

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of March 15, 2022

The DRC meeting was held via Zoom

Members Present

- ✓ Larry McEwen, Co-chair
- ✓ John Landis, Co-chair
- ✓ Steve Gendler, LUPZC
- ✓ Chris Linn, LUPZC
- ✓ Patricia Cove, HDAC
- ✓ Sam Filippi, Business Association
- Richard Snowden, Parking Foundation
, Streetscape Committee
- ✓ Joyce Lenhardt, VP Physical (Interim)
- Kathi Clayton, President CHCA (ex-officio)

Others Attending

Greg Thiel, owner 14 Laughlin
Bill O'Brien, attorney for 14 Laughlin
Dave Lockard, owner 8330 Millman
Donna Lisle, architect 8330 Millman
Juliet Fajardo, architect 8330 Millman
Joan Lau, neighbor 8330 Millman
Lori Salgonicoff, Chestnut Hill Conservancy
Leah Silverstein, Chestnut Hill Conservancy
Craig Schelter
Greg Lattanzi
Jean McCoubrey, LUPZC
Richard Maloumian
Debbie Rodgers
Devon Beverly
Anne Standish
Steve Heimann
George Deming
Tom Beck
James Fagan
Harriet Palmer
Melissa Degenhardt
Jim Ballengee
Anne McNiff, Director CHCA
Celeste Hardester, Development Review Facilitator
Melissa Nash, recorder

The meeting was opened by Larry McEwen, co-chair, at 7:07 pm. The agenda includes review of minutes and RCO reviews of 14 Laughlin and 8330 Millman. Minutes will be reviewed after the two action items.

14 Laughlin Lane

•Presentation: Bill O'Brien presented the project. He showed a Philadelphia Water Department map for the location. A variance is needed as there would be a 15' rear yard setback rather than the 30' required. The properties, which abut the rear, are on Germantown Avenue and West Chestnut Hill

Avenue. The open space on the lot is more than the required. Windows in the existing house are 6/6. The windows in the addition will be a picture window between two 6/6 windows. They have the written support of neighbors.

•Committee Reports and Comments: The HDAC gave conditional support. It requested an elevation, roofing specs and suggested reusing existing windows. It was noted that it is difficult to reuse those windows due to their age. LUPZC did not vote on the project. There were questions about the location of the addition; there were also errors in the drawings. Additional information was requested; the underdeveloped plan should be improved. A revised set of drawings was presented. Joyce Lenhardt noted that the drawings were still inaccurate. A small change was needed to align a dormer and the addition ridge. There are also problems with the roof pitch and the clearance between the roof ridge and the window above. Chris Linn noted that the design drawings were better. Steve Gendler noted that the full first floor plan shows that locating the addition off the sunporch does not work. Patricia Cove asked about the use of a metal standing seam roof on the addition, asking why slate was not chosen. B O'Brien noted that the HDAC preferred standing seam to fake slate. P Cove stated that she does not like metal. There were no additional comments.

•Committee Actions: It was moved that the committee recommend a position of no opposition in favor of the conceptual idea and functionality. Distress should be noted at the applicant's obstruction to understand the design and features of the addition. There was no response from the applicant until the meeting tonight making it difficult to support. The motion was seconded. P Cove asked how one would vote. HDAC approved the project – would that be support or no opposition or abstain or to vote against the motion. S Gendler noted that additional information was presented tonight. Celeste Hardester stated that she received the updated drawings today. They were sent out but no one has received them. J Lenhardt noted that she still has some discomfort with the design, which needs fixing. These could be conditions of the support. P Cove asked what the ZBA would think of non-support. C Hardester suggested that non-support would be taken as approval to the ZBA. C Linn suggested better communication with a motion to support with conditions. The existing motion was put to a vote. The vote was 3 in support and 3 against. A question was raised if John Landis as a co-chair was allowed to vote. This was not known, but J Landis withdrew the motion. C Linn moved to recommend support for the project with the condition to center the rooflines of the addition and the dormer. The motion was seconded. The vote was 4 in favor and one against. J Landis abstained.

