

**VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD
DRAFT MINUTES
August 9, 2017**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jane Soule, Randy Mayhew, Wendy Spector,

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Keri Cole, One Vacancy

OTHERS PRESENT:

Robert Hager, Liz Neily, John King, Tom Hayes, Jill Davies, Daniel Notargiacomo, Cynthia Cross, Naomi Malik, Michael Malik, Janet Spangler, Jennifer Maxham, Anita Clarke, Kevin Clark, Laurie Marshall, Michael Brands

I CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Jane Soule called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. New Business:

1. V-3326-17 Robert & Honore' Hager

The application is for Design Review Approval to place 192 linear foot fence, & lights over front door and garage door. The property is located at 22 The Green in Residential Medium Density / Design Review District.

Mr. Hager presented the application.

The VDRB reviewed a site plan and photographs of the proposed garage door, fence and lights.

The proposed rear porch expansion was withdrawn from the application. The porch is located on the southwest corner of the home. However, the owner is requesting railings along the west edge of the southwest porch and along the south edge of the southeast porch. The traditional railings are needed for safety purposes.

A goose neck styled light with a motion sensor to be centered over the garage door is proposed. A 40-watt equivalent bulb would be placed.

Two additional lights would be placed on each side of the front main entrance doors. The fixtures are a 13" tall lantern style with a 40-watt equivalent bulb. The lantern would be black and not bronze as depicted in the photograph.

Fences are to be placed along the front and the east side of the property.

The fence along the front would be more formal with capped posts between the spindle rails. There would be no gate. The two entrance posts would be slightly taller and would have a wood ball placed on top. This is similar to the fence on the east side of the Town Hall.

The side fence would be a simple picket fence with the support posts hidden behind the pickets. This style was chosen as it matches the neighbor's fence along the shared driveway. There would be a break in the fence to enter from the rear but no gate.

The fences would be painted white. An existing split rail fence along the side would be removed.

The VDRB read the Design Review Board's recommendation to approve as presented.

Ms. Spector recommended that the owner place the same style fence continuous with the property. She did not feel a need to match the neighbor's fence.

Testimony was voted close.

2. V-3327-17

John and Karen King

The application is for Site Plan and Conditional Use Approval to construct 4 additional residential units in 2 duplex buildings. The property is located at 25 Lincoln Street and is zoned Residential High Density.

Mr. King presented the application.

The VDRB reviewed numerous renderings and site plans of the proposed development.

The request is for two multi-family buildings, each of which contain two 1500 square foot residences. Multi-family applications require a Conditional Use and Site Plan Review.

The current property has a 2300 square foot single family house and a 600 square foot apartment above a two-car garage.

Mr. King has been working on this project since 2014. He's lived at this site since 2009.

The parcel contains 1.01 acres. The property is zoned Residential High Density. This zone requires 5445 square feet per unit. A 1.01 acre lot would allow up to 8 units on-site.

The owner wishes to have 4 additional units in addition to the current 2 units for a total of 6 residential units.

The property location has a high walk ability ratio which is conducive to high density use. Housing is needed in the Village.

Mr. King recognizes the changing demographics and will build elevator shafts in each of the proposed 4 units.

Mr. King wishes to continue living in his current home for the next ten years, and would then transfer to one of the new units. Over the past 8 years, the home has been completely refurbished. A 2-car garage and an apartment were added.

A letter from his current tenant supports the request.

Two barn like buildings would be built into the side hill with a stone veneer foundation. The property had once been a farm. Each unit would have a 2-car garage on the basement level with 2 living space levels above.

Heat pump technology would be used throughout. The garages would be wired for electric car plugins. A goose neck light with a timer similar to that on his garage would be placed above each garage door. Lights would be turned off by 9:00 or 10:00 p.m..

The site plan was reviewed. When viewed from the street, the barns would be screened up to 80% by existing and proposed trees. A number of photographs were viewed.

The current asphalt driveway would be used for access. It would be widened slightly. The steep driveway currently has water issues, as water runs directly into the street. Current standards require a negative slope at the street road that would force water along the sides. The owner feels his driveway is grandfathered. A stone lined swale is proposed along the west edge of the driveway to help improve the flow of the water.

