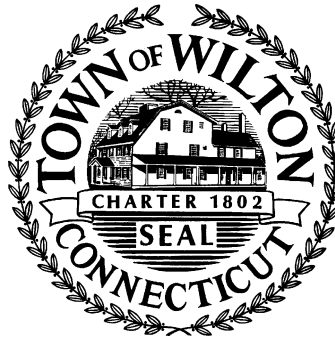


VILLAGE DISTRICT
DESIGN ADVISORY
COMMITTEE/
ARCHITECTURAL
REVIEW BOARD

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TOWN HALL ANNEX
238 Danbury Road
Wilton, Connecticut
06897

Robert Sanders, AIA, Chairman
Samuel Gardner, AIA, Vice-Chairman
John Doyle, AIA
Kevin Quinlan, AIA
Kathleen Poirier,
AIA

**ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD/ VILLAGE
DISTRICT DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR (ELECTRONIC) MEETING MINUTES**

(Revised 01/04/2024)

**Thursday, December 13, 2023
5:00 PM**

PRESENT: Rob Sanders, AIA, Chairman, Sam Gardner, AIA, Vice-Chairman,
Kathleen Poirier, AIA, and Kevin Quinlan, AIA ; John Doyle -
Notified Intended Absence

ALSO PRESENT: Daphne White, Assistant Town Planner

I. ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

- A. Call to Order** – at approximately 5:03 PM
- B. Roll Call**
- C. Election of Board Members and Approval of Proposed 2024 Calendar**

A motion was made and seconded to scramble the agenda and discuss the election of board members and proposed calendar after the applicant presentations.

D. Work Session

- 1. FDSPIN 64 DR LLC, 64 Danbury Road** – Application review for 208-unit multi-family development

Sam Fuller (Fuller Development), Ulises Montes De Oca and Juhi Bhardwaj (Lessard Design), Kate Throckmorton (Environmental Land Solutions), and Henry Conroy (Spinnaker Real Estate Partners) represented the applicant.

Mr. Sanders asked that the applicant concentrate on what had changed since the previous presentations. Mr. Fuller began the presentation of the site plan. He referred to the buildings on the plan as “plex” buildings which would consist of garages in the front at ground level approached by a driveway in modules of two garages, a one-bedroom flat behind the garages, and a town home over the garages, which is back-to-back with another town home over the flat. The townhomes would be entered from the ground level and would have the living area on the second floor. Bedrooms would be on the third floor. He said that they had moved away from a contemporary design.

He then spoke about how the entry to the site was off an interior circular driveway, not Danbury Road. Mr. Fuller referenced the amenity building at the entry, with a pool located behind it. He noted that sight lines had been heavily landscaped and at the main entry landscaping had been added to the front islands to soften the feel of the buildings. At the end of every drive there would be a tree and an island. At the back of the site there would be a gazebo, grill area, tennis court, and dog park.

He stated that the site slopes up ~15’ from the front to the back of the property, and currently consists of a series of terraced parking lots. The proposed buildings would be terraced, using as much of the grade as possible, replacing parking lots with buildings. The proposed coverage would be within 5% of the existing coverage. The two buildings to the northeast would be cut into the hill, with the retaining walls being ~6’ in height, so that only the first and second floor would have views above the wall. Mr. Fuller said that the trash receptacle would be a destination feature. It would be fully enclosed and attractively skinned with a height of 6’. The building on the southeast, which faces the parking lot and tennis court would be 4-5 feet below the parking lot. The intent would be to create a terrace area behind the apartments and extend the wall above the parking lot ~30”, so that there would be a stone veneered wall creating an area for the two ground floor flats to be below the level of the headlights in the parking lot.

Mr. Fuller finished the site plan presentation and took questions from the Board. Mr. Quinlan asked if the design of the driveways had taken into consideration the turnarounds for large vehicles, such as fire trucks. Mr. Fuller said that at the end of the central spine there would be a T-handle for a truck turnaround, and two exits from the site. Ms. Poirier asked if the lines behind the northeast buildings were contour lines or something else. Ulises said they were not contour lines, but one delineates a side-yard reference/setback line for buildings and the other for the landscape requirement along the property line. Mr. Gardner acknowledged that more attention has been paid to sidewalks.

Mr. Sanders commented about the proximity of the amenity building to building number two, which would be a problem for ground level units. Mr. Fuller commented that a way of bringing the scale down of a tall building would be to put a one-story building near it, with the amenity building being a one-story tall building. Mr. Sanders said he advocated looking at a paving line and a hedge line at the east side of the pool to provide more space for the units; he didn't think that much space belonged to the amenity. Mr. Fuller suggested squaring of the pool line; Mr. Sanders was more concerned about how the units can get more space.

Mr. Sanders then stated that he would like to see a naturalization of buffers along the north side of building four. Ms. Throckmorton noted that there is a substantial line of existing trees and that they would add holly trees and that the tree line can be loosened up. Mr. Sanders then asked about the appearance of the veneer on the stone walls. Mr. Fuller said native stone, greyish, and natural split-faced stone, and not rectilinear, was proposed. Mr. Sanders asked to see a sample.

Mr. Fuller then reviewed the elevations. He said that they now have a colonial look. Alternative colors have been looked at in addition to the anthracite color, with the proposed solution to paint the buildings different colors. He addressed a concern of the Board about the dormers, and asked if they could be pulled in so they don't look like an additional floor above. He then said that if the dormers were pulled in the second-floor bedrooms of the townhouse wouldn't be possible. To address this, the overhangs were changed as to not look like a rake was plastered onto the end elevation of the building. He said that they started with a 10/12 pitch which he described as being colonial. There would be an 18" overhang on the main frame of the building and would reduce the roof line height. Reducing the roofline and changing the overhangs would create a view of lower elements. He said there would be a 7'6" height at the outer edge of the dormer at the glazing. He said they have considered making the entire dormer in glazing to give an artist loft feel. There would be a 1'10" overhang at the fascia across the front of the building and there would be 18" rakes at the ends of the buildings which would be incorporated into the gable ends.

