

GREAT BARRINGTON DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MASON LIBRARY
231 MAIN STREET

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2024
4:30 P.M.

PRESENT: **JENNIFER CLARK**
JAMES MERCER
JB BRODEUR

JACKIE KAIN (Ms. Kain was not present until the end of the meeting)

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Clark called the meeting to order at 4:32 P.M.

PERMITS

The Committee continued review of the DuBois Freedom Center special permit application for 9 Elm Court. Architect Glenn Goble, Steve Mack, Engineer for Foresight Land Services, Eugenie Sills and Jacob Bek were present to discuss the application.

Ms. Clark said she has an issue with a non-functioning front door. She said it is non harmonious with the bylaws or the neighborhood.

Mr. Goble said the front door is still usable as an exit. He said the intent of the project is to welcome all people equally. He said the front door would not allow equal access to all. He said the door is still part of the building. It attracts people to the building then directs them to the entrance. He said this is not a church anymore, it is intended for people to experience the entire building.

Mr. Mercer asked about what kind of sign would be installed. He said he loves the rotating sign that is currently in place.

Mr. Goble said he loves that sign too. He said the permanent sign has not been decided on. The sign will comply with the bylaws and will accentuate the building.

Mr. Mercer asked if there will be a sign to direct people to the entrance.

Mr. Goble said the people will understand where to enter. He said he didn't think a sign directing to the entrance is necessary.

Ms. Sills said there is no sign design yet.

Ms. Clark said the roof line of the addition is not compatible with the architectural style of the surrounding buildings. She said there is a flat roof over the stairwell and the elevator shaft.

Mr. Goble said he wants the existing church building to be the primary focus. He said a flat roof is the lowest we can go. The intent was to avoid looking like the existing building. The flat roof follows the functionality of what it is, an elevator. It is a very small addition.

Ms. Clark said if the third floor didn't welcome people there wouldn't be a need for an elevator.

Mr. Goble said without an elevator only staff would be able to access the third floor. We want to include the public and volunteers to that space.

Ms. Sills said people will be able to read memories in that space.

Ms. Mercer said he thinks this is a wonderful project. The building is only going up 2 feet and it is still compatible with the neighborhood. He said it is extraordinary to get all of this on the small property.

Ms. Clark said everyone will enter through one door.

Mr. Goble said the premise is equality. Everyone will be treated with equal consideration. He said it is a laudable goal for everyone to enter through one door. The goals of universal access is for every one to use the same access to eliminate any equality.

Mr. Bek said it is critical to have one point of access for control of the people entering.

Ms. Clark said there are a lot of considerations.

Mr. Goble said it is a functional approach.

Ms. Clark asked if the ceiling in the basement could be raised instead of raising the entire building.

Mr. Goble said raising the floor of the church would destroy the sanctuary space. He said raising the building, having the entrance go down into the basement area is the best approach.

Mr. Bek said the preservation of the interior of the building is also important. He agreed that raising the floor would disrupt the sanctuary.

Ms. Sills said there are standards for historic properties. The sanctuary is the highest priority. The goal is to recreate as much as possible. National Historic would never allow raising the floor of the sanctuary. Everything has to be approved by them.

Ms. Clark asked about parking.

Mr. Mercer said there are no parking requirements in the downtown area.

Ms. Sills said the lighting on the building has been redesigned due to concerns at the Planning Board.

Mr. Goble said the belfry has a pyramid at the top (floor of the belfry). There is a room under the belfry that has a window where a light will be put to provide a glow. There is no ceiling under the belfry. A very thin LED tape will be set inside the belfry to illuminate it. The light source will not be visible.

Ms. Clark said we have received good, predictable responses.

Ms. Brodeur asked about landscaping, specifically below the front windows. She said something there would soften the view.

Mr. Goble said the goal is to have as much space as possible for outdoor gatherings. It is possible something could go under the window. The plans to soften the site will evolve.

Mr. Mack said there is landscaping planned along the wall.

Mr. Mercer and Ms. Brodeur said they were ready to vote on the plan.

Ms. Clark said she would vote to approve but she wants a memo or something to go with the approval to address the elevator shaft such as a stucco finish or neutral color.