The proposed buildings would comply with the required setbacks, 10' on the sides and 15' on the rear.

The site is steep and stormwater is an issue. Three drawings from Willis Engineering show various stormwater control elements. Drainage and retaining walls along the rear of the buildings would guide stormwater. Each corner of the building would have a rain barrel. The driveway extension to the western building would have porous pavers to help absorb water on-site.

A series of plantings are proposed to help screen the buildings from the neighbors. Trees are proposed along both east and west property lines. A portion of the east screening is on the neighbors property. Mr. King feels the owner should be willing to site trees as well. Apple trees would be planted on the lawn area just west of the current home. This would improve screening when viewed from Lincoln Street. The proposed barns should be invisible six months of the year once vegetation matures.

Vehicle glare would be cut down with the proposed screening along the east border.

Additional sewer and water lines would exit the property along the western boundary. The current sewer and water lines run just west of the existing driveway. Letters from both the Town of Woodstock and the Woodstock Aqueduct Company state adequate capacity.

The Fire Chief was asked to visit the site but is currently on vacation.

The construction process would be phased. The foundation would be poured and capped first. Hardscape would then be completed. The structures are panelized for ease of construction. The process also cuts down on the on-site waste. There would only be waste during the drywall process. The final step, landscaping would be completed in the fall.

All trash and recycling bins would be kept in the garages. A hauler would be contracted to drive into the site for pickup. Bins would not be placed in the street.

Ms. Spector asked about parking.

Currently two cars park in the garage and two along the asphalt driveway. One of the parking areas was inadvertently built on the neighbor's property. Recently the asphalt was removed, and the area in question was planted with grass seed. The proposed units would all have parking in the basement levels, two cars each.

Mr. King showed an early overhead photograph of Village, highlighting the development pattern within the area.

Ms. Maxham, a Lincoln Street resident, asked about square footage and building height.

Mr. King stated the buildings would be 34' tall not counting the cupolas. Each unit would be 1500 square feet. The current house is 2300 square feet: 900 each on 1st and 2nd floor, and 500 on 3rd. The apartment above the two car garage is 650 square feet.

Mr. Hayes, attorney representing the abutting neighbors to the east - Vassie Sinopulas and Chris Lloyd, listed numerous concerns.

The applicant has proposed screening on his client's property. The asphalt driveway and parking are directly on the property line leaving no room for snow removal, water drainage or screening.

The application is not complete. The applicant is updating the submittals on a daily basis. The current site plan was submitted just hours before the hearing.

The effectiveness of the proposed porous pavement was questioned. The existing

driveway is far too steep. The owner has already admitted current stormwater issues. Adding more impervious areas to the property will exacerbate the problem.

Traffic issues need to be examined. Twelve cars coming and going all day will create congestion.

Mr. Hayes read the zoning definition of a “lot” which includes, “... intended to be occupied by one primary use or building....” The site plan shows 3 buildings which overwhelm the small lot.

There is no development like this in the neighborhood. The placement of the large cupolas on the roof are also out of character and stick out well above the 35' height limit.

The Emergency Services needs to review the site. The driveways and proximity of buildings appear way too congested for maneuverability of emergency vehicles.

Vice-Chair Soule Jane suggested a site visit to address the many issues raised and asked Mr. King to mark the building site locations.

Mr. King noted he would place stakes to site buildings and driveway expansion areas.

Mr. King responded to the attorney’s concerns. Mr. King did not complain when the neighbors built a new house. The Lloyds should share the responsibility for screening as well. The Lloyds’ porch looks over the Kings’ property making screening very difficult. The Lloyds’ also want to maintain their distant views. To achieve this he is willing to trim the trees as they mature.

The cupola design is prominent on two buildings located on River Road. He is willing to reduce the size of the cupolas. When questioned if they are functional, he noted they are only decorative.

Chair Soule stated the River Road buildings are actually located in the Town and not the Village.

Mr. King noted two barns have been built in the Village in recent years.

The porous pavers do work as they are the same product that is being used at Billing Farm and Museum.

Mr. King referenced a number of historic photographs in addressing the character of the neighborhood comments.

Using a recent orthophoto of the neighborhood, Mr. King indicated a number of multi-family homes with more than one unit. Steep neighborhood streets (Slayton, Slayton Terrace, Mt. Peg, etc.) were shown as well.

