

**Coolidge Corner Study Committee
Architecture Subcommittee
January 24, 2019**



Chair, Neil Wishinsky
Alan Christ
Anne Meyers
Catherine Donaher
Elton Elperin
Frank Caro
Ken Lewis
Lauren Bernard
Linda Hamlin
Linda Olson Pehlke
Maura Toomey
Roger Blood
Sergio Modigliani
Steve Kanes
Susan Roberts

MEETING NOTES

Subcommittee Members Present: Alan Christ, Elton Elperin, Linda Hamlin, Sergio Modigliani

Other Coolidge Corner Study Committee Members Present: Catherine Donaher, Linda Olson Pehlke, Susan Roberts

Staff: Kara Brewton, Trevor Johnson

Guests: Representatives from Chestnut Hill Realty including Jacob Bloom (Cambridge 7 Architects), Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert (Law Office of Robert L. Allen, Jr.), Joe Geller and Theo Kindermans (Stantec), Marc Levin (CHR).

Materials: Draft Minutes from 1-19-19 Architecture Subcommittee, Waldo-Durgin Special District Design Guidelines (revision date 1-24-19)

Sergio Modigliani opened the meeting by introducing staff and reviewing the draft meeting minutes from the 1-19-19 Architecture Subcommittee. Sergio and Catherine suggested minor edits and Kara asked for clarification on the desired location of the green wall. The Subcommittee then voted the minutes, as amended (3-0-1).

Kara Brewton noted that she combined everyone's comments and revisions to her the best she could and made notes in brackets where there were conflicting or unclear comments. The formatting revisions from Alan Christ are reflected here, but not as a tracked change.

Sergio Modigliani suggested that each member find the area of the guidelines where they made suggested edits to ensure that the accepted changes accurately reflect the author's intention. Another member suggested the group go through together from the beginning, and that approach was adopted.

On the preamble, Catherine Donaher explained that her comments were intended to embellish the comments that were added in prior weeks. The intent is to call attention to the fact it is a prominent, unique site, one that defines the Town's major downtown commercial area. Alan Christ said the third paragraph gets a little too wordy, but not sure how to simplify it. Elton agrees with the stress on civic presence; the preamble needs to be strongly stated that the onus is on the architect to create something that respects the importance of this site. However, he noted at the same time the Design Guidelines should not be overly prescriptive or try to design a building by committee. Linda Hamlin suggested that the guidelines be condensed as much as possible so that it is accessible. Catherine noted that the developer also be called out as an important player in this. Alan said the clause regarding a design that is worthy of this prominent site is the key. Linda Olson Pehlke said she had an issue with the word "imagination"; she is not sure that is the appropriate

Coolidge Corner Study Committee
Architecture Subcommittee
January 24, 2019

goal. Linda Hamlin reminded everyone that there is so much design review process that it would be hard for anything too out there to be approved. Catherine Donaher noted that the intention of the guidelines is to set the tone for the development moving forward. Sergio suggested that Elton, Alan, and Catherine develop suggested revisions for this section and send to Kara. Sergio said the preamble is key because it sets a strong signal to Town Meeting Members.

Sergio suggested turning to page 2. Catherine said that in section 2(b) the guidelines should be more precise with respect to the number of stories of Pelham Hall as a comparative standard for the massing change of the proposed residential building. Several noted that the floor-to-floor height varied from Pelham Hall and the proposed residential building. Sergio said he would prefer a more generic description of the proposed building's relationship to Pelham Hall and consensus was reached.

Linda noted that in section 3, first paragraph, she added "and mass" when referring to the building height impacts, and no one disagreed.

Page 3 comments:

- Alan has added headers to each sub-section
- Elton confirmed that the use of "may" here is intentional, whereas in other parts of the guidelines the intent is to be consistent with the use of "should".
- Sergio raised the question about the name of the district, which needs to be discussed at some point with the full Committee.
- Linda Hamlin noted that there is a need to added images and graphics into the guidelines, especially to reflect the types of building facades the Committee would, and would not, want to see at this site.
- With respect to glazing, the subcommittee decided to exclude "large expanses of" mirrored or highly tinted glass; they did not want to exclude mirrored or highly tinted glass completely.
- Sergio stated that the committee is asking for standards or sustainability that have not been employed in Brookline elsewhere and so he is hesitant about the exclusions when we don't know what will be required to achieve these goals and concerns.

Page 4 comments:

- Discussion of the intro to 3c. Linda said the language needed to be more specific with regards to the rooftop equipment. Elton said the goal is that screening of the mechanical systems is integrated into the form of the whole. Linda Olson Pehlke said she likes the mention of noise and sound impacts, and that it seems like it comes down to which mechanical system you choose. Linda Hamlin added that the building code would influence the system design as well.

Page 5 comments:

- With respect to level of detail, Linda Olson Pehlke said that she felt "simplicity is encouraged" is contrary to many other sections of the guidelines. Elton said that a building

Coolidge Corner Study Committee
Architecture Subcommittee
January 24, 2019

form could be simple but the execution could be complex and sophisticated. Alan said it is about that the parts and the whole have a relationship to each other, and the building is not busy. There was a suggestion to strike the phrase entirely; Alan Christ will reconsider this statement and send Kara a suggested edit.

- With respect to Building Entries, Sergio noted that we needed to clarify guidelines between the residential and hotel buildings.
- With respect to Sustainable Building Design Elements, Sergio suggested that the Committee wait and hear back from CHR about their specific commitment; others agreed.

Page 6 comments:

- With respect to first floor height, discussion followed that the performance standard was that the height be generous, with a feeling of openness to the public way; that the specific height minimum may be less crucial to define so early in the process.
- Regarding the infrastructure to allow retail space, Kara noted that like the sustainability section, the point here was to design a building to be adaptable in the future. Even if it is true that a café or retail space is not financially feasible in the current market, that the guidelines should push the developer to build in the infrastructure to allow such conversion for a public space (with regards to Building Code requirements) when the building is first constructed.

After further discussion, Alan volunteered to combine the John Street & Pleasant Streetscape sections. Additionally, it was determined that the areas detailed the programmed exterior space would more likely make sense as a diagram. Finally, the idea of the open space needs to be calculated to reflect the current proposal, which includes converting the paved areas of the town's parking area on the corner of John & Green Streets to a fully landscaped park.

A topic that the Committee needs to come back to is whether they any relief for signage is being contemplated by CHR, and whether that relief requires any zoning amendments.

Sergio requested that Kara incorporate everyone's comments, send to the Subcommittee for a final OK before releasing, and then on to the full Committee for their review.

Meeting Adjourned