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Minutes
Springhill Suites by Marriott (TR14017) Meeting
June 25, 2015
Assembly of Delegates Chamber, First District Court
3195 Main Street, Barnstable, Massachusetts

Subcommittee Members Present: Ernest Virgilio (Chair), Mary Pat Flynn, John D. Harris, John McCormack, Jr., Richard Roy, Charles McCaffrey (Alternate), and Royden Richardson (Alternate)

Commission Staff Present: Paul Niedzwiecki (Executive Director), Patty Daley (Deputy Director), Kristy Senatori (Deputy Director), Glenn Cannon (Director of Technical Services), Jonathon Idman (Chief Regulatory Officer), Elizabeth Perry (Regulatory Officer II) and Jeffrey Ribeiro (Regulatory Officer II)

Minutes Summary

The Cape Cod Commission (Commission) Springhill Suites by Marriott Subcommittee (Subcommittee) held a public meeting to review a proposal by Falmouth Hospitality LLC to construct a 110-room hotel as a Development of Regional Impact (DRI). The Subcommittee discussed the project and instructed Commission staff to prepare a memorandum to the applicant outlining their requests and concerns.

Documents Used/Received

1. Benefits and Detriments Memorandum, dated 6/25/2015

Meeting Opened

Ernest Virgilio, as Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:31pm. He said that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Springhill Suites by Marriott project. He asked Jeffrey Ribeiro, Cape Cod Commission Regulatory Officer, to expand.

Mr. Ribeiro said it would be helpful to staff to have more input from the Subcommittee on the questions raised in the staff report concerning the Regional Policy Plan (RPP) issue area of Heritage Preservation and Community Character, and potentially to discuss the benefits and detriments. He restated the concerns from the staff report, specifically the exterior materials of

the hotel overall as well as the façade treatment and massing of the proposed hotel's westerly building, and referenced the memorandum outlining Benefits and Detriments that could be discussed. He also stated that staff could prepare a memorandum and/or draft decision for recommendation by the subcommittee to the full Commission.

Discussion

Charles McCaffrey said the applicant should provide material samples. He said he thinks the materials may not do a good job of approximating natural materials. He also requested that the applicant provide a sample window. Jonathon Idman, Chief Regulatory Officer, stated that staff would ask for those materials. Mr. Ribeiro said that he will ask for at least detailed specifications for the windows and other materials proposed.

Mr. McCaffrey noted that the applicant stated in the application materials that the design narrative states the building is influenced by Greek Revival architecture, but said he does not see Greek Revival detailing except to some degree that of the first floor of the easterly building. He said he does not think the pitch of the roof is appropriate for architectural styles typical of Cape Cod. He said the architectural details are only on the Main Street façade, but he said that is not an issue if the sides are appropriately buffered. He said he would like the applicant to provide renderings showing how much of the side and rear facades would be visible from Main Street.

Mr. Ribeiro discussed the planting plan provided sites a large number of Norway Spruce trees to the sides and rear of the building. He said he would ask the applicant for renderings or other materials to show how much of the façade will be visible. He also said there is an existing deciduous buffer on the neighboring property to the west.

Richard Roy asked for clarification about the buffering at ground level. Specifically he said the buffer of the green screen may not be adequate for the westerly building. Mr. Ribeiro provided an overview to Mr. Roy of the planting and fencing proposed alongside the easterly building.

Mr. Ribeiro asked the Subcommittee for comments on the façade variation of the westerly building. Mr. Roy asked for clarification as to the nature of the portion of the site formerly occupied by Lantern Lane. Mr. Idman said that portion of the site will be an interior drive over which some people will have easement rights. He said it is not a road layout.

Royden Richardson said the building should be attractive enough that it does not have to be buffered. He said the rear of the building reminds him of tenement buildings. He said the materials do not sufficiently simulate natural materials. He said the building may be too large for the site.

Mr. McCaffrey said the area is a mix of many uses, both attractive and unattractive. He said the intention of the Business Redevelopment zoning district is to improve the character of this section of Main Street. He referenced the affordable housing building at 704 Main Street as a good example of redevelopment.

Mr. Richardson noted that there had been few offers for adjustments from the applicant. Mr. Roy read from an unsigned letter from the public that stated the project was inconsistent with

the Local Comprehensive Plan. He said he does not think the building is in keeping with the village character of Main Street.

Mr. McCaffrey read from the mission statement of the Business Redevelopment zoning district. He said this building may not be consistent with the community's intent of the zoning. He said he is concerned that much of the existing vegetated buffers will be removed.

Mr. Richardson asked what portion of the site will be covered with buildings. Mr. Ribeiro said that is a question that staff has asked of the applicant. Mr. Idman said the project would have roughly 40% building coverage, which could be allowed by special permit according to the Falmouth Town Planner. Mr. McCaffrey said the applicant should provide a clear dimensional schedule through a revised exhibit. John McCormack, Jr. noted the zoning and any special permits are local issues. Mr. McCaffrey said he thought it would help the Subcommittee to better understand the building in relation to its surroundings.

Mr. McCormack stated that the proposed building should be viewed for the purposes of appropriate massing and scale in light of what could be redeveloped on either side, as opposed to what currently exists.

Mr. Virgilio said he would like further clarification on the grading changes of the site and proposed re-grading. Mr. Roy said he understood much of the re-graded areas are to be occupied by stormwater infiltration. Mr. Ribeiro said he believes that the majority of the infiltration will occur at the rear of the site, but he did not bring the stormwater report to the meeting. He said the RPP requires that all stormwater be infiltrated on-site. Mr. Idman said groundwater level concerns raised at previous hearings are not something that would be addressed by standards or requirements of the RPP. Mr. Virgilio stated that he would like to see a sectional diagram of the site, especially in the area of the former road layout of Lantern Lane traversing the site, with the proposed re-grading.

