

Meeting Minutes
State College Borough Design Review Board
October 4, 2016

The State College Borough Design Review Board (DRB) met on Tuesday, October 4, 2016 in the State College Borough Municipal Building, 243 South Allen Street in Room 241. Chairman Bryant called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Members Present

Richard Bryant, Chairman; Bond Reinhardt, Vice-Chairman, Richard Devon and Eric Boeldt.

The Board and the new Design Review Board member, Eric Boeldt, briefly exchanged introductions.

Others Present

Anne Messner, Planner/Zoning Officer; Jenna Wargo, Planner; Sarah Smith, Staff Assistant; Amy Kerner, Borough Engineer; Rocky Baer, B3 Architects; Barry Gordon, OGP Architects; Rick Pratt, OGP Architects; Alex Sahakian, Highland Holding Group; John Sepp, PennTerra Engineering; Peg Hambrick, David Stone, Mark Huncik, Kathleen Yurchak, and other interested parties.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Reinhardt and seconded by Mr. Devon to approve the September 20, 2016 minutes as submitted. The vote was unanimously in favor.

Chair Report

Chairman Bryant had nothing to report.

Public Hour

No one in the audience wished to discuss items not on the agenda.

Land Development Plan

Final Plan 408 East Fairmount Avenue Building Expansion, Fraternity Use, Zoning District, R2 Zoning District, Omicron Association, Owner

Ms. Messner noted that the project was a contributing building in the Holmes-Foster District. The Historic Resources Commission (HRC) had a couple of suggestions which were included in the agenda.

Mr. Baer's presentation included:

- There were two proposed additions:

- A walk in cooler to be added as the current walk in cooler was not functioning efficiently inside the building.
- The second area would be a restroom addition. This would allow the second-floor restroom to have private showers. This would also allow for the inclusion of a handicap accessible restroom on the main floor.
- Proposing adding a ramp in the back of property.
- There would be changes to the parking area in order to have a walkway area in to the stairs.
- The addition would mimic the style of the existing house with a steeper pitch roof and little fascia.
- For the restroom addition, they are looking for a way to change the windows in order to minimize the window area for safety and privacy reasons, but they will be attempting to redo the design to mimic the design of the current building.

Boards' comments/questions included:

- Mr. Reinhardt inquired why there was a need for a variance and Ms. Messner explained that it was a non-conforming property.
- Mr. Devon inquired about the air exhaust for the cooler and Mr. Baer explained that the exhaust vent was for the hood system not the cooler so the vent would have to remain.
- Mr. Devon commented that he understood why the HRC had commented about the windows and inquired what was planned for the higher window. (There was a suggestion of an 8-grid system or maybe brick work as there are privacy issues with that room.)
- Mr. Bryant inquired where the ramp enters the building. (Mr. Baer responded that it would enter the kitchen.)
- Mr. Devon inquired about having the ramp enter the building where the patio was. (Mr. Baer noted that the patio was not on an even level with the existing floor which would cause problems with the ramp.)

A motion to approve this plan was made by Mr. Reinhardt and seconded by Mr. Devon. The vote was unanimously in favor.

Preliminary Plan 254 East Beaver Avenue, Replacement Building, Mixed-use, Zoning District, RO with Overlay District, Highland Hold Group, Owner, Penn Terra, Engineering, OGB Architects, LLP, Architect

Mr. Gordon's presentation included:

- The building would be a seven story, mixed use building with retail uses, office uses, and residential uses.
- The building was planned to be a LEED silver building with underground parking and a bonus area for open space.
- Existing building would be removed and there would be remediation for asbestos.

- There will be two vehicle access points. One off Locust Lane to the underground parking and one off Highland Avenue under the building to on grade parking.
- There will be 10% Inclusionary housing with 4 bedrooms.
- There will be 20 foot setbacks on the sides to help with green space.
- The mechanical spaces will be in the basement and there was a section of the basement that was planned for retail storage use.
- The first floor would include retail space, the lobby for the residential use, the lobby for the office use, and a parking area.
- The second floor would include at grade parking on top of the parking deck below, three apartment units, and a commercial space.
- The third, fourth, fifth and sixth floors would all be apartment units.
- The seventh floor would have office space and a roof deck.

