



WELLESLEY DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Regular Meeting

August 14th, 2019; 6:30PM

Great Hall, Wellesley Town Hall

Members Present: Jose Soliva, Chair; Juann Khoory; Iris Lin

Members Absent: Rob Skolnik, Vice Chair; Sheila Dinsmoor

Staff: Catherine Johnson, Planning Board Chair; Tucker Beckett, Planner

Also Present: Brandon Schmidt, Doug Stewart, Joel Lunger, James Manzolini, Bart Steele, Corey Walker, Charlie White, Jeff Carter, Robert Nascimento

1. Call to Order:

Mr. Soliva called the meeting to order at approximately 6:33.

2. Public Comments on Matters not on the Agenda:

Mr. Soliva asked if there were any members of the public who wished to speak on matters not on the agenda. No one addressed the Board.

3. New and/or Continued Applications:

(Applications were reviewed in an order that differs from the Agenda and reflects whether the Applicant was present to be heard at the scheduled time.)

(All documents from the Board meeting are on file in the Planning Office.)

DRB 19-36 M: Town of Wellesley – Natural Resources Commission [NRC], 525 Washington Street; Design Review: Duck Pond Pedestrian Footbridge, Minor Construction

Documents:

- Minor Construction Application
- Letter with project description from Brandon Schmidt, NRC Director
- S1 Existing & Proposed Bridge Sections; Photograph, Existing Elevation
- S2 Existing & Proposed Bridge Side Elevations
- Site Plan

Discussion: Mr. Soliva invited the applicant, the Town of Wellesley – the NRC, for the Duck Pond Pedestrian Footbridge to present the project to the DRB.

Mr. Schmidt, NRC Director, introduced Doug Stewart, the Assistant Town Engineer and Joel Lunger, an independent consulting engineer, who has worked for the Town; then he detailed the slide deck displayed on the screen. He referenced that the wooden bridge that is near the Duck Pond and which had been dedicated by the Wellesley Rotary Club in 1992, adding that it was now showing its age and did not meet ADA code or accessibility standards. Mr. Schmidt said that two years ago the NRC received a grant from CPA funds to study the reconstruction of the bridge and that last year there was an additional grant to fund the reconstruction. Mr. Stewart and Mr. Lunger were working with the NRC on this project.

Mr. Schmidt said that the new bridge, by meeting current code, would be extended and appear slightly heavier than the current bridge but that the current bridge is substandard.

Ms. Khoory asked about the slope [5%] and asked how the bridge was going to be extended as well as tied to the existing footings if there was much of a grade change. Mr. Stewart explained that the grade change was about 1.5 feet lower on the Washington Street side and that Engineering was working with Parks [Department of Public Works, Park and Tree Division] to calculate that they would be bringing in about 4-6 inches of fill on the downslope side. Mr. Lunger added that the bridge was actually a ramp, a bridge, and another ramp. He said that the bridge would be cambered slightly, which would create a visual sense of stability, and that this slightly arched structure would be tied to the footings with pedestals.

The Board discussed the merits and cost of cambering the bridge. Mr. Lunger said the cost was minimal, perhaps only \$50.00. A slight arch would not be noticed by pedestrians on the bridge, but might be seen from the adjacent stone bridge that is the driveway. The Board indicated that the applicant could decide whether or not to arch the pedestrian bridge.

Ms. Lin asked why the walkway on the downslope side of the bridge didn't continue to the break in the wall at the sidewalk along Washington Street. Mr. Schmidt said that the NRC was focusing on the repair of the bridge and the adjacent walkway, but that ultimately it would be a goal to connect the walkway to the street sidewalk.

Mr. Soliva asked about the horizontal railings, noting that they were more extensive than the railings of the current pedestrian bridge: was that structural or aesthetic? He and Mr. Lunger discussed the space between the railings, noting that code specified 4". Mr. Soliva expressed a preference for keeping that

dimension, not less. Mr. Lunger said that keeping 4 inches of space between the railing planks would be possible by changing the bottom rail to a 3x4, rather than a 4x4.

Ms. Khoory suggested overlapping the detailing of the top 2x6 on the 2x4 below it to avoid dripping [and water penetration]. Mr. Lunger said there isn't much opportunity for creating a lip.

The Board discussed the material and color for the bridge. The product is FiberForce, and the color would be the lightest gray, but with a textured surface.

Recommendation: The Board continued the application until their meeting on September 11, 2019, with the recommendation that the NRC and DPW address the following:

1. If possible, look at reducing the trim on the arch so that the bridge, while ADA compliant, has the look of an arch that is more pronounced
2. Consider in the future connecting the crushed stone walkway to the opening in the wall along Washington Street
3. Use the lightest gray (Bedford) FiberForce
4. Research an option changing the FiberForce to real wood or to a composite wood instead of plastic because the bridge is a signature bridge next to Town Hall. [Mr. Lunger said that the strength of the FiberForce was what allowed the design to have 4x4 posts instead of 6x6 or 6x4 posts using wood or composite wood.]

