

Rye City Planning Commission Minutes
January 22, 2019

MEETING ATTENDANCE:

Planning Commission Members:

- Nick Everett, Chair
- Martha Monserrate, Vice-Chair
- Andrew Ball
- Laura Brett
- Richard Mecca
- Steven Secon
- Birgit Townley

Other:

- Christian K. Miller, AICP, City Planner
 - Tracy Stora, CC/AC
 - Melissa Johannessen, AICP, LEED AP
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I. HEARINGS

None.

II. ITEMS PENDING ACTION

1. 22-46 Locust Avenue (WP#420/SUB#355)

- Mr. Leo Napior, attorney; Mr. Jeff Kazinsky, architect; Mr. Paul Versames, applicant; and Mr. Richard Horsman, landscape architect, were present for the application. Mr. Napior stated that as requested by the Planning Commission, the applicant prepared two alternative site plans with “street-facing” buildings along Locust Avenue. He stated that per the discussion with the Commission at its last meeting, the plan was drawn to show no lot lines in order to achieve an improved building arrangement and site design. He stated that the Commission indicated that it may support zoning variances if necessary to achieve a better layout of buildings on the site. He noted that the unit count and floor area are the same as in the previous layout.
- Mr. Kazinsky described the proposed architecture of the buildings, noting that the buildings will be varied in appearance through the use of shed dormers, gables, different roof pitches, and sun porches. He noted that the design would also incorporate features from some of the newer developments recently constructed on Purchase Street, including windows and building projections.
- Mr. Kazinsky stated that the buildings were sited to relate to the buildings on the other side of Locust Avenue, with similar spacing between buildings and similar driveway widths. He stated that the driveways in this alternative are 22’ wide, with 25’-26’ between the proposed buildings. Mr. Kazinsky stated that the two alternative plans are similar to each other, with the only major difference being the location of the fourth building. In one version there is more contiguous green space than in the other, but he stated that the downside to that plan is that the two buildings on the west side of the site are close together from front to back.

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- Mr. Kazinsky noted that in the alternative plans, the blue areas are the actual parts of the building touching the ground, while the yellow areas are above ground. He stated that the blue areas are of the most concern from a flood perspective. He also noted that one of the buildings is mostly outside of the wetland buffer.
 - The Commission discussed the flood analysis map shown by the City Planner. The City Planner stated that the project must not contribute to a rise in the flood elevation on the site; he noted that the applicant's preferred alternative (presented to the Commission at previous meetings) did not cause flood elevations to rise. Mr. Napior stated that the applicant would like to get a consensus on the desired layout and then will run the flood analysis again.
 - Mr. Kazinsky presented an elevation view of each alternative from Locust Avenue. He noted that all building entrances are on Locust Avenue, all of them have porches of some kind, and all of them are unique. He noted that the building heights are the same as previously proposed, but he needs to verify the midpoint of the gable. He stated that a story variance will be needed but not a height variance.
 - The City Planner stated that the first floor elevation is approximately 29', whereas the minimum allowed finished floor elevation is 25' per the City's flood law. The Commission asked what the finished floor elevation is of the properties on the other side of Locust Avenue. The City Planner estimated it to be between 23' and 24'.
 - The Commission noted that regarding the buildings across Locust Avenue, almost all have porches, varying roof lines, and consistent front yard setbacks and separation between buildings. Mr. Kazinsky stated that buildings in the two alternative plans were designed with porches at the front setback, whereas the Commission might want to consider allowing porches to extend into the front yard setback to create variety.
 - The Commission stated that the alternative plans respond to the concerns that were raised at the previous meeting, and noted that the Commission's preference is for the plan with the larger contiguous area of open space. The Commission also suggested that the driveways should be narrowed near Locust Avenue and in between the buildings where possible. The Commission also discussed creating greater separation between two buildings on the eastern half of the site.
 - The Commission commented on the size of the building closest to the Locust Avenue bridge with respect to potential impacts on flooding. Mr. Napior stated that he will consult with the flood engineer to determine what impact the size and orientation of this building has on flooding. It was also suggested that the largest building had the feel of an apartment building, while the other buildings had a smaller-scale feel with almost the same amount of floor area. Mr. Kazinsky stated

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1 that the largest building could be rearranged with some of the space moved to the
2 back of the building rather than facing Locust Avenue.

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4 • The Commission asked what the applicant's plan would be for the open space
5 area. Mr. Kazinsky stated that it would contain seating areas as well as some active
6 use space. He stated that the landscape architect would develop a plan for the
7 area. Mr. Napior stated that there is a planting plan along the brook.

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9 • The City Planner stated that the applicant should develop lot lines according to the
10 minimum lot size, with the understanding that setback variances will likely be
11 required. The Commission noted that the applicant should develop its preferred
12 layout, do the flood analysis, and then the Commission can refer the application to
13 the Zoning Board. The City Planner also stated that the application can be referred
14 to the Board of Architectural Review at that point.

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17 **2. Minutes**

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19 • The Commission reviewed the draft minutes from the January 8, 2019 meeting and
20 made minor revisions.

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22 **ACTION:** Laura Brett made a motion, seconded by Richard Mecca, to approve as
23 amended the minutes from the January 8th meeting, which was carried by
24 the following vote:

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26 Nick Everett, Chair: Aye
27 Martha Monserrate, Vice-Chair: Aye
28 Andrew Ball: Aye
29 Laura Brett: Aye
30 Richard Mecca: Aye
31 Steven Secon: Aye
32 Birgit Townley: Aye