

Approved 12/15/15

CITY OF ROCKLAND
PLANNING BOARD
Minutes of Meeting
November 17, 2015

Board Present: Chair E. Laustsen, W. Bodine, C. Jordan, A. Knickelbein, and P. vanVuuren

Board Absent: None

Staff Present: Code Officer J. Root and Secretary D. Sealey

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:18 P.M. and reviewed the agenda.

Public Comment: None

Communications: None

Old Business:

1. Winter Street, LLC – 8 & 12 Winter Street – Continued Site Plan Review for Construction of a 40,000 Sq. Ft. 5-Story Art Management / Gallery Space (“Starfire”) – Public Hearing - Tax Map 1, Block D, Lots 9 & 10: Eric Allyn and Joe Rosillo of A & R Architects and William Gartley of Gartley & Dorsky Engineering & Surveying represented the applicant. Mr. Gartley distributed a revised Site Plan C-1, which showed a screened-in dumpster at the back of the building, as well as a new handicap parking space and sign.

Chair Laustsen asked about the reserve road and Mr. Gartley said it would provide access for Aurora, Mace’s, and the two Dowling buildings. He referred the Board to attorney Ed Collins’ letter regarding rights of access. Mr. Allyn said he had signed easements from all but Home Counsellors, though he had spoken with them about continued right of passage during construction. Mr. Laustsen asked why Home Counsellors did not have to sign the easement document. Attorney Collins said the alleyway was a private ROW and everyone had been contacted and would be kept informed of plans during construction. Mr. Collins said it was the PB’s job to make sure public ways were not interfered with and this was a private way. He said that, whether they signed or not, they had gotten it in front of everyone. He said no regular commerce occurred in the alleyway. City Attorney Kevin Beal said the PB was clearly charged with ensuring access to loading and unloading in both private and public ways.

Mr. Laustsen asked about the requested loudness comparison chart. Mr. Allyn had provided data on rooftop noise: he said the equipment was standard and had a decibel level of 66, which was just beyond normal speech 3’ away at the rooftop. The equipment would be screened by wooden planks or panels coordinating with other facades.

Chair Laustsen then turned to the issue of birds potentially flying into the building’s reflective façade. Mr. Allyn said he realized this was a reasonable question, to which there were solutions. He had found two options, both of which utilized a patterned glass invisible to the human eye but perceived by birds. He said the NYC Javits Center realized a 90% reduction in bird collisions by employing this technology. The designer said he would utilize the most appropriate and effective solution. Mr. Allyn concluded by saying he had spoken with the avian scientist who had worked with bird-friendly technology on the World Trade Centers, etc, and would check with him again before installing the Starfire façade.

In response to a question from Ms. Knickelbein, Mr. Allyn said the covered roof area had been eliminated, although the vestibule would still have a roof.

Mr. Allyn said he had been asked to correct and enhance some documents, so had added the height (61'5") and frontage percentage and removed reference to the curtain wall as windows. He said the rooftop garden would consist of 6 trees.

The PB reviewed the Standards. Two catch basins would be added on the reserve road, while two were already installed at the street. There would be 5 ceiling-mounted lights on the building. The building was fully sprinklered. The Board agreed to hold off on compliance with other ordinances (#10).

ACTION: Mr. Jordan made a motion to approve the Standards, excluding #10.
Carried 5-0-0

Ms. vanVuuren said there were only two provisions she thought were questionable: façade materials and massing.

ACTION: Ms. vanVuuren made a motion to approve the Downtown Development Standards, with the exception of materials, massing, and projection.
Carried 5-0-0

ACTION: Ms. vanVuuren made a motion to approve the Tillson Avenue Area Overlay Zone Development Standards, with the exception of materials, massing, and projection.
Carried 5-0-0

Ms. vanVuuren said there had been a lot of discussion and two things stood out to her. The first was that the city needed to coordinate the marketing/visioning message with the actual zoning; she noted that both CMCA and the Starfire projects referenced the Waterfront Area Redevelopment Plan. Ms. vanVuuren encouraged the city council to revisit the zoning sooner, rather than later. The PB had asked the council to do this a year ago and the zoning's weakness continued to do a disservice to both the city's zoning and the community.