Ms. Lin made the motion; Ms. Khoory seconded it. The Board voted unanimously to continue the hearing to September 11, 2019 (3-0).

DRB 19-40: 169 Great Plain Avenue, Town of Wellesley Recycling and Disposal Facility [RDF]: Design Review: Sheds, Minor Construction

Documents:

- Minor Construction Application
- Memorandum re project description from James Manzolini, RDF Director
- Project Description
- Shed Renderings (2 cut sheets)
- Plan View of Shed Locations and Photographs (4 sheets)
- Site Plan

Discussion: Mr. Soliva invited the applicant, the Town of Wellesley – RDF, to present the shed project to the Board.

Mr. James Manzolini, RDF Director, explained the project: The RDF is proposing to put two sheds on either side of the recycling area to replace the igloo structures that surround the barrels that contain the refundable cans. There are three reasons for the request: (1) the igloos have stopped functioning the way they were supposed to, (2) the sheds would provide additional security for the cans at night, and (3) the sheds would provide additional storage. The sheds are 12 x 16 feet; the barrels for the cans would be just inside the door. The color for the shed would be a dark neutral, but the RDF is open to Board suggestions. The roof would be black asphalt shingle.

Ms. Khoory asked if it was possible to have sheds used for storage placed elsewhere on the site but have a simpler structure, not custom built, but in place for holding the cans. Mr. Manzolini said that the current [igloo] structure is simpler and the RDF has found that they aren't secure and no longer function.

Ms. Lin echoed Ms. Khoory's concern that the shed was not open and that the access for the public to dispose of cans could be difficult. Mr. Manzolini said that he understood what the Board was saying; however, the shed provided the ability to secure the cans at night, in the same way that the RDF can secure the bin for copper. He said that the sheds can come with as many windows as possible, but that the RDF chose transom windows that would allow light, but would reduce the possibility of break-ins.

Mr. Soliva restated the Board's concern that a shed was perhaps too much of a structure, but that they understood the needs and concerns of the RDF. He suggested that a smaller shed might be possible as the storage of cans was the primary purpose.

Ms. Khoory said that a shed structure was complicated and suggested that the RDF could research what other Towns do or perhaps built a simpler structure, using arm gestures that indicated a sloped roof above a rectangular bin. She said the bin could have doors that might be locked at night. Mr. Manzolini acknowledged that this was a good idea, but added that part of the reason for the size of the shed was to provide storage for holding the cans when the containers filled.

Mr. Soliva asked about the timeline and whether the Board could be presented with an option that was not a shed structure at the September meeting.

Recommendation: The Board continued the application until their meeting on September 11, 2019, with the recommendation that the DPW address the following:

1. Investigate using strong steel sheds or bins similar to the ones that the RDF uses for propane tank returns or light bulb disposal
2. Consider whether it would be possible and more economical to custom build a small shed-structure that is low and open, in the spirit of the library area, one that would still allow the applicant to address security while providing the current customer convenience experience.
3. Make sure that any signage would match what is used elsewhere on site.

Ms. Khoory made the motion; Ms. Lin seconded it. The Board voted unanimously to continue the hearing to September 11, 2019 (3-0).

DRB 19-37 S: 380 Washington Street, Clapp Family Law and Law Office of Kimberley Joyce; Design Review: Sign/Awning

Documents:

- Signage/Awning Application
- Submission Letter from Viewpoint Sign and Awning
- Landlord Authorization
- Sign Elevation and photographs

Discussion: Mr. Soliva moved to consider the signage for 380 Washington Street. The applicant's representative, Bart Steele from ViewPoint Sign and Awning, described the project. He said that two law offices are going into the space on the left side of the building and that the intention was to replace the fabric panel with a black one that would match the panels for White's Bakery on the right side of the Playhouse. The letters would be sized to code [Zoning Bylaw] and would be white to match the bakery.

Mr. Soliva and the Board questioned whether the blank portion of the panel, to the right of the vertical line, was for a future tenant renting part of this space. Mr. Steele confirmed that. Ms. Line asked if having another tenants would mean that ViewPoint would have to redo the entire panel. Mr. Steele acknowledged that this outcome would be likely.

The Board discussed the position of the type as it appears on the left side of the panel only rather than centering the type on the panel. Mr. Steele said that the empty space on the right side of the panel was reserved for a potential future tenant, but acknowledged that additional wording on the panel would mean returning to the Board for approval and then appearing before the Zoning Board of Appeals for a special permit because it [the type coverage would exceed the allowable size under code {zoning Bylaw}.

