

Design Review Board Meeting Minutes
June 27, 2023
6:00 p.m. Virtual Meeting via ZOOM

Members present: John Sarni, Linda Riley, Scott Finlay

Members absent: Rue Sherwood, Laura Gresh

Planning Staff present: Interim Director Glenn Gibbs, Assistant Planner Andrea Bates

Applicant team present:

Ted Galante, Galante Architecture
Stephen Crane, Town Manager
Robert Weatherall, Public Safety Facility Committee Chair
Laura Jolly, CHA Companies
Paul Parisi, Fire Chief
Paul Nikas, Police Chief
Ewan Ellis, Galante Architecture

Meeting called to order at 6:05pm. Sarni was appointed Chair for the meeting. Gibbs briefly reviewed the Design Review Board bylaw.

Citizen Queries

None.

36 Linebrook Road

Galante gave a project narrative. He stated the intent of the building design is to reflect the current time period and that the parking is minimized, site landscaping provides greening, and the building siting is unobtrusive. He stated that church is a taller building with a larger footprint, parking area, and curb cut. He said the public safety building reflects the color palette of the church and reflects the color palette of the Caldwell Block building. Galante showed sightlines from the proposed balcony and stated the building is designed to provide privacy to neighbors, including the balcony that is screened both with fencing and with landscaping. Galante showed a drawing of an example building shared during with the Town Meeting vote for the land purchase of the site, and stated that proposal was a larger footprint with more parking and less green space than the building currently being proposed.

Sarni referred to the Design Review Principles and Standards. Sarni stated the building is incompatible with multiple standards, including in its relation to the surrounding residential architecture and historical cultural character. Sarni said the slanted windows on the building do not reflect the surrounding architecture. Galante responded by stating the windows referenced are an interpretation of the church window.

Riley agreed with Sarni. Riley asked to see a building more reflective of surrounding homes and is concerned about a flat roof design leaking. Galante stated that a gable roof on a building of

this size costs more and proper roof design would prevent leaks. Weatherall stated there is a precedent for non-residential buildings in this and other residential areas in Ipswich, such as the nearby church, restaurant, schools. Crane agreed and provided Town Hall as an example of a flat roofed building in a residential, historic neighborhood.

Riley said she believed window trim is a way the design can be improved.

Finlay stated he was appointed by the Historical Commission and they sent a letter to the DRB. Finlay read the letter. Finlay shared concerns that the DRB was brought in too late to the process and agreed with Sarni and Riley that the building is incompatible with multiple Design Review Principles and Standards. Finlay stated the building is too urban and the principle of form following function conflicts with the neighborhood compatibility directive in the Standards. Finlay said that the DRB could have worked with the Applicant if it had been brought into the process earlier to settle on a more appropriate design.

Riley referenced prior projects before the DRB where design professionals have worked with the Board over multiple meetings to make positive changes to the design. Riley stated this has not happened with this project and that aesthetic changes should be made to better fit into the site.

Crane stated that unlike other projects this is an essential public service building and that Town Meeting approved the site's land purchase with drawings that showed a structure that reflects the style of building being proposed. Sarni stated the Town Meeting did not vote on design details.

Sarni showed building examples from Holden, Andover, Carver, and Chatham. Sarni stated that in these buildings the apparatus bay was distinct from the rest of the building's design in an attempt to be as compatible with surroundings as possible. Sarni stated that he believes the building can be designed in a way more compatible with the neighborhood.

Sarni made a motion that the DRB disapproves of the current building design and recommends the PB request a redesign of the facades to better comply with Section IX.K.5. Finlay seconded. All approved.

Finlay said that if the building is redesigned, the DRB should be included in the discussion.

Minutes from May 10, 2023

Sarni motioned to adopt May minutes. Finlay seconded. All approved.

Adjournment

Sarni motioned to adjourn at 7:15p.m. Finlay seconded. All approved.

Minutes taken by Andrea Bates

Minutes adopted on: July 25, 2023