



**SOUTH END LANDMARK DISTRICT COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES**

Boston City Hall, Piemonte Room
Boston, MA, 02201

JANUARY 7, 2020

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: John Amodeo, John Freeman, Catherine Hunt, Diana Parcon, Peter Sanborn

STAFF PRESENT: Mary Cirbus, Preservation Planner

The hearing started later due to technology issues.

5:51 PM J. Amodeo called the public hearing to order.

I. DESIGN REVIEW

APP # 20.530 SE

25 SAVOY STREET

Applicant: David Hoogasian, Extenet Systems, Inc.

Proposed Work: Replace a double acorn light pole with new double acorn light pole with attached telecommunications equipment and antennae.

Colin Robinson was the project representative for Extenet Systems. He explained the scope of the project, which is to replace the light pole in kind with an antenna at the top and equipment strapped to the side. This proposal is in keeping with the similar light poles recently approved by the Commission.

The Commissioners confirmed the location of the light pole. They also asked about the height of the globes – the applicant confirmed that the height of the globes is very close to the existing; the top of the proposed pole is just 3 inches taller. J. Amodeo noted that it would be helpful on future applications to measure the top of the globe as well. The Commissioners asked if abutters are generally notified for the replacement of these light poles. They are not.

The Commissioners did not express any concerns with the replacement of the existing light pole.

There was no public comment.

J. Freeman motioned to approve the application as submitted, D. Parcon seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 (JA, JF, CH, DP, PS).

APP # 20.672 SE

1 APPLETON STREET

Applicant: Nick Makemson, Beacon Architectural Associates



Proposed Work: Install an internally-illuminated menu board at entry alcove wall.

Nick Makemson (Beacon Architectural Associates) was the project representative. He explained the scope of the work, which is to install a brass-framed menu board which will be installed on the side of the entry alcove and will be 24" x 36". The applicant did not provide a detail drawing of the light source. He explained that the light source will be an LED strip, attached around all four sides, which will be concealed from view, aside from staring at the menu. J. Freeman asked for a sample of the light fixture. He added that the rules explain that if you draw a straight line from your eye to the fixture, you must not be able to see the light source, although a reflection is okay.

The Commissioners concluded to approve the location of the menu board in concept, but remand the lighting details to staff.

There was no public comment.

J. Freeman motioned to remand the application to staff, D. Parcon seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 (JA, JF, CH, DP, PS).

APP # 20.660 SE

16 HOLYOKE STREET

Applicant: Geoff Stilwell

Proposed Work: Reconstruct a roof deck, visible from a public way

The applicant did not show.

APP # 20.418 SE

34 CLARENDON STREET

Applicant: Christopher Lapan

Proposed Work: At the front façade, replace nine (9) six-over-six, double-hung, wood windows in kind.

The applicant did not show.

II. ADVISORY REVIEW

ADVISORY REVIEW

25 CLAREMONT PARK

Proposed Work: Construct a penthouse and roof deck

The project representatives did not come forward when called, so the Commissioners asked for public comment. Bob Barney expressed concern that there is no setback at the rear of the building for the penthouse, and is additionally concerned about setting precedent.

The project representatives came forward after public comment. The representatives were Jas Bhogal (developer), Carolyn Keller (Embarc Studio), Sean Griffin (developer) and Mark Van



Brocklin (Embarc), who later joined his colleagues. They walked the Commissioners through the project, which includes the construction of a headhouse, penthouse, and roof deck. The representatives provided view perspectives through Claremont Park at the front of the building, and additional views from the rear.

A mockup has not yet been constructed. The Commissioners requested that the mockup be in place, as BIM software cannot detect full visibility. There will not be any mechanicals on top of the penthouse, but will be mechanicals on the roof deck. The Commissioners requested that these mechanicals be mocked up as well.

The Commissioners expressed that they cannot make a determination without knowing if the penthouse is visible. If the penthouse is only as visible as described in the presentation provided then it is likely approvable and the Commissioners would request dark colors on the fenestration and materials. If it is more visible, then the penthouse is likely not approvable because it will change the profile of the skyline and the proposed materials are not in the vocabulary of the South End.

The Commissioners also asked about visibility from Claremont Street and SW Corridor Park. They will require additional information about how much of the penthouse will be seen from this perspective.