The high density cluster home is a popular trend as it allows for needed housing on smaller lots. The Village Zoning Regulations have zoned this area as high density zoning for more than 40 years. He felt 8 units in one building would not be in character and therefore created 2 buildings with 2 units each. The barn scenario also makes them more character of the area friendly.

Mr. Malik, a neighbor from 5 Stanton Street, noted numerous concerns. The project is out of character. He stated that he feels three buildings are too much for the site. The other multi family units located in the neighborhood are all placed within one building, and, therefore, less notable. Twelve cars coming and going all day is a lot of traffic and too much for the neighborhood. Snow removal is an issue. Twelve Cassella containers on the street each week will not be pretty. If approved, this could set a bad precedent as it would have a negative impact on the village character.

Ms. Cross, owner of 37 Pleasant Street - the Mac's Market property, is especially concerned with stormwater. Drainage onto her property is already an issue. Mr. King admitted to an existing stormwater issue. Allowing more stormwater would be unbearable.

Mrs. Malik, a resident at 5 Stanton Street, stated that drainage is a primary concern. Stanton Street is very steep and already has more stormwater than it can handle. She asked if engineers have studied the issue. Her home was built in the 1840s. Rain events are going to become more severe in the future as evidenced by the July 1st rainfall.

Mr. Clark, a long-term resident at 3 Stanton Street, felt the proposal is not in character with the neighborhood. He is very concerned with additional traffic on the narrow and steep Stanton Street. There are no sidewalks and winter travel is very difficult.

Ms. Spangler, downhill abutter whose house is directly across Lincoln Street, stated that the Kings have been fabulous neighbors. However, she is concerned with trash, traffic, and water issues. The July 1st storm really impacted her property. Traffic glare is a major concern, as vehicles exiting the site will shine directly on her home. This is a nice and quiet neighborhood, which is why she moved here. She does not want suburbia.

Mr. King responded. The cross drainage issue was caused by the construction of Ms. Spangler's garage. Mac's Market is the source of noise and light pollution in the neighborhood.

Following a brief discussion, Mr. Mayhew with a second from Ms. Spector moved for a continuation of testimony to allow for a site visit.

The motion passed with a 3-0 vote.

After additional discussion, the VDRB agreed to hold a site visit on Thursday, August 17 at 11:00 a.m. The neighbors were informed that the site visit is a public event should they wish to attend. Testimony would be continued on August 23, 2017.

3. V-3331-17 Liz Neily

The application is for Design Review Approval to replace doors and windows on South elevation with two sets of sliding glass doors. The property is located at 79 Pleasant Street in Commercial/Light Industrial / Design Review District.

Ms. Neily presented the application.

The VDRB reviewed photographs of the building and proposed renderings.

Ms. Neily presented a new rendering of the south elevation with minor changes.

The intent of the request is to allow natural light into the basement area of the building. The building is for an industrial use, a baking and presentation studio.

A sliding door, two windows and a set of carriage doors would be removed from the existing south elevation first floor.

The window and door on the extreme west end of the elevation would remain as is.

A 16' wide opening centered on the elevation is proposed. The opening is proposed to have 4 sections of 4' wide glass doors. The inner 2 doors would slide to either side and the outer 2 doors would be fixed.

A set of full glass French doors (8' wide) would be placed on the east side of the elevation.

The proposed glass doors would have a modern grid frame and would not be a solid glass unit. However, it is located on the rear of the building and would not be seen by neighbors or the passing public.

The property is located in the East End Design Review overlay zone which has a slightly less rigorous design standard.

The applicant added a 6" high (one step), 4' wide x 38'-40' long deck along the rear of the building to the application. The deck would make access easier. An extended roof along the rear elevation currently covers this area. The east end of the deck would be flush to the east elevation of the building. The western edge stops just before the existing door on the west end.

The deck would not be visible to the general public.

The VDRB read the Design Review Board's recommendation to approve as presented.

Testimony was voted close.

III. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Zoning Officer's Report

The report was issued.

