

# DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE

*Minutes of the Meeting of October 20, 2020*

The DRC meeting was held via Zoom

## Members Present

✓	_____ Larry McEwen, Co-chair	_____ , Business Assn.
✓	_____ John Landis, Co-Chair	_____ TT&P
✓	_____ Bradley Wells, LUPZC	
✓	_____ Jean McCoubrey, LUPZC	_____ ✓ Jan Albaum, Streetscape Committee
✓	_____ Patricia Cove, HDAC	_____ ✓ Larry McEwen, VP Physical
		_____ ✓ Kathi Clayton, CHCA President

## Others Attending

Sanjiv Jain, owner 8612 Germantown  
Shelby Ulrich, office of Larry McEwen  
Henry O'Reilly, owner 30 West Highland  
Leah Silverstein, CH Conservancy  
Lori Salganicoff, CH Conservancy  
Shirley Hansen, CH Conservancy  
Eileen Javers, CH Conservancy  
Matt Millan, CH Conservancy  
Jeff Krieger, neighbor 30 W. Highland  
Ellie Davey  
Randy Williams, HDAC  
Carl Primavera  
Melissa Degenhardt  
Jesse Carpino, 8224 Germantown  
Sam Blake  
Joyce Lenhardt, LUPZC  
Anne McNiff, Director CHCA  
Celeste Hardester, Development Review Facilitator  
Melissa Nash, recorder

The meeting was opened by John Landis, co-chair, at 7:05 pm with a brief overview of the agenda, including the review of the September minutes, and preliminary presentations by Larry McEwen at 30 W. Highland and Sanjiv Jain at 8612 Germantown.

## **September Minutes**

- John Landis showed the minutes via screen share. No issues were noted. There was a motion to approve. Jean McCoubrey noted that she was present at the meeting. The motion was seconded and the minutes were approved.

## **Streetscape Report**

- Jan Albaum reported that Streetscape is currently working with Citizens Bank on its new signage. The proposed signage uses stark white and bright green. Streetscape and the Conservancy have

recommended cream and less bright green. The colors would be used on non-stone trim, shutters and the daisy (logo) wall. The colors are more sympathetic to the serpentine stone than the original choices. Lighting would stay the same. The bank also wanted daisy door pulls and it feels the street tree is in the way of seeing the façade from the street. The tree could be pruned. The grout selection for the repository was also discussed. It was suggested that a letter explaining the choices be sent to the DRC. J Albaum asked if the bank was required to follow the recommendations.

(A this point an agenda change was suggested. 8612 Germantown would be heard before 30 West Highland. The Germantown site would be a shorter presentation.)

### **8612 Germantown Avenue**

•Presentation: Sanjiv Jain presented the project. The commercial recruiter, Cathy Meadows, was successful in getting El Limon come to Chestnut Hill. The site requires a variance to be used as a restaurant. If the site were zoned CMX-3, there would be no need for a variance. The space is currently zoned CMX-1 and was the former home of Hideaway Music. There will be no changes to the exterior. A bathroom will be added in mid-space. It will be a sit-down restaurant with 40 seats. There would be takeout. There will be no outdoor street seating like McNally's has. There is space at the rear of the building for possible outdoor seating. Celeste Hardester noted that there is no ZBA date as yet, so the neighbor notification list is not available... Jean McCoubrey asked about the restroom. It will be ADA accessible single use. S Jain noted the exhaust would be to the exterior. At present, one entry was planned but a rear entry is possible. It was asked where the HVAC equipment would be located. Patricia Cove noted that the stonework on the façade was changed. This was done by improper cleaning and it now looks painted. It was stated that the project should be seen by HDAC at 6:30 and LUPZC at 8 PM on December 3. If changes are recommended by the HDAC and LUPZC, they will be specifically recorded in the letter to the ZBA. Larry McEwen noted that there is no CMX-3 zoning in Chestnut Hill. Streetscape will want to review signage as well. The project will return to the next DRC.

