

Minutes
Baltimore County Design Review Panel
July 9, 2008

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Call to order, and announcements

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Minutes of the May 14, 2008 Meeting

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Call to order

Acting Chair, Dean Hoover, called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Baltimore County Design Review Panel to order at 6:00 p.m. The following panel members were:

Present	Not Present
Mr. Dean Hoover	Mr. Thomas Repsher
Ms. Betsy Boykin	Mr. Scott Rykiel
Ms. Magda Westerhout	Mr. Derrick Burnett
Mr. Francis Anderson (Resident Member – RRLR)	Mr. Donald Kann
Mr. Timothy McCubbin (Resident Member – Middle River)	Mr. Christopher Parts

County staff present included:
Pat Keller, Jenifer German, Krystle Patchak

Minutes of the May 14, 2008 meeting

Ms. Boykin moved the acceptance of the draft minutes and the motion was seconded by Mr. McCubbin and passed by acclamation at 6:05 p.m.

The approved minutes are filed as Appendix B.

ITEM 1

PROJECT NAME: Vincent Farms

DRP PROJECT #: 495

PROJECT TYPE: Residential, Middle River

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The proposal calls for 29 single-family detached dwellings being constructed on an approximately 14 acre site, zoned DR 3.5. The site is located on the east side of Vincent Farm Lane, south of Ebenezer Road in White Marsh/Middle River. Mr. Scott Barhight, of Whiteford Taylor Preston, advised the panel that this is the second review for the project and introduced the architect, Ms. Cheryl Obrien to the panel. Ms. Obrien stated that the development is a project of Ryland Homes and they have been working with Ryland to work out the issues addressed at the previous meetings. The garages were pushed back on the proposed dwellings to create a better streetscape. Various massings were proposed for different elevations and models as well as a mixture of materials. More details were also given the sides and rears of the homes. Ms. Obrien also stated that optional trim packages will be available for homes with highly visible side elevations.

Ms. Kristy Bischoff, of Daft McCune Walker, explained the recent legislation which was passed to change the minimum lot size to 75ft. This has caused the proposal to reduce the lot count from 35 to 29. The sidewalk proposed around the center island was also shown as removed.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS:

Ms. Westerhout commented on the garage setbacks and the enhanced streetscape.

Mr. McCubbin, resident member for the Middle River area, stated that the community is interested in removing all of the sidewalks on the site to correspond with the surrounding community. He also suggested decreasing the width of the pavement to match the surrounding roads in the neighborhood. Mr. Barhight stated that they are planning to ask for waivers from the Department of Public Works for both the sidewalk and pavement issues. Mr. McCubbin also suggested rearranging the homes on the middle island so that they face the front road.

DISPOSITION:

A motion was made by Mr. McCubbin to approve the plans as submitted with the recommendation to remove the sidewalks within the development. The Department of Public Works will have the authority to make this final decision.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Boykin.

Ms. Westerhout stated that she would recommend that the sidewalks stay in place, and the right of way be reduced. She stressed the importance of the sidewalks as a safety amenity as well as the close location to the elementary school.

The motion was passed by acclamation at 6:17 p.m.

ITEM 2

PROJECT NAME: The Rec Room

DRP PROJECT #: 496

PROJECT TYPE: Commercial, Towson

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Mr. Steve Hill, of STH Design Associates, presented the project to the panel and introduced the owner of The Rec Room, Mr. Brian Recher to the panel. The Rec Room over the years has gone through many different development stages with different projects and additions at different times. At this time, the applicant is proposing an addition to the existing green room consisting of an outdoor bar and seating area covered by an open air canopy, as well as restrooms. The site is located at the corner of Shealy and Delaware Avenues. The materials proposed include black glazed brick to match the existing Green Room structure as well as a metal gate and glazed concrete flooring.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS:

Ms. Boykin questioned the use of landscaping on the site. The applicant stated that there is currently a planter located at the corner of Delaware and Shealy Avenues that will be maintained and a new semi-circle planter element is proposed at the rear of the site. Ms. Boykin suggested adding street trees, preferably canopy trees, at the curb to create a street edge.

Ms. Westerhout also suggested enhancing the green space on the site. She also commented on the enhancement of the corner and suggested studying the dumpster radius to make sure that trucks will be able to enter the site.

Mr. Hoover stated that the site is not large enough to accommodate additional landscaping and he stated that he agreed with the idea of planting street trees along the curb.

DISPOSITION:

A motion was made by Ms. Westerhout to approve the plans with the caveat that the applicant provide the Planning Office with a revised landscape plan to address the street tree recommendations.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Boykin and passed by acclamation at 6:34 p.m.

Final landscape plans are to be submitted to the Planning Office for final approval.

ITEM 3

PROJECT NAME: 639 Main Street – Best Care Assisted Living Facility

DRP PROJECT #: 497

PROJECT TYPE: Commercial, Towson

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Rick Richardson of Richardson Engineering LLC presented the proposal to the panel. Best Care Assisted Living is an assisted living facility operating in Reisterstown. The site is zoned RO and DR 3.5 and the facility is run out of a house, which currently holds 15 residents. The proposal calls for the construction of a new building in the rear of the site to accommodate additional residents up to the number allowed per the BCZR, which is 22 total beds. The new building, completed in Victorian style architecture, will be one story in height with a wrap around front porch. The parking that currently exists in the front yard of the site will be removed and additional parking will be added towards the back of the site along with an access to the rear building.

