

MINUTES OF THE DESIGN WORKING SESSION
SUDBURY BOARD OF APPEALS
Wednesday, March 10, 2010

In Attendance:

Jeff Klofft, Chairman, Zoning Board of Appeals;
Jon Gossels, Zoning Board of Appeals
Jody Kablack, Planning and Community Development
Beth Rust, Sudbury Housing Trust
Toby Kramer, NOAH, Inc.
Wayne Keefner, Meridian Associates
Bob Wegener, Narrow Gate
Jay Webber, Narrow Gate
Daniel Hewitt, Sudbury Housing Trust
Larry O'Brien, Sudbury Housing Trust
Frank Riepe, Design Review Board

Neighbors in attendance: Nancy MacPhee, 5 Marlboro Road and Jane Graham, 32 Marlboro Road

Mr. Klofft, acting as Chairman, explained that the objective of this working session would be to review design concepts. Under consideration are driveway placement, traffic safety, building location and setbacks, building scale, number of units, street views, and how the buildings interface with the neighboring houses and street. Feasibility issues are to be dealt with afterward regarding septic, storm water management, site grading, and aesthetics.

Mr. O'Brien, Selectman and Sudbury Housing Trust (SHT) member, reminded attendees that the work session is not the definitive decision as no quorum from any group was present. He said that at the last Zoning Board meeting the SHT heard from both the neighbors and Design Review Board (DRB) that the original designs as proposed would not be acceptable. Therefore alternatives had been drawn to be presented to the working group.

Mr. Riepe, DRB, said that his goal was to see what the new concepts look like -- do the buildings sit gently on the site and do they fit in a graceful way into the neighborhood.

Ms. Kramer, Project Manager, handed out new drawings labeled Plans A-E which she said were new approaches to tackle priority issues. She also began to work through the meeting agenda which covered parameters and objectives.

As to the point about proximity to adjacent lots Ms. Kramer said that abutters' houses did not sit directly next to the proposed site.

Mr. Klofft said that one of his concerns about proximity is usually about the ability to maintain a property within the property boundaries. He then gave the example of ladders being raised and overlapping the confines of a property.

Mr. Klofft said that in the original design the grade was too steep at the back and he was concerned about the driveway placement and its impact on traffic.

Mr. Keefner said that the septic system should remain in place because the soils are better at the lower part of the site. Water can be contained there.

Mr. Hewett noted that Sudbury has a broad range of property types. In the area are many farm-like houses. There is no intention to have several outbuildings but some are needed for functionality. As to the driveway location he said that certain schemes, as provided, will only work depending upon the building shape, but engineering studies need to be done for final determination. He said that the first objective is to select a design scheme and then work with an engineer to see how the design would work and how to best achieve it.

Ms. Kramer said that NOAH, Inc. wants to create a sense of community within the site through the design and ensure social opportunities for the tenants.

The group then looked at Plan A. Mr. Hewett noted that movement through the site went up and down the hill. There are side stairs for entry into the rear units. Ms. Rust noted that tenants would have to utilize the stairs when going in and out of the apartments and that somewhat impacts salability. She used the examples of tenants carrying groceries from cars into apartments and other hindrances such as strollers.

Mr. Klofft noted that the patios were better screened than on the original plan because they face the parking area. Porches face the street on the lower, front building.

Mr. Riepe asked about the grading implications and noted that retaining walls would still be needed.

Ms. Kramer said that the driveway would be on Maynard Road.

Plan B has 3 unit clusters with the driveway on the Marlboro Road side. It was noted that grading was more level with this plan. Retaining walls would still be necessary. Parking would be in the middle of the site, partly screened by the buildings themselves.

Plan C is comprised of two units at the back and four units in the front. Mr. Klofft asked about the frontage and it was estimated to be 90 feet. The driveway was off of Maynard Road. Parking areas were broken down. Four spaces with screening were shown along the western side and more was in the middle of the site behind the lower building. Ms. Kablack said that the goal was to make sure the façade of the buildings facing the road looked more like building fronts. Dwelling entrances face the street and the personal spaces face the parking area. The back building still requires stairs for entry.

Plan D is more indigenous to the Sudbury area with a house and barn scheme. Four units are at the back of the lot and two units in the front. Parking is located in between the two structures and

is tucked under the back building with two tandem spaces per unit beneath the building. Alternate parking is located down the hill off the driveway, which is on Marlboro Road.

Mr. Klofft asked if all parking was needed. The answer was dependent upon a tandem parking plan under the back building.

Mr. Keefner noted that the back building absorbs some of the grading and acts as a retaining wall so that there is less of a need for separate retaining walls.

