

Town of Westwood
Zoning Board of Appeals
Westwood Public Library
660 High Street
Meeting Minutes
September 23, 2015

Members Present: David W. Krumsiek- Chairman, John F. Lally, Douglas C. Stebbins

Staff Member Present: Louise C. Rossi - Zoning Administrator, Tom McCusker – Town Counsel, Nora Loughnane – Director, Community and Economic Development, Jeffrey Silva – Westwood Police Chief

Mr. Krumsiek gave a brief description of the proceedings and all were sworn in who anticipated giving testimony.

Upon a motion by Mr. Lally, which was seconded by Mr. Stebbins, the reading of the legal notices for the two applications filed for the hearing was waived.

Applications:

580-590 High Street

Applicant: – Town of Westwood

Project: Special Permit under Section 9.3.5 & Variances from Section 5.2, 5.4.1.1 and 6.1.14

90 Deerfield Avenue

Applicant: – Town of Westwood

Project: Variances from Section 5.2 and 6.1.14

Mr. Krumsiek explained to the attendees that the applications would be considered jointly as they are, essentially, one and the same project as one does not get underway without the other. The entire project encompasses the property currently used by Town Hall, the Police Station, the Scout House behind Town Hall and part of the American Legion lot.

Don Waller of PARE Corporation, engineers for the Project introduced his team of Rich Almeida and Marc Gabriel as all who have met frequently with the Town regarding the Fire Station Project and now for the Police Station Project. Mr. Waller walked the Board through a Power Point presentation of the project. The police station is to be enlarged which will solve safety and traffic concerns. The building will be located approximately 25' further back on the lot than the existing station. A new defined access road, 22' in width with a sidewalk, will be located behind the station and will link up with Deerfield Avenue. In order to accommodate future growth, the building will be two stories with a single story extension on the side.

Mr. Gabriel informed the Board of the studies that had been done on the site and existing problem areas which will require variances. The American Legion has no frontage and their parking needs are causing all sorts of haphazard parking on their land and Town land.

There is a diesel generator on site which will be upgraded with a double walled, above ground tank and which is integral to the police department. All storm water will be captured, treated and then discharged which is an improvement over the current situation.

Mr. Waller stated that the height of the new building will exceed allowable limits, but this was done to replicate the style of the neighboring Town Hall. Mechanical equipment will be kept in the roof space and this will assist in its' longevity of it as it will not be exposed to the elements.

Mr. Lally inquired about the impervious surface coverage on the lot and was told that coverage for the entire project will be 61% versus coverage today of 54% without any maintenance of storm water.

According to Police Chief, Jeffrey Silva, the communications tower will be the same as the existing tower and will be further away from High Street.

The new parking design provides for 91 spaces for the Police and Town Hall and 35 spaces for the American Legion. The police parking will be screened by a 4' fence and the parking space associated with the Deerfield School will be staying. Trees will be planted along the American Legion side of the street but not around the parking lot as the space cannot be too tight.

Mr. Stebbins inquired if this was a single lot. According to Mr. Gabriel, this project space is four lots consisting of the Town Hall, Police Station, Scout House and the American Legion. The future configuration includes the Town purchasing the Scout House and swapping some land with the American Legion so that in the future, the site will comprise two lots; the American Legion and the Town lot.

Mr. Krumsiek read the requirements of Section 9.3 for a Special Permit in the Water Resource Protection Overlay District (WRPOD) and noted that there are certain requirements to building in such areas.

Shawn Sweeney – 77 Deerfield Avenue – inquired about using a 90' tower for the station and Mr. Waller responded that a 90' tower would be insufficient. Mr. Sweeney expressed concerns about the design of the building and parking and suggested that Deerfield Avenue be made a dead end. He also mentioned the height of the new building will dwarf the Town Hall and questioned why there would be no full basement. Mr. Waller responded that there is not habitable space in the basement. Mr. Sweeney also questioned the "urban" feel of a locked lot for police vehicles and would like more street scape.

Chief Silva said that the building comprises 20421 s. f. of which 1000 s.f. would enclose air handlers. A space needs analysis was done and the changes in best practices over the years can be accommodated with the new building. There have been a number of incidents with the police cars, hence the locked lot and it is not operationally functional to have a cell block in the basement.

Mr. Lally inquired as to the type of exterior lighting and was told it would encompass the street, pedestrian areas and walls and have cut-off features.

Pauline O'Keefe – 36 Deerfield Avenue – expressed concerns over increased school traffic on a revamped Deerfield Avenue.

Tom O'Keefe – 36 Deerfield Avenue – inquired about additional equipment on the new tower and congestion in the parking area as it will be reduced from 96 spaces to 91 spaces. He was informed that the American Legion parking will be increased from 28 spaces to 35 spaces.

Mr. Krumsiek inquired if there were any other options to reduce the footprint of the new building. Mr. Waller stated that he worked with a Task Force and they studied options and believed the one before the Board is the most viable.

Mr. Krumsiek expressed concern with losing parking spaces at Deerfield school for weekend field programs and inquired if the secured police lot could be moved to another site on the property.

Mr. Sweeney brought up the proposal of converting Deerfield Avenue to a dead-end; thereby eliminating some traffic as then it would not be used as a cut-through street.

Ms. Loughnane said that the land occupied by the Scout House considered for purchase and the land swap with the American Legion were issues to go before Town Meeting. The entire project hinges on all the moving parts working together or else, it doesn't get done.

Mr. McCusker mentioned he had submitted a letter that due to the configuration of the land, the location of the wetlands and the amount of impervious surface and the inherent restrictions, that the site meets the requirements of the statute to be considered for a Variance.

Mr. Krumsiek would like to see a traffic study and Ms. Loughnane said the Planning Board would look to putting more parking spaces by St. Johns' Church and the Planning Board would also consider the height of the building.

On a motion by Mr. Lally which was seconded by Mr. Stebbins, it was voted unanimously to grant a Special Permit and four Variances to 580-590 High Street and 2 variances for 90 Deerfield Avenue upon the conditions that a traffic study be reviewed by the Planning Board and the Zoning Board reserves the right to revisit the project should there be substantial change to the plan.

The hearing adjourned at 8:50 PM.