Mr. John Gontrum, of Whiteford Taylor Preston, stated to the panel that they are to review assisted living facilities for compatibility based on surrounding uses, as stated in section 432A of the BCZR.

Mr. Paul Thompson, architect for the project, discussed the materials for the project. Premium grade shingles are proposed as well as pewter colored siding with white trim. The shutters will be completed in blue/gray accents and all four sides of the home will be treated with the same detail. The base of the structure will be completed with faux stone.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS:

Ms. Boykin questioned the location of existing and proposed landscaping on the site. Mr. Richardson stated that they are only proposing a fence along the side and rear of the site and are willing to accommodate more fencing if needed. Ms. Boykin suggested continuing the fence along the three sides in the rear of the property around the new building.

Mr. Hoover questioned the panels review for compatibility and the special hearing that the panel must attend. Mr. Keller, director of the Office of Planning, stated that Planning will submit a compatibility report at the Special Hearing, which will rely heavily on the DRP's decisions and recommendations.

Ms. Westerhout questioned the use of site lighting and stressed the importance due to the possible impact on the adjacent neighbors. Mr. Richardson stated that there are not site lights proposed and there will only be lights attached to the proposed facility.

SPEAKERS COMMENTS:

Ms. Joann Franklin, of 9 Walgrove Road, stated that she would like to have the fencing around the property so that there will be no problems with people wandering onto her property and to preserve her privacy. She also stated that she would not mind more trees on the site to give her additional privacy.

Ms. Kimberly Willingham, of 633 Main Street, was concerned with construction taking place and blocking her driveway. She stated that the applicant agreed to not block her access and to provide fencing. Mr. Gontrum stated that he will provide a letter to Ms. Willingham addressing these agreements.

DISPOSITION:

A motion was made by Ms. Westerhout to approve the project with conditions:

1. Provide fencing around back of site – All three sides
2. Provide lighting plan
3. Provide landscape plan

All plans are to be revised and submitted to the Office of Planning for final approval.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Boykin and approved by acclamation at 7:00 p.m.

ITEM 4

PROJECT NAME: 1506 LaBelle Avenue

DRP PROJECT #: 498

PROJECT TYPE: Residential, Ruxton/Riderwood/Lake Roland

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Jim Carroll, architect and owner of the property, presented the project to the panel. The property sits at the corner of LaBelle Avenue and Emory Street in the Ruxton Heights section of Baltimore County. The previous owner had begun an aggressive renovation and unfortunately was unable to progress the project beyond the demolition stage. The original 1902 structure on the site was razed after it was left to deteriorate.

The new proposal for the site calls for a brick and wood-frame structure approximately 4,700 sf in size with a 3-car garage. The materials for the project include a brick base along with hard-plank siding and trim with asphalt shingles.

The majority of the house is proposed at the center of the property and a steep slope runs along the property. Nine of the twelve trees on the property are to remain. An outdoor fireplace is also proposed on the side of the lot adjacent to 1504 LaBelle Avenue.

The applicant met with the community during the week of June 30, 2008 and stated that most of the comments on the overall project were positive.

SPEAKERS COMMENTS:

Ms. Kris Willett, of 1504 LaBelle Avenue, stated her concerns in regards to the fireplace, which is located close to the property line facing her home. Mr. Anderson questioned the intended height of the fireplace and the applicant stated that it will meet the requirements, which is less than 15ft and it will have to meet the setback requirements also. Ms. Willett was also concerned with the height of any new fencing that will take the place of the existing 6ft fence. The applicant stated that he does not intend to replace the fence at this time.

Mr. Don Willett, also of 1504 LaBelle Avenue, stated that his residence was not drawn to scale on the site plan and the location was not correct. He was also concerned with the scale of the proposed home.

DESIGN REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS:

Ms. Westerhout commented on the scale of the home and the materials proposed as well as the model that was provided. She was concerned with the main entrance facing Emory Street and not Labelle Avenue, which is the homes actual address. She suggested turning the garage so you will not see the 3 garage doors from the street. Ms. Westerhout was also concerned with the amount of asphalt facing LaBelle Avenue.

Mr. Hoover also commented on the excessive amount of pavement on "front" of the site and suggested eliminating some of it. He also stated that he believes that the fireplace will have to be placed outside of the building restriction line.

Ms. Boykin was also concerned about the garage orientation and suggested providing a more significant buffer along the street.

Mr. Anderson, resident member for the Ruxton/Riderwood/Lake Roland area, stated that he was also concerned with the excessive amount of pavement on the site. He would like to see that reduced and the orientation of the garage changed. He also suggested checking the setbacks of the fireplace and providing foundation level plantings.

DISPOSITION:

A motion was made by Mr. Hoover to approve the project with conditions:

1. Revise orientation of garage and parking area
2. Revise fireplace location and make correct adjustments
3. Indicate existing and proposed landscaping on plans

All revised plans are to be submitted to the Office of Planning for final approval by both Mr. Anderson and the Office of Planning.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Westerhout and approved by acclamation at 7:37 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Code Statement: Section 32 – 4 – 203 (i) (2) of the Baltimore County Code states, *The Panel's recommendation is binding on the Hearing Officer, and on the agencies under subsection (l), (Directors of the Office of Planning, the Department of Permits and Development Management and the Department of Environmental Protection and Resource Management), unless the Hearing Officer or agencies find that the Panel's actions constitute an abuse of its discretion or are unsupported by the documentation and evidence presented.*

Approved as of September 10, 2008