### **30 West Highland**

•Presentation: L McEwen, architect, and Henry O'Reilly, owner, presented the project, which has been submitted to the City and to CHCA. O'Reilly has been a Chestnut Hill business since 1954 and has owned the property since 1971. The site is L-shaped. At one time the property was used as storage for Jones Oldsmobile. There is one street tree at present. The building had a flat façade. The garage door opening was filled in, currently with a bay window and a pent roof was added. The street frontage is 80'. There is currently limited activity at the site. There is proximity to Chestnut Hill West at Highland and Chestnut Hill East at Gravers as well as bus routes on the Avenue. Currently the property is composed of 3 parcels: 30 West, 14 rear and 22 rear. There is an easement for alley access. A title search to confirm this is underway to verify the easement. Zoning for the main part of the property is CA-1 and CMX-1. Properties on Germantown Avenue are zoned CMX-2.5 and on Highland CMX-2. There are no Wissahickon Watershed restrictions. Of the 8 townhouses, 6 would be on CA-1 and 2 on CMX-1. Maximum 60% coverage is required; the project would have 53%. Trees would be added. Impervious coverage would be reduced. The benefits to the community would be filling a need for more residential units, more trees, more eyes on the street, increases wild life, and access to mass transit. RSA-3 density would allow 8.3 units. The present zoning does not allow residential use and no street setback is required. A new drive will provide access to the garages with the alley being used for leaving the site. There will be pedestrian walkways. A general layout of the units is garage and guest room on ground floor, kitchen and

living areas on the first floor, master suite on the second floor, 2 bedrooms on the third floor and a roof deck. Some parts of the buildings are set back to increase windows and to provide more space for neighbors. The overall building height is 38' with 9' pilot houses for access to the roof. The buildings will be stone, Roman brick and metal panels. All are low maintenance materials. The current building is stone on the street and stucco in the rear. Pedestrian entries should be enhanced. Various views of the project were shown. The units are 36' apart. It was asked why the Royal Crescent in Bath was shown on the drawings. It was used to show the unified same facades and formality that are found on this project.

- Discussion: The project should be referred to LUPZC, HDAC and Streetscape (due to the proximity to the Avenue). It was suggested that the Streetscape Committee could meet with HDAC. It was asked if neighbors have been notified. At present the lots are being consolidated. Then the project would be submitted to L&I with accelerated review. H O'Reilly has spoken to some of the neighbors, noting the 14, 16 and 18 West Highland. So far, all have been OK. R Snowden and some other neighbors have not been contacted or responded This should be formalized for the next DRC.

- Committee Discussion: P Cove noted the size, scope and scale of the project on the community and street. Lori Salgonicoff noted that it had been proposed that the Germantown Avenue overlay be extended to the unit blocks. This project would change the character of the unit block. L McEwen likened this design to houses that have their facades to the side rather than the street. L Salgonicoff noted that scale is a problem for her. J Landis asked that specifics of scale be stated. Height is a problem as is massing. L McEwen suggested that the street façade could be modulated. Trees would also soften its presence. They are re-using the stone from the existing building. The brick is reflective of other Highland Avenue brick. J Landis noted the additional views and asked for more. The project adds many trees and a garden walk. L Salgonicoff asked if the committee members could walk the site. All are welcome. J McCoubrey noted that although the height meets the code, the roof parapet and pilot houses give a taller appearance. The cantilevers are large and are out of context. She also asked about landscape buffers on the driveway. L McEwen suggested that there would need to be planting or a privacy fence. A planting buffer would be good. She also asked about water department review for drainage. The plan has been submitted to the Water Department; it had no problem with the design. There are multiple installations to control water. J Landis suggested more info on water be shown. J Albaum would like to see adjustment to the Highland façade to reduce size impact. Bradley Wells added the need for storm water info with more specifics. There is an infiltration basin under the walkway between the buildings and one in a driveway. Joyce Lenhardt noted that she admires the existing building and is sorry to see it go. She would like to see elevations of the building and its neighbors and a section. She is concerned about the pilot houses. Matt Millan asked if these would be condos or rentals. They will be condos. Density should be calculated on frontage. He is concerned about the density, form and massing, especially the street unit. The street unit needs to have a street façade. L McEwen does not want an entry on the street. Most of the ground floor is the garage. M Millan asked about fire emergency access. L McEwen has met with the fire department and they are satisfied, Randy Williams suggested the street unit should incorporate commercial space, replacing the existing. Anne McNiff asked if an HOA would be necessary. It will need an HOA. C Hardester noted the Highland Avenue façade needs work and that exiting from the alley is difficult. H O'Reilly stated that the alley will be improved and that consideration of commercial space was done. J Landis stated that greater consideration of the Highland Avenue face is a general concern. Concepts should be shown at

LUPZC. He also asked if L McEwen and H O'Reilly could be contacted by committee members. L McEwen would prefer this be done via email for the record. Jeff Krieger has spoken to Henry O'Reilly about overall height, sunlight for the existing houses, parking and storm water. The alley is not a good driveway. He is interested in the title search for the alley. L McEwen asked about current maintenance. The alley is tight and needs clean up.

**Adjournment**

- J Landis asked that additional issues and concerned voices be encouraged to attend LUPZC. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.