Mr. Riepe asked about the interior spaces. The living space is on the upper two levels and the lower level is basement space with both personal and mechanical storage areas. Mr. Riepe asked whether there would still be a need for outdoor storage for the front buildings. A shed would be required on the east side of the building for trash and utilities. The front buildings will also have a basement for private storage.

Mr. Riepe felt that this design was schematically good, particularly in the way it deals with the grade.

Plan E works off of the same structural plan as Plan D however, the driveway is off of Maynard Road and parking is shown off of the driveway at the west side. While there are single spaces below the back building the spaces are not tandem parking spaces. Soft parking spaces would be available for visitors.

Mr. Riepe questioned the differences in slope between plans D and E. E has a longer driveway which would be useful in icy conditions and for school children heading to the bus stop. Ms. Kramer said that the driveway in E goes across the grade.

Mr. Klofft asked whether it would be possible to work with the abutting neighbor to obtain an easement for use of his driveway to help with the shape of the drive's entrance.

Mr. Riepe said that he was troubled by the placement of scheme D. He said that if a shed is necessary then perhaps it could be located directly opposite the front building by the east gable and a walkway could be created in between the shed and the building to create a visual connection between the two. Ms. Kramer was concerned about residents looking at their trash receptacles. Mr. Riepe said that a shed could be handsomely designed.

Mr. Gossels noted that plan E appears to have more pavement. He preferred option D.

Ms. Kablack said that many of Sudbury's 40B properties utilize tandem parking so she did not feel tandem parking would be problematic. She also reminded the group that not all of the residents would have cars or be of driving age. She also said that if E was the preferred plan then tandem parking could be incorporated into plan E.

Mr. Klofft said that the windows on the back building should still look barn-like.

Siding on the back building would not be horizontal clapboard but more of a barn-board type sheathing.

Mr. Klofft said that he felt more comfortable with the big house and barn design of plan D or E because the plan helped with the grading issue and the buildings looked less massive than the original plan. Mr. Gossels agreed and added that the plan looks more like other examples found on Maynard Road.

Mr. Klofft also said that the big front building and smaller back building would work only if the setbacks were greater.

Mr. Riepe said that he would like to see a new rendering of both D and E and wants a better look at the driveway of C. Ms. Kablack asked for an elevation as seen from Marlboro Road.

Mr. Riepe said that he felt plan D could be designed in a way to have only one entrance from the street view making it look more like a single family house with only one entry. He said that the larger building makes it look less like a single family house.

Ms. Kramer said, however, that the grading is better at the front of the lot so it would be better to have the bigger building in the front. She said it would also be better from a selling perspective to consider a more level building with fewer stairs.

Mr. Klofft disagreed with Ms. Kramer by citing the Russ Tanner development on Boston Post Road which is permitted but not yet built.

Mr. Hewett said that the problem with plan C is that multiple doors on the front announce multiple units. He suggested breaking off the ell section to make a breezeway that could be entered from the back.

After much discussion about different scenarios for plan C Mr. Klofft said that it would be fine to take another look at revising plan C, however he feels that plans D and E would be best suited for the site. He said that while he preferred the design style of plan D with the entry on Marlboro Road he felt that from a safety perspective having the entry on Maynard Road would be better.

Ms. Kablack said that Town Engineer Bill Place said that there were adequate site lines for both entries. Mr. Place had initially preferred a Marlboro Road entry, but has since changed his mind.

Mr. Riepe said that he prefers plan D because it has less pavement but the obscurity of the driveway on Plan E is preferred from that perspective. He added that the Fire Chief also prefers plan D. Mr. Riepe said that he wants to see a scheme for plan E with parallel parking spaces as he is bothered by the four head-in parking spaces near the road.

A discussion about driveway width ensued. Ms. Kablack said that she would talk with the Fire Chief about driveway width and about which Road is preferred as an entrance. Mr. Gossels mentioned that at the 40B on Old County Road grassed pavers were implemented as a way to

accommodate emergency vehicles turning around. Ms. Kablack said that she doesn't want access to be the only determining factor of the design.

Mr. Riepe noted that the driveway in design D has a solar orientation which should help with ice melt. Plan E swings over and has trees shading it which would inhibit ice melt.

Mr. Gossels made a general comment that he is very comfortable with the new plans and feels that the Housing Trust and NOAH are going in the right direction.

Nancy MacPhee, 5 Marlboro Road, said that she can clearly see Maynard Road from her living room window and invited anyone interested to see the view.

Ms. Kablack summarized the discussion and said that for the next meeting Plan D would be an option, Plan E would be re-worked, and Plan C would be explored as well.

It was decided that one more working session would be scheduled for a date to be determined before the next public meeting on April 27.