Mr. Soliva suggested that if ViewPoint needed to receive Board and ZBA approval for a future tenant it would be possible to center the type on the panel for now and redo the design of the panel as necessary in the future. This would give a more balanced look to the sign. Mr. Steele said that a future tenant might be able to add their signage to the right side without remaking the panel. Mr. Soliva questioned whether this additional type would be in compliance or necessitate a complete redo anyway. Mr. Soliva continued to discuss this with Mr. Steele, emphasizing that when a second tenant rented space in this area, it was very likely that the sign panel would require a redesign; centering the type now balanced the current sign, while a new tenant with an unspecified sign verbiage would likely require a complete redesign.

Mr. Soliva asked the Board if they found the asymmetrical position of the lettering acceptable. Ms. Khoory said she did not. Ms. Lin agreed with Mr. Soliva and Ms. Khoory. Mr. Steele asked the Board whether they meant that the letters for one office should be centered left to right and whether they should be at the top with room below for a second tenant. Mr. Soliva said that the wording should be centered left to right without leaving vertical space for a future tenant. Ms. Khoory suggested that the two law offices on the sign could be side by side across the whole panel rather than stacked vertically on the left side of the panel with a blank right side. The Board discussed several options.

Recommendation: Mr. Soliva moved to approve the sign as presented, with the following changes:

1. The position of the wording should have the two offices appear side by side rather than stacked, better filling the horizontal dimension of the panel
2. "The Law Office of Kimberly J. Joyce" is the wording that moves to the right side of the sign
3. Maintain the horizontal line under "Clapp Family Law" and add one under "The Law Office of Kimberly J. Joyce"
4. Keep the vertical bar that separates the two offices
5. Align type across the panel
6. The color of the panel and the type font should match what was used for White's Bakery
7. A corrected elevation/drawing should be submitted to the Planning staff for review and approval
8. When and if an additional tenant occupies the office space, the applicant shall resubmit a new sign design to the DRB for approval in its totality

Ms. Khoory seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion (3-0).

DRB 19-38 S: 32 Church Street, Lynn Evans; Design Review: Sign

Documents:

- Signage Application
- Sign Elevation and Photograph showing sign position
- Existing Storefront Photograph

Discussion: Corey Walker of Signorama in Framingham and Charlie White, owner of Lynn Evans, presented the application. The sign panel is 22-1/2 x 96 inches, made of aluminum, smaller than what was there before.

The Board discussed the position on the building's banding and asked about the colors used on the sign. Mr. Soliva had the applicant confirm that there was no illumination on the sign and that the sign was centered left to right between the two doors of the building. Mr. Khoory asked the applicant to make sure that there would be no discoloration on the façade of the building left by the former sign.

Ms. Khoory suggested that the applicant look into softening the intensity of the powdered black frame and/or increasing the intensity of the olive/green on the logo for more visibility. Mr. Walker said that the frame came factory colored. Mr. White indicated that they could look at the intensity of the olive/green. The Board expressed a concern that the top and bottom margins of the sign were close to and blended with the type, especially "Est. 1978". Mr. White said that they typeface for this could be reduced.

Recommendation: Mr. Soliva moved to approve the sign as presented, with the following changes:

1. Reduce the size of the font for "Est. 1978" to give emphasis to the font used for "Lynn Evans"
2. Keep the size of the font for "Lynn Evans"
3. Center the type on the sign panel
4. Center position of sign on the width of the storefront and vertically on the sign band of the building
5. The applicant shall submit a new plan/drawing to the Planning Department for staff approval

Ms. Lin seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve the motion (3-0).

DRB 19-41 S: 41 Grove Street, The Exercise Coach; Design Review: Sign

Documents:

- Signage Application

- Landlord Authorization
- ZBA 2018-48 Special Permit Decision pursuant to sign package for 576-590 Washington Street and 39-43 Grove Street
- Sign Elevation and Photographs showing window signage
- Awning Elevation

Discussion: Mr. Bart Steele of ViewPoint Sign and Awning returned to the table to present the application for The Exercise Coach, along with Jeffrey Carter, who was introduced as The Exercise Coach. Mr. Steele reminded the Board that he and they were talking about 41 Grove Street, the Belclare building, which had been before the Board a few months ago for the site concept and then to the ZBA for special permitting. He said that the awning sign and the window graphics were in compliance with what the ZBA determined.

Mr. Soliva asked if the “Please Use Other Door” signage could line up with the center of the coursing of the stone on the building façade instead of centered on the top glass panel. Ms. Khoory suggested lowering all window signage a bit so it was visible to someone driving.

Ms. Lin and the other members of the Board discussed the typefaces used for the window signage. They said that the font should be the same throughout, allowing for the use of Bold or Condensed versions of the same typeface/font. Mr. Steele confirmed that two fonts were used: Times Roman and Franklin Gothic Demi-Bold. Ms. Khoory said that the size of the type giving the phone number was large, perhaps given an impression that this store was more like a place where one would pick up an order of food; she suggested that the applicant rethink the size of the type.

