City of Auburn Planning Board

Tuesday June 2, 2020 6:30 pm

Memorial City Hall

Present: Andy Tehan, Crystal Cosentino (Chair), Tina Tomasso, Elizabeth Koenig, Theresa Walsh

Excused: None

Staff: Stephen Selvek, Office of Planning and Economic Development; Holly Glor, Secretary; Brian Hicks, Code Enforcement; Nate Garland, Corporation Counsel

**Agenda Items:**

1. Approval of the May 5, 2020 Planning Board Meeting Minutes

2. Application for a Special Use Permit to convert the existing building into an 8 apartment multiple family dwelling at 70 South Street. Applicant: Robin Casper

Items Approved: Agenda Items 1 & 2

Applications Denied: None

Applications Tabled: None

**Crystal Cosentino** 00:00

Alright, ready? Alright, so we're gonna call tonight's meeting to order. And I'm gonna ask the Secretary to please call the roll.

**Holly Glor** 00:10

Andy Tehan

**Andy Tehan** 00:11

Here

**Holly Glor** 00:11

Elizabeth Koenig

**Elizabeth Koenig** 00:12

Here

**Holly Glor** 00:13

Tina Tomasso

**Steve Selvek** 00:18

Can Tina hear us. She was on before.

**Holly Glor** 00:26

Tina, can you hear us? Can anyone here us?

**Steve Selvek** 00:58

Can anyone hear us now?

**Theresa Walsh** 01:01

Yes.

**Steve Selvek** 01:02

Hey okay.

**Holly Glor** 01:05

So we were just calling the roll and I left off on Tina Tomasso.

**Tina Tomaso** 01:10

Here.

**Holly Glor** 01:11

Teresa Walsh.

**Theresa Walsh** 01:13

Here.

**Holly Glor** 01:13

And Crystal Cosentino

**Crystal Cosentino** 01:15

Here. The first item on the agenda tonight is the approval of the meeting minutes for the May 5, 2020 Planning Board meeting. Is there a motion to approve the meeting minutes? made by Elizabeth second by Andy. All in favor? Aye. Those opposed? Motion carried. The second item on the agenda is an application for a Special Use Permit to use the existing building at 70 South Street for an eight unit dwelling. The applicant is Robin Casper. We're going to turn it over to Steve for some staff comments.