Boards' comments/questions included:

- Mr. Devon inquired if the retail would be focused on pedestrian traffic and Mr. Gordon responded that it would be. He also noted that there would also be one space for 800 feet of residential and there was no requirement for an office use on the ground floor.
- Mr. Devon inquired if there would be parking spaces with charging stations. Mr. Gordon responded that they were considering parking spaces for carpools, a charging station, and a green space.
- Mr. Devon inquired if there was a limit to how much space could be limited to one use when it is a mixed-use building. Ms. Messner explained that it would depend on the zoning district. Mr. Devon stated that it appears the Borough did not want high rise apartments. Ms. Messner responded that the ordinances are encouraging mixed-use. Mr. Devon inquired if the building would be the highest it would be allowed and Ms. Messner stated that it was the highest allowed for that project.
- Mr. Reinhardt inquired about the roof deck and if it would be a green roof? Mr. Gordon noted that it was a roof garden and he was unsure if it could be qualified as a green roof. The roof deck would be isolated to the office spaces.
- Mr. Devon inquired if there would be a retaining wall around the roof deck so that people could not just walk off the roof. Mr. Gordon noted that there was a wall included.

Mr. Pratt's presentation included:

- The student housing had its own entrance on Beaver Avenue, a separate door for retail on Beaver Avenue, and the office entrance on Beaver Avenue.
- There would be no change inside, but it would be breaking up the façade on the outside.
- There was planned to be some type of pergola and shading in the roof garden area.
- There would be some fins and different materials on the sides of the building.
- The materials of the office entrance would be masonry and natural materials.
- The materials for the retail entrance would be glass.

- The materials for the marquee section were being planned to be something with a textural feel. The marquee would be the section between the office and retail entrances. There would be a fin wall with tile, paneling or stone.
- The windows were planned to be different sizes in order to break up the mass of the front façade.
- The fins in the front were placed to break up the façade.

Boards' comments/questions included:

- Mr. Devon inquired if the roof structure over the deck would be retractable. Mr. Pratt responded that there was a discussion of a portion being retractable, but nothing had been decided yet. They wanted something to shade the area.
- Mr. Devon inquired if the roof garden would be enclosed on the North Side and he noted it would be nice to have a partial roof in case people wanted to walk out under an open sky.
- Mr. Devon expressed a dislike of the intended colors. Mr. Reinhardt noted that the colors were very different from the nearby buildings. Mr. Pratt noted that the green was a weathered copper material that would match the architecture building on campus. He stated that the wood material would be a fiberglass material with the texture and color of wood. He also noted that the beige material would be a corrugated metal material that was meant to relate to the surrounding buildings.
- Chairman Bryant inquired if the retail space would include backlit signs and Mr. Pratt stated that they would.
- Mr. Devon inquired if the retail space was designed to go up to the second floor and Mr. Pratt noted that it was a tall retail space.
- Mr. Boeldt inquired if the zoning regulations required the retail space to be the entire first floor as it seemed like it was only a small portion of the first floor. Ms. Messner responded that the regulations only require it to be the first third of the first floor facing the street.
- Mr. Devon inquired how the apartments would be marketed. Mr. Gordon responded that they would be market rate, but they were conducting a marketing study.
- Mr. Reinhardt inquired about the stormwater and if there would be more impervious surface with the project. Mr. Sepp stated that the stormwater management would be underground and that there would be a slight increase in the impervious surface.
- Mr. Devon stated that he was encouraged by the materials and colors shown in the meeting. He noted that it was difficult to see an aesthetic theme and that there may be too much variety.
- Chairman Bryant noted that the rendering did not give an accurate depiction of what the materials looked like.
- Mr. Devon suggested that they review the roof and roof deck again. Mr. Gordon noted that they had reviewed several permutations. They would review their final plans for it before returning. They would also consider getting a landscape architect involved in the project going forward.

