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Town Planner's Recommendation
Wednesday, December 4, 2013

- X. ***Public Hearing*** (continued) - **15 Madbury Road and 8 Mathes Terrace**. Design review for site plan for redevelopment of two lots for a three-story **mixed-use student housing development**. Submitted by **Kostis Enterprises LLC and Theodore Finnegan**; David Garvey, agent; Michael Sievert, MJS Engineering, engineer; Robin Wunderlich, designer. Tax Map 2, Lots 12-5 and 12-6. Central Business Zoning District.
- I recommend that the design review be closed and the Planning Board provide guidance to the applicant cautioning about the numerous concerns (See my comments below).

Please note the following:

- The applicant has submitted updated plans that I think are a significant improvement over the prior plans – basement units are eliminated, the first floor is all residential, and parking is provided (in the first floor). While these improvements are welcome, I believe that there remain numerous challenges with the project.
- The applicant submitted new perspective drawings. I am concerned that these do not effectively (accurately?) convey the relative sizes of the proposed building with the three four-square buildings that would remain. The proposed building does not look overwhelming in the perspective drawings but I think this merits a closer examination.

The left block of the proposed building measures 78 feet long in front by 56 feet deep for a footprint of 4,368. The right block measures 54 feet wide in front by 56 feet deep for a footprint of 2,916 square feet (This does not include the smaller section in the middle).

The three remaining four square buildings on Mathes Terrace are 10 Mathes Terrace (Bragdon, Dugas, & Rutter), 12 Mathes Terrace (Lenk Orthodontics), and 13 Madbury Road (Peter Stanhope).

The footprints of the main multistory blocks of these three buildings, i.e., *not including their porches, one-story additions, and outbuildings*, are:

- 10 Mathes Terrace – 840 square feet
- 12 Mathes Terrace – 900 square feet
- 13 Madbury Road – 840 square feet

Thus, the footprint of the left block of the proposed building is *5.2 times* the area of the footprint of the main block of 10 Mathes Terrace and 13 Madbury Road and *4.85 times* the area of 12 Mathes Terrace. The right block is *3.5 times* the area of 10 Mathes Terrace and

13 Madbury Road and 3.25 times the area of 12 Mathes Terrace. I am not including the porches, one-story additions, and outbuildings because these elements do not contribute substantially to the sense of mass of the four-square buildings. Not also that the four squares are generally two-story structures while the proposed building has a sizable third floor. Are these comparative sizes conveyed in the perspective drawings?

- 1) Mathes Terrace is a private way. This presents numerous challenges. *We discussed possibly making Mathes Terrace a Town road at the TRG meeting on October 29. If this were feasible, some issues would be mitigated.*
- 2) How would maintenance of Mathes Terrace be handled now with one sizable development and three small properties?
- 3) The parking garage is helpful. Would there still be parking concerns for residents and visitors?
- 4) Could fire access be provided in a reasonable manner given the size and private character of Mathes Terrace?
- 5) The one-year construction process could have adverse impacts upon the businesses on Mathes Terrace.
- 6) At present, Mathes Terrace has a low key atmosphere that is conducive to the operation of small businesses. What impacts would result from a 62-bed student development immediately adjacent to those businesses?
- 7) While the basic design makes sense (two blocks with hipped roofs connected by a recessed section) the scale of the project appears to be significantly inconsistent with the scale of the existing five (remaining three) foursquare houses. There are numerous references in the Town's Architectural Regulations (that are part of the Site Plan Regulations) speaking to the importance of a proposed building having the proper scale and being harmonious with the prevailing neighboring character.
- 8) There should not be an open garage facing Mathes Terrace per the Architectural Regulations. If the property were downsized it could be placed on the far left side.
- 9) The maximum height in the Central Business District is 30 feet. The height may be increased up to 50 feet only at the reasonable discretion of the Planning Board
- 10) The existing sewer line crosses the lot of another property owner.
- 11) There appears to be minimal space on the lot for landscaping, tree planting, and tree preservation.
- 12) There appears to be little or no appropriate area on the lot to treat, store, or detain stormwater.
- 13) A conditional use would be needed for the dumpster and paved area to the left.
- 14) There would be little room for snow storage on site.
- 15) It would be a real loss for the two existing four square houses to be demolished. The Planning Board asked me if this issue would be sufficient grounds to prevent a development. It would not since the site is not in a historic district. However, in combination with other compelling concerns, it should be considered.
- 16) Additional traffic on this highly constrained road would be generated.