

LAND USE, PLANNING AND ZONING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of March 4, 2021

Executive Session

Members Present

<u>✓</u>	Jean McCoubrey, Co-chair	<u>✓</u>	Larry McEwen
<u>✓</u>	Steve Gendler	<u> </u>	Ned Mitinger
<u>✓</u>	John Landis	<u> </u>	Andrew Moroz
<u>✓</u>	Joyce Lenhardt	<u>✓</u>	Bradley Wells, Co-chair
<u>✓</u>	Chris Linn	<u> </u>	Kathi Clayton, Pres, CHCA (ex-officio)
		<u> </u>	Tony Banks, VP Physical (interim)

Others Attending:

Tony Bracali, Goldenberg Group
Josh Goldenberg, Goldenberg Group
David Mercuris, Goldenberg Group
Jason Tucker, Goldenberg Group
Carl Primavera, attorney for Goldenberg Group
Deborah Popky, HDAC
Patricia Cove, HDAC
Randy Williams, HDAC
Shirley Hansen, HDAC
Eileen Javers, HDAC
Bill O'Keefe, HDAC
Miles Orvell, HDAC
Richard Bartholomew, HDAC
Lori Salganicoff, CH Conservancy
Leah Silverstein, CH Conservancy
Anne Mc Niff, Executive Director CHCA
Celeste Hardester, Development Review Facilitator
Melissa Nash, recorder

The meeting was opened at 8:07 pm by Jean McCoubrey, co-chair. This meeting was conducted remotely using Zoom. This was an executive session. The content should not be shared. There were no votes. There will be no firm position, only feedback.

100-102 East Mermaid Lane

•Presentation: The development team was introduced themselves by Carl Primavera, the attorney. Jason Tucker, the Director of Development for the Goldenberg Group described the property at 100-102 East Mermaid. The property is 4.4 acres beginning next to the Chestnut Hill East tracks and extending to the new Meeting House. The project presented is in a very preliminary stage. There will be a long process with the community and collaboration with the neighbors. They have spoken to the neighbors and received feedback for this larger than usual site. David Mercuris stated that the Goldenberg Group first started its company with a big box scheme then to residential use and condos and student housing. They do good public work and have school partnerships. Their office is in Blue Bell. They considered moving the offices to this site. Reuse of the existing has been explored. Zoning has been explored. This history was not shared with the neighbors. Josh Goldenberg stated that the site offers unique

opportunity as an amazing bookend for Chestnut Hill and as a sustainable community on a green, eco-friendly site. A land use map showing transit. There is 110,000 sq ft of building, the old Meeting House, a parking lot and a City playground. The playground and a trail head need to remain accessible. The plan is to retain the old meeting house and the stone wall on Mermaid. They will form an open edge on Mermaid Lane. Trees will be retained. There will be trees along Mermaid and around the meeting house. The new building will be passive, high performance and certified. It will be a quiet environment. The site plan was reviewed briefly. Heights and setbacks are reviewed. The majority of parking will be in a stacker machine near the train tracks, which will hold over 100 vehicles. There will be three curb cuts. The meeting house will be semi-public. The proposed will be more sympathetic to the neighborhood than the current.

•Comments: J McCoubrey asked for a clarification of zoning and what it allows. C Primavera noted the zoning was a placeholder allowing single family with street frontage. The property does not fit RSD-3. It is more like RMX-3. This is not a typical zoning variance case. Across Mermaid zoning is RSA-3; across the tracks, it is RM-2. RMA-3 requires a 25' frontage and no interior streets. With the street frontage the property could be broken into 27 lots. The planned building is 6 stories but has setbacks from the street. J Landis asked about the number of units planned. The number ranges from 250-285, which is 60-70 units per acre. The densest properties in Chestnut Hill have 20-30 units per acre. Support is needed for the density. Better arguments are needed to support this density. Parking is too distant from many units. There is some parking near the old meeting house. Patricia Cove asked if the units would be rentals or condos. They would be rentals. The building is entered through a common hallway. Building reuse was questioned. The existing building is obsolete. Miles Orvell asked about the size of the apartments. The average size is 800 sq ft, but there is a wide range of sizes from studios, 1 bedroom juniors, 1 bedroom, 1 bedroom with den, 2 bedrooms and 2 bedrooms with den. They would cater to higher incomes. Bill O'Keefe asked about outdoor space. About 50 % of the apartments would have private outdoor space. The park is to the rear. There will be a pool behind the old meeting house. The public can access the park through the ends of the site. There is a 25' elevation changes which may help with accessibility. Miles asked about the view from the street. There will be a distinguished view from the street with punched windows. They are cultivating a good design team from Digsau. The Goldenberg Group plans to own the property long term; this is not a flip. J McCoubrey asked about the structure. This is a single structure. It may have multiple entries for improved circulation. Assembly points will promote a sense of community. A McNiff asked about a commitment to include the neighbors and how this would be done. Efforts will be shared. Issues will involve height, light, setbacks, and street maintenance. They should be more forthright about the development. Goldenberg will share its efforts. Joyce Lenhardt noted that the discussion should have begun a year ago but had no discussion. She asked if they had considered under building parking and other uses, perhaps a senior living site. This should not include care services. Celeste Hardester noted that the number of people in the building could amount to 5% of Chestnut Hill's population. This is substantial. Neighborhood impact includes the number of deliveries that could be generated. It was answered that residents will use shops in Chestnut Hill.

•Comments cont.: It was asked if the Goldenberg Group had considered houses and interior streets. They looked at this but didn't like the solutions. J Lenhardt asked the Goldenberg Group to share some of these earlier schemes. The cars to residents ratio is too low. Randy Williams asked if electric cars can be accommodated in the stackers. This can be done. There can also be accommodations for bicycles. Bill O'Keefe asked about the timeline. They will try to do the demolition next year and then an 18-24 month construction schedule with occupancy in Spring/Summer 2024. C Hardester inquired about the height. The building would not be all 6 stories tall. A McNiff asked about the demolition and safety concerns including asbestos. Neighbors should be informed of any possible contaminants. P Cove asked about the start of the RCO process. C Primavera stated that the process with CHCA needs

to be worked out. It may take a long time to set up an agreement with the community and the neighbors. J Landis spoke about remapping the site, which will require more than the standard round of meetings for the process. C Primavera noted that unified communications are important. J Lenhardt suggested an agreement with the community is necessary. C Primavera agreed. The dimensions of the site and the building were presented - 740' along Mermaid, by 126' deep at the widest. It is generally rectangular. The central building would be 300-400' long of varying height. A 500'-600' building with the wings is projected. Richard Bartholomew noted the scale and massing of the building the building height and the traffic generation are all important concerns. J Landis noted that this will be a 2 part process; first generating a general program and the specifics. Lori Salgonicoff asked if they would pledge to keep the Meeting House. The goal is to save it. It would be harder to save with a single family scheme. The project needs to produce enough income to sustain the project. [at this point I have noted that Steve G spoke but that I could not hear him.] J McCoubrey noted there would be forward movement with neighbors and community. J Lenhardt noted that the next meeting should give history of the project. The CHCA can come back to the Goldenberg Group with a potential process with the CHCA, CH Conservancy and neighbors. Neighbors should see a personal benefit. This should be an inclusive process that includes neighbors.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 10:32 PM.