The questions/comments from the public included:

- Ms. Hambrick stated that the exterior going west became more modern and the property adjacent on that side was a very traditional property. Mr. Gordon noted that was one of the reasons for the increased setbacks. Mr. Devon suggested divider walls and to make those walls have a stone face in order to echo the style of the fraternity.
- Ms. Hambrick was interested in how the LEED status and inquired when it would be awarded. Mr. Gordon stated that they planned to have the project registered with LEED before the Final Plan. The developers would submit a bond to the Borough that would be surety that they would fulfill the work. When the project was completed and it received its LEED certification then the Borough would release the bond. Ms. Hambrick inquired what would happen if the project did not get LEED certified. Ms. Messner responded that the bond would be kept, but there would need to be an independent study that verified that it could not be certified. She also noted that it was a lengthy process to get certified and usually if a developer was going through the process, they would do everything they could in order to receive the certification. Mr. Gordon noted that the project would be one floor lower if they could not get the LEED certification and they would eliminate the office floor.
- Ms. Yurchak inquired about the different applications of mixed-use. Ms. Messner noted that would depend on the Zoning District in place for the parcel. Ms. Yurchak inquired if the Zoning District was changeable and Ms. Messner responded that it was not. Ms. Yurchak inquired if there would be any zoning violation if the developer removed the office space and Ms. Messner noted that Borough staff would have to review the overlay ordinance if the problem came up.
- Ms. Yurchak inquired if there was much parking behind the building. Mr. Gordon noted that they were not moving the building, only the opening, and that the parking would be underground which would not be visible outside.
- Mr. Boeldt inquired about a landscaping plan. Mr. Gordon responded that there would be landscaping around the building and the project would include much more green space than there was on the parcel previously.
- Mr. Boeldt inquired if the opening for the parking would have grill work. Mr. Gordon responded that there would be grill work and a vehicle barrier.
- Mr. Boeldt noted that there was a sidewalk on the parcel and inquired if it would be renovated or upgraded. Mr. Gordon stated that the fine details had not yet been determined. Ms. Messner noted that it was a sloping sidewalk with no stairs.
- Mr. Stone inquired if the light beige material was decided on. Mr. Pratt noted that it was not decided yet, but they were reviewing a textured panel material. Mr. Stone inquired at what point would the preliminary plan be approved. Ms. Messner noted that the Planning Commission would make recommendations, but there could be items outstanding until the final plan. Mr. Gordon noted that they would have the materials finalized prior to the final plan.

- Mr. Stone inquired how the inclusionary housing number was determined. Mr. Gordon noted that the ordinance allows for rounding down.
- Mr. Stone inquired what the visual of the building was from the rear of the building on the Highland side. Mr. Pratt stated that it was a U shape with the outer sides extended. He noted that there would be aluminum frame windows that would help break up the façade and it would be a fiberboard material. Mr. Stone stated that he would like to see a rendering of the back side because it faces the neighborhoods.
- Mr. Huncik noted that the building was in a transition zone between the downtown and the neighborhoods. He suggested that it might be beneficial for the developer to be in contact with the fraternities. He noted that there were historical features in the neighborhood and then suddenly a very modern building. He noted that there was not much of a view on the patio. He suggested that the developer consider more of a transition between the fraternities and the modern building.
- Mr. Huncik inquired where the HVAC would be located as he was concerned about the noise.
- Mr. Huncik inquired about providing parking for the commercial space and planning for deliveries.
- Mr. Huncik inquired about providing bike access and spaces in the garage. He inquired how the developers were planning to bring traffic into the building as Locust Lane was a one-way road. He was concerned how the building would affect traffic in the neighborhood.
- Mr. Huncik inquired about the inclusionary housing that was planned. He noted that there were only planned to be four bedroom units in the building and he had been told by staff in the past that four bedroom units were not desirable for inclusionary housing. He noted that all the inclusionary housing was planned to be on the interior of the building.

