

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
Laura Noble Perese, Secretary
John Doyle, AIA
Kevin Quinlan, AIA

Village District Design Advisory Committee/ Architectural Review Board

Minutes

July 1, 2021, 6:00PM

Electronic Call In Meeting

PRESENT: Rob Sanders, AIA, Chairman, Laura Perese Sam Gardner, AIA, Vice Chairman,
John Doyle, AIA

Also Present: Michael Wrinn, Town Planner

I – Architectural Review Board

Chairman Sanders called the meeting of the Architectural Review Board to order at 6:02 and seated the board members.

PRE_APPLICATION REVIEWS:

1 – Better Environment, LLC – 24 & 26A Danbury Road, 6 story, 89-unit residential development, 8-30g – Pre-application Review

Discussion and confirmation by the Committee that the 2 applications would be handled separately.

Douglas Cutler, architect and owner of the property, described the proposal and the history of his property. Needs density to save what retail we do have. Proposing 4 and 5 stories over a level of parking, parking in the rear, 1 car per unit. Small area of retail, looking for a coffee shop use. Rob S. opened discussion around the entrance and exits in relation to the Kent Road intersection and pedestrian access.

Committee talked about the character; this is a large building, while noting residential in this spot may not be a bad thing. Mr. Cutler wants that number of stories in order to have tax credits for environmental reasons, such as green roofs. Wants to provide affordable units, needs the density to do so.

Concerns about having zero setbacks from wetlands, little to no setbacks, which impacts the large bulk, combined with building height of 67'. General discussion about the size of the building and affordability and fire access. Sam G. not concerned about something coming in as a modern or contemporary look but needs to be a good design. Use may be fine here and the site opens up the possibility to have a thoughtful building here.

2 – Better Environments, LLC – 221 Danbury Road, 6 story, 150 unit residential development, 8-30g

Douglas Culter, architect and owner of the property, presented the plan, showing the multifamily building with 2 point of access, leading to an underground parking deck. Question was raised by Rob S. in regards to fire access, to which D. Cutler replied it was an urban building and would be dealt with as such.

D. Cutler said pretty similar to previous application at #24 Danbury Rd, needs the scale to make it economically feasible.

Laura P. noted that Historical Society is directly across the street and this is not in context, little landscaping, good to see some green elements. Conversation continued on the lack of context of this in relation to this immediate area. Rob S. showed small scale of Our Lady of Fatima directly adjacent, said other buildings adjacent are smaller. Aggressive massing, trees on plaza area will most likely not survive. Should relate to the area. John D. would like this to relate in scale to the neighborhood, don't maximize everything here.

Doug C. said office is not coming back, loses feasibility if this gets scaled back too much, want's to take advantage of the 8-30g regulation.

Discussion on traffic circulation patterns, displayed how building is only set 5' off front property line. Committee recommended that the applicant look at the scale and setbacks in relation to the neighborhood.

3. FD SPIN 141DR LLC, 141 Danbury Road, proposed redevelopment of current Melissa and Doug site, to include new 4 ½ story multifamily residential building with 173 apartments – Review final comments from pre-application meeting for report to P&Z

Michael W. opened up by saying we need to get a report back to P& Z on the review of the project. Some items were character and context, big mass, faux panels, good material but debatable if appropriate for that building. Concern about getting an accurate picture of the actual grading.

John D. said it was difficult to talk about architecture when it does not comply with the regulations. Sam G. believes planning does belong in the ARB's purview, more than just materials.

Other items noted were intelligent site plan, waking trails and back was nicely designed. Scale is wrong. Sam G. asked that we add giving the project more definition to the terms of out of context and scale.

Michael W. confirmed with the Commission that Commissioners would be available in August if a special meeting was needed in order to keep moving reviews and projects forward.

The meeting of the ARB was adjourned at 8:01 PM

***Minutes have not been reviewed by this committee and may be subject to revisions in future minutes. Full audio recordings of meeting is available at: www.wiltonct.org/tv/index.htm**