Rutt, VP Physical
- Laura Lucas, President CHCA (ex-officio)

Others Attending

Roy Aharovich, Vich Developers
Zamir Garcia, Architects
Augusta O'Neil, developer
Richard Maloumian,
John Beckham,
Jeff and Tallulah Regan
Melissa Degenhardt
Chrissy Clawson
Elizabeth Stokes
George McNeely
Ann Nevel
Kate O'Neill
Diana Dimarzi
Frank Veasy
Michael Sivel
Karen Pilling
Jennifer Pinella
Brian Rudnick
Matt Spector
Lori Salgonicoff, CH Conservancy
Camille Pelosi, LUPZC
Craig Schelter, LUPZC
Greg Lattanzi, LUPZC and CHCA Board member
Joyce Lenhardt, LUPZC and CHCA Board member
Anne McNiff, Executive Director CHCA
Celeste Hardester, Development Review Facilitator
Melissa Nash, recorder

The meeting was opened by Larry McEwen, co-chair, at 7:01 pm. This is a pre-refusal meeting.

8228 Germantown Avenue

•Presentation: Zamir Garcia opened the presentation with an overview of the site and neighborhood. Roy Aharovich described the overall project. The development, called “The Weiler”, will be a senior community with 14 condo units and 16 parking spaces. The existing house will house a commercial space on the first floor and condo owner’s community space on the second floor. There are two engineers working on the plans for the land and the site. Z Garcia resumed the description. The site is currently zoned RSA-3, although the future zoning is CMX-2. The existing house is on the Philly Register. It was built in 1760 in the Federal style and in 1796 it was owned by the Detweiler family. It is typical “Germantown” style for the period with stone walls and divided window lights. Typical details for buildings in the area were shown. They also looked at typical massings in the area. The hotel across the street is three stories and a mansard roof with a two story porch. The development consists of the condo building with a commercial space. There is a ground floor entry for residents that includes elevator access, mail and a trash area. A curb cut will be needed to access parking. Parking will be under the building on the ground level. The house will be restored with commercial on

the first floor and condo amenities above. There are 3 floors of condos with 4 units per floor; there is a fifth floor with two larger condos. Materials will reflect local materials. Three stories of brick and mansard upper levels and the fifth floor steps back from the street to provide a terrace and there are projecting bays into the courtyard. The access drive is partially under the building. The wall that exists at the sidewalk of the existing building will be rebuilt. The cornice lines relate to next door building. The street will be activated at the façade.

•Committee Comments/Questions: L McEwen asked what refusals were expected. Z Garcia stated that a refusal for a curbcut will be needed. He did not know if any others would come up. L McEwen noted that CMX-2 has a height limit of 38', which will trigger a refusal. Density may also require a refusal. S Gendler asked about the height of the problem. It is 61' at the street, but there is a grade change. It was noted that the presentation was very clear and thorough. It was asked if the property is to be re-zoned through City Council. The use of CMX-2 is due to the projected zoning changes. J Landis noted that although the property is to be re-zoned, it is now RSA-3, which would trigger variances. It was asked if the design is based on CMX-2. IT generally is. S Gendler observed that the design belittles the house. The 1 West project down the street was re-zoned CMX-2.5. It also has more stepping back from the street. L McEwen also noted that brick only goes to the fourth floor and that there is more stepping back for the top floor Patricia Cove noted that the historic house is dwarfs. There should be a more complementary design. It was asked if there was any residential in the old building. All of the condos are in the new construction. The upper level of the house is amenities for the condo owners. J Landis noted that the scale and density of the construction are concerns. More setbacks are needed to have more light on the street. The courtyard (parking access) does not provide light for the units. It appears that the regulatory house needs to be put in order. The site is too maxed out. Joyce Lenhardt asked if the street Mansard is actual living space or a terrace screen. The area with windows is enclosed space; above the windows there is a wall for the terrace. She suggested eliminating the fourth floor on the Avenue. J Lenhardt asked about the age limit for the community. It is being proposed as 50+ with limited social. The new building competes with the house and should be simplified. Removing the shutters on the façade of the condo building would simplify it. The density is too high and it does not actually conform to CMX-2. L McEwen observed that the smaller units were good. C Pelusi noted that, in addition to the density and height, street continuity is interrupted. In that portion of the block the buildings step back from the sidewalk. Chris Linn stated that he agrees with the comments overall. Greg Lattanzi asked if the developers had reached out to the Philadelphia Historic Commission. The project has been discussed but there has been no design review. S Gendler asked about pervious coverage He suggested modelling the difference with and without the fifth floor. This was modeled but they wanted the ground level parking. L McEwen suggested reducing the massing and increasing exterior spaces. S Gendler noted that the outdoor space is meager and that high density could trigger another refusal.

•Community Comments/Questions: Melissa Degenhardt asked about the building that seems to be on the rear of the lot. There is no other building on the property only the house. She also asked about ADA access to the community space on the second floor of the house. It can be accessed through the new building. P Cove suggested that the connection be shown more clearly in elevations. Brian Rudnick stated that he is confused about zoning and if there is a master Plan for zoning. There is a city masterplan for zoning and much of Chestnut Hill on Germantown Avenue will be re-zoned.

•Committee Comments: L McEwen asked about light from the project spilling over to the rear yards of neighbors and the shadows that may darken the houses and yards. Celeste Hardester asked about ground floor commercial use (CMX-2). Commercial space will only be in the old building. There will also be a condo entry lobby on the ground floor of the new building. J. Landis noted that neighbors may be impacted by this new project. The project does have an advantage for the community with increasing life on the street and it fits in with the existing consistency. More work is needed for the contextuality of the community. C Hardester asked about the affordability of the units. The plan is that they would sell for \$500-550 per sq ft with parking P Cove asked about the schedule. R Aharovich noted that they plan to have another meeting with the CHCA, then go to L&I. It was suggested that zoning be clarified by City Planning. Refusals need to be estimated. C Hardester asked about appearing before the Historic Commission

Committee Business

•Minutes Approval: It was moved that the May minutes be approved. The motion was seconded and approved.

Adjournment

•The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.