Mr. Devon stated that he thought that the building would have foot traffic, but he did not think there would be a large increase in the vehicle traffic. Mr. Gordon noted there was a preliminary traffic letter for the project.

Mr. Boeldt inquired if there would be an impact on Beaver Avenue as far as closing part of the street while the building was under construction. Mr. Gordon noted that the property had overhead wires on three sides so there would have to be some street closures in order to get access to the property.

Official Reports and Correspondence

Borough Council (BC): Ms. Messner had nothing to report from Borough Council.

Staff Report: Ms. Amy Kerner joined the meeting in order to give a presentation on StormWater Management Education for Design Review Board. Ms. Kerner's presentation included:

- Information on the MS4 permit which requires the Engineer to provide education to all volunteers.
- Discussed the MS4 basics, Existing Permit Requirements, Illicit Discharge Basics and how the public could gain more information about illicit discharge.
- Discussed urbanized areas – the Borough’s first permit was issued in 2003 and expected to run through 2008, but was then extended until 2013. The second permit was issued on November 1, 2013 and runs through October 31, 2018.
- Reviewed the requirements of the permit including implementing the Stormwater Management Program, implementing a Chesapeake Bay Pollution Reduction Plan and reviewing the Impaired Waters around the Borough.
- Discussed the Minimum Control Measures including Public Education, Public Involvement, Illicit Discharge Detection & Elimination, Construction Site Runoff Management, Post-Construction Stormwater Management, and Pollution Prevention Good Housekeeping.
- Reviewed what Illicit Discharge meant which was basically anything that was entered into to the storm sewer system that was not stormwater.
- Discussed why illicit discharge was important and how it affected the local waterways.
- Reviewed the Relevant Authorized Discharges such as firefighting, potable water sources, non-contaminated HVAC condensate, crawl space pumps, residential car washing, lawn maintenance, pavement wash waters, dechlorinated swimming pools discharges, and external building wash down.
 - Reviewed the changes to the Authorized Discharges including that potable water sources must not contain concentrations of Total Residual Chlorine, residential vehicle washing must not contain cleaning agents, pavement wash water would no longer be permitted, swimming pool drainage would no longer be permitted, and external building wash down discharges would no longer be permitted.
- Reviewed how the Borough combats illicit discharge including Borough staff monitoring, requiring contractors use inlet filter bags, installing Stormceptor systems, using street sweeping, and partnering with neighboring municipalities for cleanup and spreading awareness.
- Reviewed several ways to get more information on the Borough’s Stormwater Management Program.

Boards’ comments/questions included:

- Mr. Bryant inquired what made Bellefonte an urban cluster. Ms. Kerner responded that there were many reasons and she was not familiar with all of them.
- Mr. Bryant inquired what Impaired Waters were and Ms. Kerner responded that they were any water that had some sort of pollution or impairment. She noted that in the case of the Borough, the impairments are mostly siltation and thermal pollutions.
- Mr. Devon inquired about Impaired Waters going through the ground surface. Ms. Kerner responded that putting the water into the ground before they reached the Bay was one way to filter out the Borough’s impairment issues.

- Mr. Devon inquired if that meant that residents couldn't wash cars. Ms. Kerner noted that would be one example, but that if the soapy water went through a filter such as the ground then the water would be cleaned of the impurities and would not be a problem.
- Mr. Devon inquired about finding a way to make the sidewalks and roads more permeable. Ms. Kerner responded that the ordinance encourages permeability, but it only applies to new development and most of the Borough was built prior to the Stormwater ordinance being adopted.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, Mr. Reinhardt made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 11:28 a.m. and Mr. Devon seconded the motion.

Respectfully submitted by:
Sarah E. Smith, Staff Assistant