Mr. Mercer said there are all kinds of ideas that could be suggested. He said we are advisory. We should be ready to vote.

Mr. Mercer made a motion to approve the plan submitted by the DuBois Freedom Center as presented. There were concerns about massing and the materials for the new addition. The Design Advisory Committee recommends consideration for softening the exterior of the addition with a stucco finish or alternate material to be more congruent with the neighborhood. The Committee expressed additional concerns about the elevation of the building and the roof line.

Ms. Clark said she is concerned that the motion doesn't fulfill what is asked for in Design Guidelines.

Mr. Mercer said everyone has done the best they can with the project. He said he thinks this is a wonderful project.

Mr. Brodeur seconded.

Ms. Kain arrived at 5:10 PM.

Ms. Clark said nothing has been said about the front door.

Mr. Mercer said it is their design.

Ms. Clark said it attracts people but it can't be used. She said she can write her own statement.

Ms. Brodeur said she would like to go forward with the motion and have Ms. Clark write her own letter.

Vote on the motion: all in favor.

MINUTES: JANUARY 21, 2024

The approval of the minutes of January 21, 2024 were passed over

PERMIT: DARE BOTTLE SHOP & PROVISION

Applicant Mary Daire was present to discuss the signs for the business location at 28 Railroad Street.

Ms. Daire said Jess Marsh from Hired Hands Signs designed the proposed sign for a sign band mounted to the buildings and painted window. There is no neon in the signs. They are not bright or abrasive. The colors are orange and navy. The sign is the window will include the outline of a bottle with lettering to the side. The cork of the bottle will be filled with 23 carat gold leaf. The letters will also be gold leaf. She said the gold will help the sign stand out.

Ms. Daire said the sign band will be installed when the weather is better. The sign band is painted on the surface with similar colors as the window sign.

Ms. Kain asked how the paint will stand up to the weather.

Ms. Daire said the paint is weather resistant. She said the paint is longer lasting and environmentally friendly. No vinyl will be used.

Mr. Mercer asked if there will be lighting on the sign.

Ms. Daire said no. She said the store will only be open until 7 PM on weekends. There is no need for lighting on the sign.

Ms. Kain said she is enthusiastic about the sign. It is bold and it stands out. She said there is a balance with the letters and the cork. The sign band compliments the sign in the window.

Ms. Brodeur said she has no objections. She said she likes it a lot.

Mr. Mercer said the sign is fabulous.

Ms. Clark said she is a former graphic designer. She said feels the letters are too large. She said no other store front has window signage. She said it looks highly commercial to me. The window sign is too larch. She said she reduced the sign by 35% but forgot to bring the picture with her. She said reducing the sign would be more in proportion with pedestrian traffic. She said she would be happy to send the picture around.

Ms. Kain said she would like to see what Ms. Clark proposed. She asked if it would stand up to the window.

Ms. Daire said the larger text makes it so it can be seen.

Ms. Brodeur said the window will look different when the background is filled in by the shop.

Ms. Kain said she went to the store in Lenox. The massing of the letters works with the activity in the store.

Ms. Brodeur said she didn't think the lettering will be as bold with the background.

Ms. Kain asked how shiny will the gold be.

Mr. Mercer said it called water gilding. It will be shiny.

Ms. Daire said the gold technique was highly recommended so the gold doesn't get lost in the shadows.

Mr. Mercer said it is wonderful.

Ms. Kain made a motion to approve the sign application, Ms. Brodeur seconded.

Ms. Kain, Ms. Brodeur and Mr. Mercer in favor. Ms. Clark opposed because the sign is too large.

The committee briefly returned to the discussion of the special permit for the DuBois Center. Ms. Kain recused herself.

Mr. Mercer made a motion for Ms. Clark to execute a letter on behalf of the Committee, Ms. Brodeur seconded. All in favor.

The Committee members decided to cancel the meeting scheduled for February 29, 2024. They scheduled the next meeting for March 20 at 5:00 PM.

CITIZENS SPEAK TIME:

There were no citizens present to speak.

Having concluded its business, Ms. Clark adjourned without objection at 5:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly L. Shaw

Kimberly L. Shaw
Secretary