

# LAND USE, PLANNING AND ZONING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of January 9, 2020

## Members Present

<u>✓</u>	Brad Flamm, Chair	<u>✓</u>	Larry McEwen
<u>✓</u>	Steve Gendler	<u>✓</u>	Ned Mitinger
	John Landis	<u>✓</u>	Andrew Moroz
<u>✓</u>	Joyce Lenhardt		Bradley Wells
<u>✓</u>	Chris Linn	<u>✓</u>	Laura Lucas, Pres, CHCA (ex-officio)
<u>✓</u>	Jean McCoubrey	<u>✓</u>	Joyce Lenhardt, VP Physical

## Others Attending:

Chris Young, Camfred Group potential developers for 208-10 Rex  
Fred Duling, Camfred Group potential developers for 208-10 Rex  
Cecil Baker, Cecil Baker+Partners architect for 208-10 Rex  
Eric Leighton, Cecil Baker+Partners  
Michael Sklaroff, attorney for neighbors of 208-10 Rex  
25 members of the community  
Celeste Hardester, CHCA  
Melissa Nash, recorder

The meeting opened at 8:00pm by Bradley Wells, co-chair.

## **208-10 Rex Avenue**

•Developer Presentation: Fred Duling of the Camfred Group opened the presentation, which was a proposal for developing 208-10 Rex Avenue. The property has 59,059 sq ft and is zoned RSD-3. The existing house is 4300 sq ft. The parcel is under agreement. An overview of the project includes a street ending in a cul de sac with a series of twins on the east side of the property and 4 condos in the existing house. There has not been a formal submission to zoning as they wanted to present to neighbors for input first, then to zoning. Some priorities they are addressing are preservation of the house, density, designing for the neighborhood, working with the slopes, complementary materials and colors, minimizing the impact on street parking, landscaping and storm water management. The project will have four condos plus 4 twins. The twins will be about 38' tall. Each condo will have about 2400 sq ft. The twins will have footprints of  $\approx$ 1500 sq ft. There will be 13 parking spaces and 8 garages. Coverage will be about 26.75%.

•Architect Presentation: Cecil Baker presented the project. He stated that he had fears about incorporating the historical. The house is Gaudiesque inside. They looked at the neighboring twins who are in the same village with the mansion and the contemporary additions. The twins will be equipped with elevators allowing the smaller footprint. There are two types of twins: type A with 4 stories, a basements and 3764 sq ft., mainly on the uphill sites and type B with 3 stories, a basement and 3085 sq ft. It was asked if the twins would be taller than the mansion. They will not. There may be many variances. It was noted by neighbors that there were porches on the existing twins facing the street. There is no welcoming warmth in this design. Ned Mitinger stated that while this design is preliminary there is no clear idea about finances. He asked why 8 additional units. It was answered that it would require \$2-1/2 to 3 million to rehab the house, the cost to handle storm water is \$1 to 1-1/2 million, new construction runs \$200 to \$250 per square foot. F. Duling expressed that single houses priced at a level

to make the project work financially could be more than would be marketable even in Chestnut Hill. C Baker noted that the developer pays at least \$500,000 for new ground. A neighbor directed the developer to Millman Place. Other neighbors noted that this was a minimal change from the prior proposal. This development is too dense and too much change to the neighborhood. Attorney Michael Sklaroff noted concerns about parking, traffic, character and RD-3 zoning. Preservation covenants are possible. Zoning helps to protect scale and character of the neighborhood.

•Committee Comments: L McEwen noted that the twins on the street front on the street. The new units could also face the street. He approves of the idea to keep the mansion, but the project is not too big or too massive. The project is not typical of the street. C Baker stated that the development would increase value of neighbor properties. A neighbor remarked that it is not right to add so much to the property. Another neighbor reiterated that zoning is intended to preserve the character of the area. L McEwen described the area as 50' wide lots with small yards; the depth of the lot is a problem. Joyce Lenhardt asked about anticipated refusals. Variances will include semi-detached residences, multifamily in house, parking in side yard, rear yard setback, impervious coverage, steep slope disturbance and heritage trees. It is possible that the land could be subdivided as only 5000sq ft is needed for RSD-3. C Baker noted that singles could be considered. A neighbor asked if cute houses would be considered not interesting. M Sklaroff suggested the scale of the buildings on Rex Avenue be seen in context. Jean McCoubrey asked what could be done with the property if the house were torn down. The question was not clearly answered. With the house there an additional house might be built. N Mitinger asked about money and aesthetics; the front twins are in the way of the house. All new construction should be behind the house. J Lenhardt stated that the project needs to be seen in context as the new construction looks too large, that twins don't need to be 3000SF, and questioned the need for elevators. She also questioned parking in front of the house. There are 8 spaces in front of the house and 6 in the cull de sac. Steve Gendler stated that the additional units do break down the site and provide a use for it. It could become another Greylock if it has too many limitations. He added that the density is on track but the scale of the twins on Rex Avenue was too large, and asked if they could be turned towards Rex. M Sklaroff noted that there was no interaction between the neighbors and developers or their attorneys. (Carl Primavera is the attorney for the developers. not present) M Sklaroff suggested that these are good discussions, but that if talks have reached an impasse to let them know. Aside from desiring for the development to comply with by-right zoning, it was unclear how neighbors envisioned this in conjunction with keeping the mansion.

•Continued Project: The next step is to submit the project for review. The process would then kick in. A neighbor stated that the scale/mass was appreciated but the aesthetics was not. It was asked if a driveway off Crefeld was possible. It is not. It was asked if 3 large singles would work. There would not be enough dollars generated. It was suggested that the size of the twin could be reduced. The committee said it would be helpful to see an elevation from Crefeld/Rex that shows the mansions, twins, and houses across Rex ghosted in.

### **Committee Business**

•Executive Sessions and Changes to Guidelines: The changes to the revised Guidelines have not been officially approved. Executive session is in the new version but it does not related to RCO reviews. The wording should not suggest "backroom activity". How to do pre-reviews and how to schedule them should be formalized. These reviews are not part of the RCO process but are advisory. Roberts Rules allow invitees to executive session. There is also an issue of advising/meeting with problem property owners. It was also suggest that a realtor could be on DRC through the Business Association. Conflict of Interest is addressed in the CHCA bylaws. It was noted that the Land Use Green Book has never been updated, and that we might seek a grant to hire a firm to help us do that.

- Committee Chairs: Brad Flamm has been chair for three years. It was suggested that the committee talk to Brad Wells about serving. Jean McCoubrey agreed to co- chair with Brad Flamm for the moment. Jean was approved for this position, whichh needs to be approved by the Board.

**Adjournment**

- The meeting was adjourned at 10:42PM.