8330 Millman Place

•Committee Reports: The HDAC reviewed the project on March 3. P Cove read a statement regarding the property. The Historic Commission had requested that the building be placed as far away from the Venturi House as possible. The stone wall should be schist. A new tree may be needed for the courtyard. The HDAC supported the project. LUPZC also reviewed the project on March 3 and noted a clear need for the variance and generally approved the views from the existing house. The question of the viability of the maple was raised. The list of neighbors contacted was presented. The project was supported unanimously. As all had seen the full presentation, it was determined that the neighbor who has objected to the project should be the focus.

•Presentation: Joan Lau, as an immediate neighbor, has legitimate concerns. It was noted that the required 10' setback is not against Lau's property. Juliet Fajardo presented views of the accessory dwelling unit from J Lau's property. The ADU does not cause a loss of view of the Vanna Venturi

House. The ADU is 85' from the Lau house. There are sheds in the rear of both properties now. The current fence is derelict. A new fence and plantings are proposed – 6' wood fence and arborvitae. The structures move the view to the left more toward the Vanna Venturi House. Joan Lau read a statement about her long ties and experiences in chestnut Hill. She does not approve of the location and the size of the ADU. It is in the backyards of the neighbors and is too large for the main house. The architect noted that the opinions of the neighbors are important. The neighbor adjacent to the 8' setback does not object. J Lau noted that the ADU not being located inside the envelope of the existing house is not supported by zoning. The law calls for ADUs to be contained in an existing structure. J Fajardo noted that this is one reason for the variance. The other is the side yard. The Vanna Venturi House is a small house on a large property. The ADU is a big ask. J Landis asked if more time and communication could lead to a compromise. L McEwen noted the ZBA appointment is June 1. There is time to work this out. S Gendler noted that this was a new recognition for this critical neighbor. It was noted that the Historic Commission liked the present location and the project was supported by the Historic Commission. Changing the design will reinvolve the Historic Commission, which can increase time. Craig Schelter asked if the project was approved by the full commission or the architectural committee of the Historic Commission. It was approved by both. It was further noted that when the new code was written, this situation for ADUs was not foreseen. L McEwen noted that the ADU was a small quiet building. It was suggested that the building could be adapted to reflect J Lau's concerns. A consensus should be able to be reached. Community committees could help. S Gendler suggested layers of fencing and trees but that is visual obfuscation. The façade of the ADU facing Lau's property could be more open. A fence can be off-putting. J Landis noted that the concerns of neighbors have not been well considered. David Lockard should work with neighbors for a better solution. D Lockard stated that the intention was to make the ADU as inconspicuous as possible and to maintain a clear separation between the ADU and the house. He suggested that the Laus have a categorical objection to the ADU; it is not wanted. Anne McNiff questioned the legality of a 6' opaque fence on front setback. The fence would be all on a side yard. C Hardester noted that front yard fences are limited to 4' height and 50% opaque. The architects noted the fence shown was a suggestion; it can be changed. C Schelter noted that the Historic Commission uses neighbor input and who is present. Neighbors need to speak up. J Lenhardt noted that J Lau did not veto the possibility of a compromise; there may be a solution. J Landis noted that a view is not owned. It was noted that an ADU is a high bar for a variance.

- Committee Actions: J Landis suggested that this project be tabled. It should be studied by the owner, neighbors and a subcommittee to resolve differences and return in April. It was suggested that J Landis's statement be used as a motion. Sam Filippi proposed a motion using J Landis's statement. It was seconded. J Lenhardt noted that the HDAC's statement was not needed to be incorporated into this motion. The HDAC, LUPZC, VP Physical, architects, and neighbors should work on the consensus. D Lockard suggested a 30 day limit on reaching a consensus. The motion was seconded and approved by the committee. C Hardester and J Lenhardt will get the contacts. D Lockard suggested meeting at the Vanna Venturi House to better understand the situation.

Committee Business

- Update El Limon: Questions were asked about the status of the restaurant, especially about the walkway to the outdoor seating. There is work going on. It was not known if it was being done by Sanjiv Jain or SEPTA.

- Minutes: The minutes were reviewed. It was noted that there is a change needed regarding the makeup of the wall. It will be full Wissahickon schist. It was also noted that the next step in the review process is the DRC not the ZBA. It was moved that the minutes be approved with the changes.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 9 PM.