Ms. Khoory also asked the applicant to check the scale of the awning sign to make sure the space around the words “The Exercise Coach” was uniform. Mr. Soliva confirmed that if the valence is 8 inches, the height of the lettering allows for what is shown in the drawing: approximately three-quarters of an inch.

Recommendation: Ms. Khoory moved to approve the sign as presented, with the following changes:

1. Use the same family of typefaces for all signage, although it is acceptable to change within the family from bold to condensed to regular weight, etc.
2. For the window sign “The Exercise Coach”, leave space to either side from the mullions
3. Examine the size of the phone number as it looks too big; reduce slightly if possible
4. The applicant shall submit a new plan/drawing to the Planning Department for staff approval.

Mr. Soliva seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion (3-0).

DRB 19-35 R: 15 River Glen Road, Robert Nascimento; Design Review: Retaining Wall

Documents:

- Retaining Wall Application
- Staff Report for September 13, 2017; updated for August 13, 2019 meeting
- Letter from Robert Nascimento, Owner of 15 River Glen
- Photographs of existing rear yard (5)
- Renderings of retaining wall (2)
- Cut Sheet of material for retaining wall
- Plan for pool area
- Cross-sections of wall construction and detail drawings
- Site Plan for 15 River Glen

Discussion: Mr. Soliva asked the applicant [Robert Nascimento] to introduce himself and explain what was proposed.

Mr. Nascimento said that previously the Board and the ZBA had reviewed his plans to add a pool on one side of his rear yard and had approved a wall at the back of the property as well as an intermediate wall that ran from the house to the back. He added that the change now proposed was to terrace the intermediate wall [between the pool and the other half of the yard]. Mr. Soliva review what the Board had approved two years previously. Mr. Nascimento added that the approved wall was approximately 6-1/2 or 7 feet high; this wall was terraced, has series of stairs, and has planters on several levels. He indicated that the rear wall also increased in height by about 15 inches.

Ms. Lin verified that there would be a fence around pool [6 feet]. Mr. Soliva asked what the material was that was being used for the terraced wall. Mr. Nascimento said it would be the Mini-Creta blocks as shown in the photo. Ms. Khoory confirmed with the applicant that he was using a structural engineer for the wall.

Ms. Lin inquired about the width of each planter. Mr. Nascimento said each was about 2-1/2 feet. Ms. Lin suggested that increasing the size of the planters would reduce the height of the wall, allow for space in the planters that would support healthier plants, and have a simpler look to the terraced wall if fewer planters replaced many small ones. The Board discussed whether simplifying the planters and the terrace design would create a taller wall. Currently, the drawings show 30-inch drops with planters serving in lieu of handrails.

Ms. Khoory noticed that there were two different renderings of the terraces and stairs in the packet. She confirmed with the applicant that the preferred one had the stairs at the bottom. Ms. Khoory also suggested that the fence material should be consistent by side, using black vinyl-clad metal or using black vinyl-clad metal on one side and the white fence on a second side, hiding both with shrubbery.

Ms. Lin asked if the patio could have a shape that was more organic and less rectangular.

Recommendation: Ms. Lin moved to approve the retaining wall as presented with the following changes:

1. Reduce the number of terraces from four to three and the stair configuration so that no elevation change is greater than 30"
2. Reduce the numbers of planters by consolidating them into longer one(s)
3. Re-examine the geometry of the patio to make it less rectangular
4. Fence as submitted, but make sure the pool is fully fenced and screen the pool equipment with shrubbery, but not necessarily a wooden fence

Ms. Khoory seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion (3-0).

DRB 19-39 M: 93 Central Street, Bobbles and Lace: Design Review: Minor Construction/Awning

Applicant did not appear; no Board consideration.

4. Design Guideline Handbook Update – Discussion

The draft guidelines were projected onto the screen, but the Board decided to postpone its review and discussion to the September 11, 2019 meeting with the expectation that the full board would be in attendance. Mr. Soliva explained that the Board wished to reorganize the guidelines written by Gamble Associates to express the neighborhoods of Wellesley. He suggested that staff consolidate the individual comments and then the full Board can review this at a meeting, review this with the consultants, and have public outreach before finalizing the guidelines. The Board would like to start its review at the September 11, 2019 meeting.

5. Minutes: The Board reviewed the Minutes from the June 19, 2019 and July 17, 2019 meetings. There were no additions or corrections. Mr. Soliva moved to approve both sets of Minutes; Ms. Khoory seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously (3-0) to approve both sets.

6. Adjourn: *Having no other business, Mr. Soliva adjourned the meeting.*

Next Meeting: September 11, 2019

Minutes Approved: September 11, 2019

Minutes compiled by:

Catherine Johnson, Planning Board Chair; Tucker Beckett, Planner