Mary Pat Flynn said she thinks the hotel overwhelms the site. She said she is concerned that there is no public use proposed. She said the storefronts at 704 Main Street provide a public benefit. Mr. Ribeiro clarified that there is no restaurant or bar proposed. Mr. Idman stated that the Commission cannot require an applicant to incorporate public uses into a project, or require an applicant to allow public use of a project, but he said there were opportunities to increase activity and visual engagement at the street-front facades. He also stated that the hotel did not exclude Falmouth residents as customers, even if it is a business they might be unlikely to use themselves.

Mr. McCaffrey said there should be an entrance onto Main Street. He said he does not think there should be parking visible from the street. Mr. Ribeiro clarified that the RPP allows parking to the side, but there could be improvements to the façade of the building along Main Street to address Mr. McCaffrey's concern. Mr. Ribeiro stated that "strip development" as outlined in the RPP constitutes parking between the building line and the street, which this proposal would not create. He asked the subcommittee what improvements they think should be made to the façade of the westerly building. Mr. McCaffrey said there should be habitable space at the front of the westerly building at ground level.

Mr. Richardson said he is concerned about the impact of hotel guests on the surrounding areas.

Ms. Flynn said early discussions about the hotel were that it would be primarily targeted to business travelers. She said the hotel is close to Main Street so it would be easy to walk to stores and restaurants. She said hotel rooms could benefit travelers to scientific and research institutions and businesses.

Mr. Richardson said he is concerned about the long-term impact of the hotel. He said he is concerned what would happen if the hotel is not well utilized. Mr. McCormack said he does not think Marriott would award a franchise to an operator without a good business plan. Mr. Virgilio said he thinks the hotel would be targeted to business travelers.

Mr. Idman summarized the preceding comments, with a focus on the building design issues. Mr. McCormack said that the local zoning should have included design standards for the redevelopment district. Mr. Virgilio agreed with Mr. McCormack. Mr. Idman asked the Subcommittee if they would like to see greater variation in cladding materials. Mr. McCaffrey said that would be consistent with traditional Cape Cod architecture. Mr. Ribeiro asked if the building should have distinct façade treatments. Mr. McCaffrey said he would like more information on materials from the applicant.

Ms. Flynn said the materials and the architecture do not do much to make the building attractive. She said the design does not reduce the size of the building. Mr. McCaffrey said that design and materials alone may not be enough to address the size of the building being out of scale with the site. Mr. Roy said the building may be too much of an imposition on residents of Lantern Lane. Mr. Ribeiro reiterated the details of the landscape plan and the building design and size. He also said that the Subcommittee should take note that the residential house closest to the westerly building is under the control of the applicant and is part of the project site. Mr. Roy, Mr. Richardson, and Mr. Virgilio said the building may be too large at the rear of the site. Mr. Ribeiro asked if they meant the building should step down in height as it moves to the rear of the site.

Ms. Flynn said she is concerned about the pool on the roof. Mr. Ribeiro said there is no lighting proposed for the pool. Mr. McCormack said the outdoor pool, and impacts related to things like light and noise that it might create for neighbors, should be a local issue, and Mr. Idman agreed.

Mr. Richardson asked for clarification on how design is a regional issue. Mr. Idman provided an overview of the RPP standards and reasoning.

Ms. Flynn said she thinks the building should have larger side and rear setbacks. Mr. Virgilio said he is concerned about the noise from building utilities. Mr. Ribeiro said there are not building noise standards in the RPP. Mr. Idman said that is largely a local issue, and that Commission standards and the local zoning encourage smaller setbacks. Mr. Roy asked the Subcommittee members what they think of the pedestrian bridge. Mr. McCaffrey said he thinks the glass is a good treatment for the element.

Mr. Virgilio said that the Subcommittee had a good discussion thus far, and that there had been plenty discussed without getting into Benefits and Detriments. He said there were significant comments and requests that staff should convey to the applicant. He noted the applicant was not present at the hearing.

Mr. McCormack noted that the list of Benefits and Detriments provided must be carefully weighed. He said just because there were a greater number of either benefits or detriments did not mean one necessarily outweighed the other.

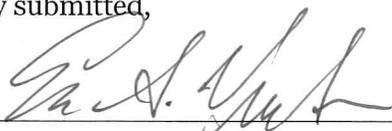
Mr. Virgilio asked Paul Niedzwiecki, Executive Director, to speak. He discussed the process of a Limited DRI review, and the legal standards required. He said the legal standard for transportation had to be a standard of equal applicability, which is why the Institute of Transportation Engineers numbers are used. He said the Commission takes its review role seriously. He said the Commission members can consider much of the testimony they've taken during the Benefits and Detriments analysis.

Mr. Virgilio thanked Mr. Niedzwiecki for his comments and staff for their work thus far. Mr. Idman said staff would draft and send a memorandum to the applicant summarizing the concerns and requests voiced by the Subcommittee. Mr. Idman said he thinks the Subcommittee should think about continuing to the full Commission after the next public hearing in Falmouth. Mr. Idman laid out options as to what the Subcommittee's report to the full Commission could look like.

Mr. Virgilio said the conversation had to be continued with the applicant. Ms. Flynn and Mr. McCaffrey agreed. John Harris said that it should be clear that the Subcommittee would like to see changes to the design. Mr. McCaffrey agreed, but added that the applicant should take time to provide a considered response.

Mr. Virgilio adjourned the meeting at 6:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Ernest Virgilio, Chair, Springhill Suites by Marriott Subcommittee

7/23/2015
Date