Ms. vanVuuren's second concern was facade materials. She said both CMCA and ADZ had interpreted this standard consistently; for ADZ the terra cotta tiles were similar to brick and CMCA argued that its corrugated gray zinc panels were similar to stone fluting and wooden clapboard. Glass curtain walls had been presented as windows, never as façade materials, in these projects. For CMCA, the glass curtain wall fronting on Winter St. had been labeled as a display window and ADZ referred to the window schedule when mentioning the glazing called out on the elevations.

However, Starfire had argued that there was a list of materials but it included "anything else". Ms. vanVuuren said the glass curtain wall was a new material that was not included in the façade material standards, nor had it been argued or proven as similar. Therefore, she asked, did the materials meet the zoning requirements? Mr. Jordan said he looked at it as the "no vinyl siding" rule, which aimed to keep the quality up. There was further discussion.

Mr. Allyn said his was the only project of the three that had included the materials listed. Ms. Knickelbein noted that the zoning did not say a percentage of the façade must have the materials. Ms. vanVuuren said the other two projects presented glass as a window or door, not as a façade material. Mr. Allyn responded that the zoning asked for particular materials and he had used them.

Concerning massing, Mr. Laustsen said in previous reviews there had been no blank walls greater than 10'. CMCA had verticals that broke up the wall. Ms. vanVuuren said the ordinance was too vague and Mr. Jordan agreed it was ambiguous. He thought the zoning east of Main St. should be thrown away. Ms. Knickelbein said the intention was to have a broken-up façade, which Starfire had achieved from the pedestrian point of view. Mr. Jordan agreed.

ACTION: Ms. Knickelbein made a motion to approve the façade materials and façade massing projections in the Downtown Zone.
Carried 5-0-0

ACTION: Ms. Knickelbein made a motion to approve the façade materials and façade massing projections in the Tillson Avenue Area Overlay Zone.
Carried 5-0-0

ACTION: Mr. Bodine made a motion to approve the Minimal Architectural Design Standards.
Carried 5-0-0

ACTION: Mr. Jordan made a motion to approve #10 of the Site Plan Standards regarding compliance with other ordinances.
Carried 5-0-0

Chair Laustsen read aloud the proposed Findings of Fact.

ACTION: Ms. vanVuuren made a motion to approve the Findings.
Carried 5-0-0

ACTION: Mr. Jordan made a motion to approve the Site Plan with the condition that the applicant must get a license agreement from the city for any projections over the public sidewalk or roadway.
Carried 5-0-0

2. Fisher Engineering / Douglas Dynamics – 160 & 162 Thomaston St. – Continued Site Plan Review Application for Expansion of Existing Plant Parking Area - Map 62, Block A, Lots 3 & 4:
William Gartley represented the applicant.

Chair Laustsen started the review by saying the PB had the ability to change the height of the pole lights. He then said the traffic study had concluded that the proposed driveway onto Thomaston St. would produce an “A” rating no matter which way the traffic went; even if 225 vehicles left at once, the intersection would only drop to a “B”. Sight distances were excellent. He said Fisher had added landscaping and offered to plant evergreens on the neighboring residential properties.

There were 2 catch basins in the parking lot and an underdrain soil filter. LED lighting would be on 20’ poles and the PB had the photometric plan that showed zero lumens at the property line.

ACTION: Mr. Jordan made a motion to approve the 20’ (including the base) poles.
Carried 4-0-1 (Ms. vanVuuren abstained)

ACTION: Mr. Bodine made a motion to approve the Standards.
Carried 4-0-1 (Ms. vanVuuren abstained)

Chair Laustsen read aloud the proposed Findings of Fact.

ACTION: Mr. Jordan made a motion to approve the Findings
Carried 4-0-1 (Ms. vanVuuren abstained)

There was a brief discussion about not having landscape islands in the parking lot.

ACTION: Mr. Jordan made a motion to allow the parking lot to be developed without interior landscaped islands so long as appropriate landscape mitigation efforts are undertaken.
Carried 4-0-1 (Ms. vanVuuren abstained)

ACTION: Ms. Knickelbein made a motion to approve the Site Plan.
Carried 4-0-1 (Ms. vanVuuren abstained)

Approve Minutes of the 7/14/15 Meeting:

ACTION: Mr. Jordan made a motion to approve the minutes of the 7/14/15 meeting.
Carried 4-0-1 (Mr. Bodine abstained)

Adjournment:

ACTION: Mr. Bodine made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 P.M.
Carried 5-0-0

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Sealey