

PLANNING & ZONING
DEPARTMENT
Telephone (203) 563-0185
Fax (203) 563-0284
www.wiltonct.org



TOWN OF WILTON
Town Hall Annex
238 Danbury Road
Wilton, Connecticut 06897

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
TOWN OF WILTON
2018 JUL 13 A 10:08
BY: LV

Village District Design Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, July 11, 2018

PRESENT: Michael Bilby, Kevin Quinlan, AIA and Rob Sanders, AIA

PRESENT Robert Nerney, Town Planner; applicant Paxton Kinol; applicant's counsel J.

OTHERS: Casey Healy, landscape architect Kate Throckmorton, architect Tim Gooding and members of the public and press

Application: Wilton Heights, LLC, 300 Danbury Road, 3 Whitewood Lane, 7 Whitewood Lane and 11 Whitewood Lane (a/k/a Assessor's Map 58, Lots 36, 42, 41, 40, 37 and 39), request to construct a 138,434 square foot mixed use development consisting of 74 multi-family residential units and 23,554 square feet of retail space contained within multiple buildings

The meeting convened at 4:00 p.m. Seated members of the committee included Michael Bilby, Kevin Quinlan, AIA and Rob Sanders, AIA. Architect Tim Gooding representing Wilton Heights, LLC, provided an overview of the planned project, the site layout as well as the architectural elements and features associated with the design. Mr. Quinlan expressed his pleasure regarding the overall "human scale" of the development; but raised a number of concerns over the lack of architectural continuity; particularly the eclectic mix of architecture ranging from a "ski community" vernacular to federalist and colonial styles. Mr. Quinlan questioned the lack of architectural treatment on the easterly elevation; noting that a lack of continuity creates the appearance of incompleteness. Mr. Kinol stated that the modified design on the easterly elevation evolved due to discussions with neighbors; but would be happy to revisit the matter.

Mr. Sanders agreed with Mr. Quinlan stating that the architectural mix diluted the overall form and integrity between the buildings. Mr. Sanders expressed concern with a prominent and dominating Georgian vernacular being sandwiched between simpler designs. Mr. Sanders also questioned how the planned structures relate with the topography. Mr. Gooding stated that they were attempting to work with the topography noting that the site functions as a "bowl" with rising topography to the east. Mr. Gooding explained that such conditions allow the developer to create a streetscape presence; but lessen the mass on the east elevation due to the planned below grade parking combined with the rising topography. He felt such design benefited residential properties behind the planned development. Mr. Sanders asked for clarification regarding

location of the planned patios and wondered if such features could be extended so as to be visible from Danbury and Ridgefield Roads. It was the consensus that such improvements would enhance the project.

Mr. Sanders questioned whether the requested regulation changes could lead to incompatible development; not only on the subject site, but in others areas throughout the Wilton Center district. Mr. Healy noted that the Planning and Zoning Commission expressed similar concerns and the applicant is in the process of addressing the issue by way of establishing a maximum ridgeline height. Mr. Sanders clarified his inquiry noting that his question did not relate to policy, but rather potential impacts on design; including the subject application.

Mr. Quinlan once again expressed his recommendation for less architectural variation. Mr. Kinol expressed his open-mindedness to alter the design to accommodate the committee's recommendations. As an example, he referenced a project in Woodbridge and a development in Stonington that captured elements of former mill housing indigenous to that part of the state. Mr. Sanders emphasized the desire for architectural articulation; specifically highlighting distinctive architectural vernaculars; but doing so in a manner that naturally connects and bridges elements so that buildings relate to one another. Mr. Quinlan suggested historical progression could serve as a means of achieving articulation.

Mr. Bilby made inquiry regarding the type of tenants, traffic impacts and the means of managing desired pedestrian movement with expected increases in vehicular traffic. Mr. Paxton stated that the retail component would likely consist of neighborhood retail support services as opposed to larger retail operations such as a pharmacy. Mr. Paxton also spoke of the planned connectivity between the proposed development, the Crowne Pond residential community and the Wilton Train Station/Town Center. Mr. Paxton expressed his desire to explore off-site traffic calming and connectivity improvements within the Route 7 right-of-way; including landscape islands, planting of trees and street lights and crosswalks designed to match those within the town center.

All three committee members noted a gap between the two building clusters; opining that such gap appeared unnatural. It was suggested a design element, such as a clock tower, water feature or sculpture be considered so as to eliminate the gap and provide greater visual connectivity. Mr. Paxton explained that he was looking to avoid disturbance to a water course; but would explore the idea.

It was suggested the applicant revise the plans and meet with the Committee at a later date before issuing a final report to the Planning and Zoning Commission. The applicant agreed to this approach. There being no further discussion, the Committee adjourned the meeting at 5:45 p.m.