**Steve Selvek** 01:54

In your packets I included both a revised memo and a revised memo/new memo, and the previous memo that I submitted on the May 1 Planning Board meeting. Again the May 1 one was really looking at the code compliance side of things. And I hope you all had a chance to review that last month and again this month. The memo that I put in the more recent one was looking at a couple of those questions that had come up with respect to the proposal itself and so at last month's meeting, the board discussed at length the proposal to reuse 70 South Street as an eight unit dwelling, the board received several letters opposing the reuse of the existing building to create eight apartments. The letters, primarily from adjoining property owners, referenced a variety of concerns with the proposed use. The board had a few questions regarding parking, fencing and stormwater that could not be answered last month due to some technical issues we were having. Before jumping into the new information that was submitted that was included in your packets, regarding the parking, the fence, and the rain garden, I just want to touch base on some of the previous issues that were addressed last month, and the first one looking at is the driveway itself and the driveway, as was pointed out by one of the neighbors, is narrow. It's not unlike any other driveways pr many other driveways along South Street. Although the narrow driveway is not ideal to accommodate significant traffic, they do function for the purpose of accessing the rear yard parking at many of the properties along South Street. So this condition is not unique to this property. It is found within our historic district quite often. The other issue that was raised regarding the refuse collection. It was noted by the applicant prior to the meeting that I had reached out to that the refuse collection would be by means of curbside collection. The trash cans themselves would be stored behind the building and not readily visible from the street. This complies with the code requirements. It should be noted that yes, the trash cans being stored in the rear of the property may be seen by the neighboring properties, again, not a unique situation for any of our residential properties within the city. Moving on to the three issues that the board raised at last month that were also raised by residents in that area regarding parking, the potential for some additional screening such as a fence and then finally the rain garden item. The proposal was initially to provide nine parking spaces, again that nine parking spaces complies with the code. However, the concern has been raised that the nine spaces may not be sufficient. The applicant has stated that he could make the existing carriage garage available and would provide additional parking within that garage. Ultimately, he has agreed to provide a minimum of 13 parking spaces. So again, meeting the code plus exceeding it, based upon the eight units that are being proposed for that house. There was also a request from the board in response to concerns from the neighbors to fence a rear portion of the property. The fencing itself would provide additional separation from the adjoining properties and shield the headlight glare from cars within the parking area. Let me see if I can find the revised site plan that was submitted that highlights that. While it's difficult to see they have included a six foot tall fence along the south property line, then around the East property line and back up to the north property line. The applicant has included or has agreed to include the six foot tall fence as shown on the plan, the fence must be solid to actually, in fact, accommodate or serve its purpose of providing that buffering for the headlights, as well as just a visual screen between the two properties. It is shown as a continuous fence along the south, east, and north property lines. Specific to the south property line, there was a question regarding the feasibility of installing the fence for the carriage houses. It's difficult to tell on an aerial because of the three dimensions. But if for some reason that fence cannot be continued through where that is, meaning that the carriage houses on the property line or very near to the property line. The fence would end on both sides of that carriage house. And I would again suggest not suggest but require that if at any point in the time in the future that Carriage House was removed. Again, there's no discussion of removing the carriage house I think it's actually a critical feature and critical to the character of the overall property that that fence be installed in that area as well to make sure that continuous buffer is maintained. Finally, there was need to better explain the intended purpose and design of the rain gardens as a method of controlling runoff. The applicant submitted information about the design and the use of rain gardens from the New York State stormwater management design manual. We often think first of stormwater ponds when talking about managing runoff. You can see from the information that was provided, a rain garden is not a pond a rain garden should be first thought of as a garden or a landscaped area. And secondly, as a stormwater management area. The image, the characteristic image, that they use to kind of describe it, we get a picture's worth worth 1000 words, the design or the installation and specifically the use of a layered approach to the gravel in the soil. This creates a area where runoff can be detained and allowed to infiltrate underneath the plantings, underneath the soil. It's then topped with soil that's suitable to plant and sustain a variety of flowers or shrubs that can thrive in these moisture rich soils. Rain gardens are not intended to be an area where stagnant surface waters collect or are retained indefinitely. So those were the three primary points that the board had sought additional clarification on regarding the the application. If there's other questions or comments, we do have the applicants representative on with us tonight via WebEx. I will turn it back to the chair for further discussion or questions.

**Crystal Cosentino** 08:56

Does anybody here inside City Hall Have any questions? or Theresa or Tina? Do you guys have any questions remotely? One question I had was on the fencing on the site plan, it does say, a high ornamental boundary fence. Any comment on the type of fence that is, I mean, when I think of a six foot fence, I often think like a big stockade style fence, which, you know, or in this one is going to be, you know, a barrier so that the light won't come through. So, you know, any comment to that?

**Ed Onori** 09:43

We will have to submit to the Historic Resources Review Board for approval after this.

**Crystal Cosentino** 09:48

That's right. I forgot about that. That's, that's, that's great. Thank you. So Steve, they would have oversight to the type of fencing?

**Steve Selvek** 09:59

Given that, because it's a change to the exterior of the property of that nature, adding that fence is going to require subsequent review by the Historic Resource Review Board. So they would make sure that the fence is in fact, historically appropriate. But from the standpoint of wanting it to be solid, I can amend the draft resolution where it basically notes that the fence to buffer the adjoining properties we can put in there that it's a six foot tall, solid fence is a requirement if the board wishes that specific thing instead of just saying buffering.

**Crystal Cosentino** 10:31

Well, I think given that a lot of the property owners in and around the area were both concerned about how the rain garden what it would look like and then the lights from the vehicles and the fact that there could be nine or 13 cars going into the back lot. There could be more lights. So it I would propose that it be a solid fence of some sort. That doesn't allow especially on the side where the properties are on Elizabeth.