Mr. Fuller then addressed concern of the Board about the large windows facing each other across the motor court mews. He proposed that trees would be planted in this area, and that bottom up shades would be installed. Mr. Gardner liked the look of the ends of the building, and asked if the center of the building could be broken up based on there being so many windows. Mr. Quinlan asked if the trim of the anthracite coloring would be darker; Mr. Fuller said that he preferred all the same color.

Mr. Sanders commented that the central entry door between units three and four seemed undersized and asked if it would help the elevation overall if there was a shallow overhang over the garage doors of units three and four which could break up the three-story height the way the eave does for units one, two, and five. Mr. Fuller responded say that they could reduce the

amount of trim over the top of the doors and pull the pediment over the doors way down and pull the roof down to the door. Mr. Sanders asked about wider doors which Mr. Fuller thought would be addressed by pulling the pediments down. Mr. Quinlan commented that by adding different finishes to the all- anthracite scheme the richness could be enhanced.

The cupola on the townhouse was discussed next. Comments from the Board were that it was the wrong size, that the placement was poor, and that it brought an asymmetrical look with the rest of the building being very symmetrical. All agreed that the cupola was unnecessary.

Mr. Sanders commented that Juliet balconies seem to be a trend in this type of building and that there would be sliding doors but no outside space. He asked if this would be an opportunity to have a porch as an amenity for these units, which could add variety. Possibly cantilevered, or using recessed garage doors or recessed windows in the units. Mr. Fuller said that there were not parking curbs for each space, only in front of the door which is elevated to house and protect a tree. There would be no other space markings. He addressed the idea of balconies, saying that posts wouldn't work, based on work he has done in the past. He said he would hang them, and possibly be aluminum. He also said he doesn't like recessed balconies as they take up space in the living area and shades light coming into the room. He then said he would circulate plans incorporating balconies as well elements that would break up the paved space extending across the front of the garages.

Mr. Fuller presented the elevations of the amenity building. He commented that the dormers along the front and back of the amenity could be removed to lower the scale, which was agreed to by Mr. Gardner. He also said the east side of the amenity would be a solid wall with transom lighting to limit the view into the exercise room from building number two. Mr. Sanders suggested placing the cupola over the entry (off-center) of the amenity building. Mr. Fuller then said that he would center the entry from its current position, enlarge the cupola and leave it in the same place. He said the chimney, for a fireplace in the amenity, could be removed, which the Board supported. Mr. Gardner suggested something over the entry, and Mr. Fuller agreed to look at possibilities. Looking at the trash building, Mr. Fuller said it is just walls, no cover. It could be lowered to less than 14' but needed to be about a foot higher than the container. Mr. Sanders expressed concern about owners being able to see into the trash building from upper floors, and suggested that a gable roof would be a good look at the end of the internal driveway. Mr. Montes De Oca then suggested changes to the trash building, including revised heights and a partial roof, obstructing the view from adjacent units. The Board favored this.

Lighting was then discussed. The ten-foot fixtures that are presently there will remain, and scone-like fixtures would be on the building. Since the lighting details were not yet available, Mr. Sanders would like to see more detail at the next meeting.

The meeting was then delayed by technical difficulties. During this time, the Board approved the 2024 meeting schedule, and also approved the November 9, 2023 meeting minutes, with amendments. As the problems persisted, Mr. Sanders suggested that there be an open discussion about the Guidepost Montessori application, without decision, to guide the applicant towards what the Board thinks are the key points of the application.

2. Guidepost Montessori, 221 Danbury Road – Application review for signage

Mr. Quinlan commented that he liked how the pin mounted letters followed the curve of the building, and that it wasn't too large. He commented that overall, he is in favor of the signage. Ms. Poirier had no comments. Mr. Sanders expressed concern over the sign lighting. There were armature lights shown mounted on the curved portion of the building. He doesn't think that is the best solution for lighting signage on the drum part of the building. To have a night presence, he thinks that ground lighting would be best to illuminate the sign, versus lighting affixed to the drum part of the building. The Board members agreed. Mr. Sanders then asked the Board members if they would support approving the application with this condition, and they all approved. The applicant, Kaitlyn Rosas, had technical issues but was eventually able to communicate visually.

Mr. Sanders opened the discussion to elect officers. Mr. Gardner nominated Mr. Sanders as Chairman of the commission, and was seconded by Mr. Sanders. The vote passed unanimously. Mr. Sanders nominated Mr. Gardner for Vice-Chairman, which was seconded by Mr. Quinlan. The vote passed unanimously.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

November 9, 2023 – Regular Meeting

Minutes were approved with amendments which will be incorporated and re-posted.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

Next meeting: January 4, 2024

IV. ADJOURNMENT – 6:39 PM

Respectfully submitted by Rich Callahan – Recording Secretary

*MINUTES HAVE NOT BEEN REVIEWED BY THIS BOARD/COMMITTEE AND MAY BE SUBJECT TO REVISION IN FUTURE MINUTES. FULL AUDIO RECORDING OF MEETING IS AVAILABLE AT: [Village District Design Advisory Committee / Architectural Review Board Minutes & Agendas | wiltonct](#)