B. Current VDRB Vacancy

Two applicants were interviewed, but the Trustees could not make an immediate decision. The decision was continued to the next Wednesday. The Town Planner mentioned that there had been talk of increasing the VDRB to a 7-member board with one vacancy. In discussing the expansion, the VDRB unanimously agreed it was not the right direction for the 7-member concept as it did not work in the past. The VDRB requested to remain a 5-member board.

C. Table Layout

In a discussion of the current "V" formation of the conference room table, the VDRB noted a preference for the former orientation, straight across. During tonight's hearing, Mr. King, the applicant, had a hard time finding a suitable location by which both the audience and the board would be able to view his presentation. The resolution was for the left side of the room to move to the right side, to enable a clear view. The tables as set up would not work for a full board, the past few meetings have had only three members. The VDRB clerk, the Town Planner, is forced to sit in the same plane as the board members making it appear he is part of the board when he is not. In the former layout, he sat at the end of table, which separated him from the board. The board noted it is difficult to view all members of the audience as their eyes are focused on the corners of the room due their seating position. One has to turn one's head to view the other corner. With the table straight across the eyes are focused on the center of the room enabling an easy view of the entire audience.

IV. DELIBERATIONS

A. V-3326-17 Robert & Honore' Hager

After discussion, the following findings of fact were established:

1. The VDRB reviewed a site plan and photographs of the proposed garage door, fence and lights.
2. The proposed rear porch expansion was withdrawn from the application. The porch is located on the southwest corner of the home. However, the owner is requesting railings along the west edge of the southwest porch and along the south edge of the southeast porch. The traditional railings are needed for safety purposes.
3. A goose neck styled light with a motion sensor to be centered over the garage door is proposed. A 40-watt equivalent bulb would be placed.
4. Two additional lights would be placed on each side of the front main entrance doors. The fixtures are a 13" tall lantern style with a 40-watt equivalent bulb. The lantern would be black and not bronze as depicted in the photograph.
5. Fences are to be placed along the front and the east side of the property.
6. The fence along the front would be more formal with capped posts between the spindle rails. There would be no gate. The two entrance posts would be slightly taller and would have a wood ball placed on top. This is similar to the fence on the east side of the Town Hall.

7. The side fence would be a simple picket fence with the support posts hidden behind the pickets. This style was chosen as it matches the neighbor's fence along the shared driveway. There would be a break in the fence to enter from the rear but no gate.
8. The fences would be painted white. An existing split rail fence along the side would be removed.
9. The VDRB read the Design Review Board's recommendation to approve as presented.

After further discussion, Mr. Mayhew moved with a second by Ms. Spector to approve the application as presented.

The motion was approved with a 3-0 vote.

B. V-3327-17

John & Karen King

Continued

C. V-3331-17

Liz Neily

After discussion, the following findings of fact were established:

1. The VDRB reviewed photographs of the building and proposed renderings.
2. The applicant presented a new rendering of the south elevation with minor changes.
3. The intent of the request is to allow natural light into the basement area of the building. The building is for an industrial use, a baking and presentation studio.
4. A sliding door, two windows and a set of carriage doors would be removed from the existing south elevation first floor.
5. The window and door on the extreme west end of the elevation would remain as is.
6. A 16' wide opening centered on the elevation is proposed. This would be 4 sections of 4' wide glass doors. The inner 2 doors would slide to either side, the outer 2 doors would be fixed.
7. A set of full glass french doors (8' wide) would be placed on the east side of the elevation.
8. The proposed glass doors would have a modern grid frame and would not be a solid glass unit. However, it is located on the rear of the building and would not be seen by neighbors or the passing public.
9. The property is located in the East End Design Review overlay zone which has a slightly less rigorous design standard.
10. The applicant added a 6" high (one step), 4' wide x 38'-40' long deck along the rear of the building to the application. The deck would make access easier. An extended roof along the rear elevation currently covers this area. The east end of the deck would be flush to the east elevation of the building. The western edge stops just before the existing door on the west end.
11. The deck would not be visible to the general public.
12. The VDRB read the Design Review Board's recommendation to approve as presented.

After further discussion, Ms. Spector moved with a second by Mr. Mayhew to approve the application as presented.

The motion was approved with a 3-0 vote.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the July 26, 2017 meeting were approved as submitted.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Brands, AICP
Town Planner