

VILLAGE DISTRICT
CONSULTANT COMMITTEE

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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
Megan LaBant Abrahamsen
Kevin Quinlan, AIA

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BY: 

Village District Design Committee Meeting Minutes *
October 23, 2018

PRESENT: Rob Sanders, AIA, Chairman, Laura Noble Perese, Secretary, John Doyle, AIA and Kevin Quinlan, AIA,

PRESENT Robert Nerney, Town Planner; applicant Paxton Kinol; applicant's counsel
OTHERS: Casey Healy, landscape architect Kate Throckmorton, architect Tim Gooding and members of the public

ABSENT: Megan Abrahamsen. Sam Gardner, AIA, Vice Chairman

Chairman Sanders convened the meeting at 4:05 p.m.

The first order of business involved the review of the Wilton Heights, LLC application, involving the redevelopment of property at 300 Danbury Road, 3 Whitewood Lane, 7 Whitewood Lane and 11 Whitewood Lane. Mr. Gooding updated the committee concerning the proposed mixed use development which consists of 74 multi-family residential units and 23,554 square feet of retail space.

The committee was provided an updated set of plans and summary correspondence specifying the changes. Mr. Gooding stated that he had altered the horizontal trim band between the retail areas and upper level residential living areas by de-emphasizing the height of the bands, varying the style of trim for different buildings and adjusting the alignment relative to each building so as to eliminate the effect of a continuous band. Mr. Gooding noted the decorative band on the red brick building had been eliminated entirely.

The second change involved reducing the size of windows on the Federal and shingle-style buildings and continuing the reduction around the north and south elevations and terminating at what he felt were well-defined architectural break points.

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Mr. Gooding stated similar changes had been made with respect to siding color by extending the treatment around the north and south elevations and transitioning at a natural façade break.

Mr. Gooding noted that the southwest corner of the south building has been pulled in 4 feet to increase the setback from the southerly property line. Finally, the addition of arcade columns on the north building were added so as to increase mass, create the appearance of grounding and generally improve the scale and proportion of the building elevation.

Committee questions and comments ensued. Ms. Noble-Perese made inquiry as to whether a plan had been prepared to address future signage needs. Similar questions were asked regarding street furniture, trash receptacles, bicycle racks and improvements within the pavilion area. Mr. Kinol stated that these issues are usually addressed as tenants become known, but noted the pavilion area would be properly wired and fitted with lighting to allow for evening use.

Mr. Sanders asked if any efforts were made to preserve historic structures. Mr. Kinol stated that the corncrib is to be donated to the Wilton Historical Society, but preservation of other buildings has not gained much community interest. He stated members of the Historical Society had toured the site; concluding that many of the buildings had been altered in a manner that diminished their historical significance.

Discussion ensued regarding the pavilion with some believing the structure needed to be enlarged while others focused on the types of materials and positioning of the building. It was agreed that materials proposed for the “mill style” building would be incorporated into the pavilion.

Committee members questioned the size and shape of windows; noting a proposed mirror configuration of two “L-shaped” windows could be replaced with one singular triangular-shaped window; more conducive with the overall historical vernacular. It was also suggested windows; particularly on the north, south and east elevations, be reduced in size. Several committee members also expressed concern with the eclectic mix of architectural styles and suggested further refinement to allow for a better blending and natural transition of architecture.

Kate Throckmorton reviewed the landscape plan and spoke to planned improvements along the rear portion of the site. Ms. Throckmorton stated low-impact materials, such as stone dust and pervious stone, was planned near wetland areas while more traditional concrete and paver stone would be used in high traveled areas of the site. Ms. Noble Perese recommended the use of pollinator plants while Mr. Doyle and several other committee members suggested concealing of the rooftop HVAC equipment so as to improve the overall aesthetic appeal of the site.

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Deliberations and report formatting ensued with Ms. Noble Perese distributing a project report form to the applicant and committee members. During deliberations, members expressed concern with the general size and mass of the buildings; but noted that the overall context was less of an issue as the development would establish the context of the neighborhood. Signage and color of materials were discussed. It was suggested that the applicant return to the committee for further guidance prior to selecting signage. Committee members suggested lighting and hardscape materials be consistent with village center improvements. The proposed integration of concrete and brick accent seemed consistent with the center improvements.

Color, texture and shingle size were discussed with the committee recommending the utilization of smaller versus a larger sized shingle. Roof top terrace areas were viewed as a positive and contributing element of the project with the caveat that air-conditioning units be better shielded. The parking lot design was briefly discussed with committee members concluding the matter represented an engineering issue versus an architectural matter.

Several of the plan pages were photographed with the intention of including photographs with the report.

The second order of business included a review of minutes from the September 20, 2018 meeting. The minutes were adopted unanimously without change. The Commission was reminded that the next meeting of the VDCC will be held on November 27, 2018 at 4:00 p.m. in Meeting Room "A" of the Town Hall Annex Building.

There being no further discussion, the Committee adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

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