

HARMONY HOMES DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes of May 1, 2020 meeting

Attending the meeting:

Michael Behrendt, committee member

Barbara Dill, committee member

Kitty Marple, committee member

Todd Selig, committee member

Sarah Wrightsman, alternate for Barbara Dill, Planning Board representative on committee

John Randolph, applicant

Maggie Randolph, applicant and architect

Mike Sievert, design engineer

The meeting came to order at 1:05 p.m. John explained the project. The committee went through the Design Guidelines.

The electrical lines will be buried.

Barbara asked about the view from Johnson Creek. John said he could take photographs from there. He said there is significant evergreen plants. He said the existing building is probably more exposed. He thinks the new building will be fairly hidden.. Guidelines. Didn't focus on last time. Sentence in text part look at view from johnson creek.

Todd said there was considerable conversation about the views when the guidelines were created. The site was being considered by Powerspan. There was discussion about the view from Route 4 and not so much from the river considering that relatively few people use the river. The landscape is more dense now. He wonders if this building will be seen from the river.

John said preserving views is the main work of the committee. The vegetation has grown up a lot over the years. If you go the speed limit on Route 4 you can barely see the site. But you will see a little more from the river. They are minimizing changes to the site.

Mike said if you are coming from the east you will have a view of this building for about three seconds. The tree line will block the view after that. From Johnson Creek the building will be tucked back into the tree line. You will see it when you pass the entrance. It might be a few feet higher than the current building. John said the peak will be about 31 feet. Maggie has pictures showing the building relative to the tree line.

Mike said if you are heading west there is a clump of trees where the Phase 2 building will be. The only point you will be able to see that building from the river is straight on.

Todd asked about the colors. Will they be coordinated with the existing building? John said the colors will be the same. Barbara said she did not think there was any white on the existing building. The trim is pale. It would be less visible with a pale version of the blue.

John said the terraces in the back will be semi-private. There will be an individual deck behind each unit. This is an additional way to attract people to work there. The office space will be at the top level with a deck.

John said there will be 6 living units, a training area, and a childcare area.

Maggie said she would submit floor plans later. She said the same materials will be used as the existing building – cedar and hardiboard or cedar throughout that is painted. The childcare will be for any Harmony Homes staff. It will not be open to the public. John said he would meet Health and Human Services requirements for an outside play area.

Sarah asked if there are vacancies whether it would be open to the public. John said that depends on the type of license they get. With 80 employees and the chance to grow to 200 employees there should not be an issue filling the slots. He is also sensitive to creating more traffic.

John said the apartments would rent for about \$700. This would be around 30% of people's pay.

Kitty said the childcare facility looks small. John said they could do training elsewhere. Maggie said there would be around 10 children in childcare.

Barbara asked about turn arounds for emergency vehicles. Mike said that would not be an issue unless the parking lot is full.

Mike said the area showing the gravel wetlands is really to accommodate the second building. They are not being used now.

John said he prefers to keep landscaping to a minimum. Mike said the foundation area is a drip edge. There is not really room for landscaping.

John thinks the tenants will be happy with the arrangement and any landscaping in front won't matter. He also wants to keep the costs down.

Kitty said the back of the building is a little stark. There was a suggestion to add window boxes in front. John said he would look at that but does not want something that could become an eyesore. He wants to have low maintenance year round.

Michael suggested adding diagonal bracing on the posts. Maggie said they want to keep them functional and simple.

Todd said the front elevation is plain but recognized that the only people seeing it will be those living there. He said they will have a great view of the river. John said with fitting the building onto the site they don't have a lot of flexibility. The front is simple. The water side will be the living side. Michael suggested looking at no-cost/low-cost small embellishments on the front.

Barbara asked about the balustrades. John said the balusters in back are vertical and 5 feet tall.

Barbara said the trim on the main building is not white. John said it was off white. Barbara said a stark white would not be a good choice. Michael suggested a light gray. John said they want to stay consistent with the theme on the existing building.

John said he would look to see if solar panels would work.

Todd suggested that John and Maggie evaluate the color and any simple ways to enhance the design.

John said he thought the last time the committee had a hard time making a decision but he was not seeing that now.

Barbara asked about the horses. John said that is still the goal. They had also talked about a dock and he still wants to do that. Barbara asked about planting trees on the driveway. John said they were committed to planting more trees. It was suggested that maple trees could be planted on the driveway between the light posts. This could be an opportunity for families to dedicate a tree. John said they opened three years ago and have had to invest a lot more during that time.

John said the purpose of the new building is to help 18-25 year olds who work there. Michael noted that Ben Frost, the attorney at New Hampshire Housing Finance Agency said that an employer can legally discriminate and set aside housing just for employees. Michael assumed if somebody moved in and then no longer worked at Harmony Homes though they would be able to stay there. John said actually they could legally require somebody to vacate the apartments if they no longer work at Harmony Homes.

Todd moved that the committee endorse the general design presented today as consistent with the established design guidelines and requested that the committee be reconvened prior to final Planning Board resolution of the application to finalize any minor architectural or site changes/additions that might be determined to be beneficial to the overall project. The motion was seconded by Barbara Dill and passed 4-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Michael Behrendt, Town Planner