The Commissioners skipped ahead to review 115 Worcester Street to allow time for the 566 Columbus Avenue project representatives to make copies of their presentation.

The Commissioners called 599 Columbus Avenue but the project representative did not show. The Commissioners skipped ahead to review 115 Worcester Street.

ADVISORY REVIEW

115 WORCESTER STREET

Proposed Work: Construct a new building

The project representatives were Jay Szymanski (architect), Marci Booth (LIHC), and Randi Lathrop (consultant) were the project representatives. They walked the Commissioners through the historic site conditions and the current proposal, which is the construction of a residential building on a vacant lot. The new building will be evaluated by the Commission as a Category A building.

J. Amodeo noted that the property lines need to be clear, and that the applicants must be clear about the façade being coplanar with the adjacent building. There were also additional questions from the Commissioners regarding the parallel sidewalks and planting beds in front of the building.

The Commissioners also discussed the massing of the building. J. Freeman commented that the current proposal included many features that are not in proportion to a typical South End building and suggested that the applicants look more carefully at the South End vocabulary.



The Commission presented 424-444 Massachusetts Avenue as an excellent example of a contemporary building that blends with the architecture of the historic district.

Several members of the community spoke about their concern with the proposed development, namely its height, monolithic appearance, and materials. Some members of the community also expressed concern about the impact of the proposed construction on the neighboring rubble foundations.

ADVISORY REVIEW

566 COLUMBUS AVENUE

Proposed Work: Construct a new building

The project representatives were David Goldman (New Boston Ventures) and Jonathan Garland (J. Garland Enterprises and Design) were the project representatives. They explained that they have already received BPDA board approval with the support of the mayor and several city council members, and that BPDA would like to work jointly with the Commission moving forward with aspects of the design. The representatives walked the Commissioners through the latest iteration of the design and the neighborhood context. All zoning will be as of right.

Several members of the community offered public comment and expressed concern about the proposed development. Members of I am Harriet Coalition spoke, expressing their desire that the building should be landmarked, rather than demolished (Staff note: the demolition of 566 Columbus Avenue has already been approved).

The Commissioners expressed concerns regarding the windows, monolithic façade, and massing, along with other design details such as the corner at Massachusetts and Columbus Avenue. They suggested that the project representatives incorporate more of the South End architectural vocabulary and look to 424-444 Massachusetts Avenue and others as examples. The Commission also asked staff to coordinate with BPDA for a joint review.

ADVISORY REVIEW

599 COLUMBUS AVENUE

Proposed Work: Construct a new building

Peter Spellios (developer) and members of the design team were the project representatives. They explained the work to the Commissioners, which includes constructing a new building on a vacant lot.

The Commissioners expressed that the proposed building needs to incorporate more of the vocabulary of the South End into the design, and needs to express more of the language of the historic district, especially given its location on the border of the district.

Several members of the community offered public comment as well as the Boston Preservation Alliance. The Commissioners offered additional comments to the representatives regarding specific design elements. They also requested additional renderings of different views of the new building and suggested that the design still needs refinement before it is ready for a formal Commission review.



The Commission requested a second Advisory Review.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW/ APPROVAL

J. Freeman noted that there should be a better process to review roof decks. J. Amodeo also suggested remanding roof deck reviews to staff unless extraordinary.

APP # 20.418 SE 34 Clarendon Street and APP #20.584 SE 2 Union Park were pulled from the agenda and postponed until the 2/04/2020 SELDC Public Hearing.

P. Sanborn motioned to approve all other Administrative Review items. J. Freeman seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 (JA, JF, CH, DP, PS).

III. RATIFICATION OF 11/05/2019 MEETING MINUTES; 11/07/2019 PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES; 10/24/2019 PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES; 10/23/2019 PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES; 09/26/2019 PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES; 09/10/2019 PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES; AND 08/22/2019 PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

J. Amodeo asked how the minutes are compiled. Staff responded that a template is used based on Open Meeting Law requirements and that Landmarks staff is working to make all minutes uniform.

J. Freeman motioned to approve the minutes. P. Sanborn seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 (JA, JF, DP, PS).

IV. STAFF UPDATES

There were no staff updates.

V. ADJOURNMENT – 11:07 PM

J. Amodeo motioned to adjourn the hearing. C. Hunt seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 (JA, JF, CH, DP, PS).