**Elizabeth Koenig** 11:00

So with then in saying that then will that help be then be a buffer for noise. My whole thing is the noise thing.

**Steve Selvek** 11:06

Yeah, I mean the fencing and I mean, it does provide separation. I mean, noise carries over a fence.

**Elizabeth Koenig** 11:13

Well I'd like to, can I ask you something?

**Steve Selvek** 11:15

Yeah, yeah.

**Elizabeth Koenig** 11:16

So I'd like to ask the question are pets allowed in the apartment? house?

**Ed Onori** 11:22

Um, I have not asked the owner that question. I'm assuming not, but I don't know the answer to that question.

**Elizabeth Koenig** 11:32

Okay. Well, I'd like to know and I'll tell you why. I moved next to somebody down in town here and they have two big big dogs that bark bark bark. And to me, that's a deterrent. Now if you have everybody that has dogs or whatever, I think that could be a problem. I don't know for noise and because I'm looking at four or five properties of the whole side of that of your property. So I would want to know the answer to that. I mean, I'd like to.

**Ed Onori** 12:00

You know, I'm guessing because these are to be higher end apartments? That they probably won't let pets in there.

**Elizabeth Koenig** 12:10

Yeah, cuz I know the higher ends like Bartolotta did don't have pets.

**Ed Onori** 12:14

Yeah, I'm assuming with the amount of money that they're going to put in it. They, they don't want that.

**Elizabeth Koenig** 12:20

Okay. Thank you.

**Crystal Cosentino** 12:24

One other question that I had for the applicant was related to the parking spaces that would be in the carriage garage is it really big enough to accommodate what would it be four additional vehicles because I see nine spots highlighted on the site plan but that would require four to be parked in the garage.

**Ed Onori** 12:49

Right. And I think there's enough room for that. I did just get a text from the owner. They will have no pets.

**Elizabeth Koenig** 12:58

Thank you.

**Crystal Cosentino** 13:06

So in I can't remember I know I looked at it the resolution says that will go to 13 parking spots?

**Steve Selvek** 13:12

Yeah, the resolution indicates providing a minimum of 13 vehicles and utilizing the carriage barn. I mean it's a large charage barn.

**Elizabeth Koenig** 13:20

I've looked at it myself and it could accommodate four.

**Crystal Cosentino** 13:22

It will?

**Elizabeth Koenig** 13:23

Oh yeah. It's beautiful. It truly is.

**Crystal Cosentino** 13:33

I didn't have any other questions, Andy, Elizabeth, Theresa or Tina. Any questions from you guys?

**Tina Tomaso** 13:40

No.

**Theresa Walsh** 13:41

No.

**Steve Selvek** 13:43

So I will note that I did provide a draft resolution for the board's consideration, specifically highlighting the requirement for 13 vehicles, requiring the fence to buffer the adjoining property. I've amended the resolution or the draft resolution noting that it would be a six foot tall solid fence to buffer the adjoining properties, that there would be the management of potential runoff IE meaning, the rain garden, and that the parking lot perimeter landscaping, which was put in as part of the last go-around would also be included as part of that.

**Crystal Cosentino** 14:23

All right, is there a motion to adopt the resolution issuing the Special Use Permit, made by Andy, a second by Elizabeth. If I could ask the Secretary to call the roll.

**Holly Glor** 14:41

Andy Tehan.

**Andy Tehan** 14:42

I'm gonna vote yes.

**Holly Glor** 14:44

Elizabeth Koenig.

**Elizabeth Koenig** 14:45

I'll vote yes.

**Holly Glor** 14:46

Tina Tommaso.

**Tina Tomaso** 14:48

Yes.

**Holly Glor** 14:49

Teresa Walsh.

**Theresa Walsh** 14:51

I vote no.

**Holly Glor** 14:52

Crystal Cosentino?

**Crystal Cosentino** 14:54

Yes. Motion carries. That is the last item on our agenda for this evening. The date for the next regular Planning Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 7 at 6:30. Is there a motion to adjourn? Made by Andy, seconded by oh, who was that, second by Theresa. All in favor. None Opposed. Carried.

Respectively submitted by Holly Glor