



Design Review Committee

Memo

TO: Al Bangert, Chairman
Zoning Board of Appeals
FROM: Michael McGowan, Chairman
Design Review Committee
RE: Herring Brook Meadows; Alternate Design
DATE: October 31, 2007

On Wednesday October 17, 2007, the DRC met to review the latest alternate building designs proposed, based on the drawings prepared by Phung/Porzio Studio of Architecture dated 10/4/07. The proposed building designs are developed to a preliminary sketch level. The following is an overall summary of the concerns, issues and ideas discussed for your information and use.

Attendees, DRC: Mike McGowan, Hal Stokes, Eric Kluz – DRC
Planning Dept.: Laura Harbottle, Town Planner

General Comments:

1. Overall this design is an improvement from the previous proposal but as preliminary sketches, needs further design development.
2. Understanding in the 40B process that such a large project could be “approvable” without the design being finalized, we hope there may be a way for the Design Review Committee to continue to have design input after the projects’ approval.
3. Both the plans and elevations are likely to go through extensive revisions for a number of reasons. 1) They don’t necessarily match in all areas, 2) Entrances and egress are not fully resolved and thus don’t match up plan to elevation, 3) Bedroom egress as noted is not resolved and will push out the façade of Building B and 4) The roof lines don’t match up where there is a supposed transition from metal to asphalt shingle. We have done the best we could to provide a review.
4. Information not available including end elevations, roof plans, and cross sections inhibits our understanding of the design.
5. Good attempt to reduce the scale with 2 1/2 v. full 3 stories.
6. The architecture represents a collection of varied architectural styles; bungalow, NE farmhouse, & contemporary Cape Cod. The buildings need further development to unify the elements used.
7. We like elements attempted; cupolas, barn doors, gables, light wells, tower.
8. The Rt. 3A side of each building is generally not welcoming, and fragmented.
9. In general, entrances could be enhanced.

10. Entry canopies extend into other building recesses. This appears arbitrary.
11. Those balconies incorporated within the facade look better; others appear tacked-on. We suggest further developing those to integrate them better.
12. The roofing details and connections do not appear totally resolved.

Material Use:

1. The use of a metal roof reminds one of more commercial usage or mountain type housing. Color is not indicated but we would not recommend. If used sparingly great care should be taken to integrate any metal roofing into the shingled roofline.
2. The combination of vertical siding and shingles is awkward; we suggest all shingles with a varied pattern study. The transition from metal roof to asphalt roofing needs clarity.
3. Building colors are not available. We suggest natural finish siding with the stonework, dark green painted trim, and natural color roofing.
4. Stonework use is fragmented and should be continuous.
5. In general a mix of materials and styles within reason is acceptable if the mix is done artfully, and can lend a unique character to the buildings, which we'd prefer to overly-uniform façades.

Miscellaneous Site Issues:

One of our committee members walked the site recently and notes an attempt should be made to save the large beech tree that is within what might be called the existing circular drive. It is a fine specimen, probably 50 or 60 years old and would make a nice feature to off-set the parking from 3A.

Building Design Observations and Suggestions:

Building A: North Elevation [river side]

1. Second bedrooms in Units 3, 4, 5, and 6 on all floors have minimal exterior exposure to fit a window to qualify as a bedroom. A minor footprint change may be needed to accomplish.
2. Incorporate East end Unit & balcony into the façade, similar to west end Unit 1.
3. Windows appear to be needed in Units 35 & 36 v. vertical siding.
4. Living Room windows in Unit 2 need to be much larger.
5. Layout of Unit 1 could be revised to take advantage of the river side views v the road side.

Building A: South Elevation [Rt. 3A side]

1. Windows need to be incorporated in the stonework for Unit A11.
2. Façade transition awkward at Stair and Unit 7.

3. Windows should be incorporated on the 3A side for the living rooms in Unit 7.

Building B: East Elevation [river side]

1. Consider moving footprint forward to increase the rear yard setback to 65' from 38', increasing the rear yard play area.
2. Shows a desired setback of Unit 6 from Unit 5, not reflected in the plan.
3. Shed dormer appears missing at Unit 1.
4. Units 2 & 4 should align to achieve the elevation as shown.

Building B: West Elevation [Rt. 3A side]

1. Suggest developing right Unit 6 to similar treatment as left side Unit 1.
2. Roof transitions between Tower and Unit 1 are awkward and appear unresolved.
3. Vestibule entry needs to be incorporated per code.

Building C: North Elevation [river side]

- This building has several Mechanical Closet projections that the other buildings do not have and are not reflected in the design elevations. Generally these should be integrated within the plans, and/or shielded, as-well-as addressed in the other buildings.
- Dormer appears to be needed at right side Unit 7.
- Tack-on balconies (4) could be integrated better.

Building C: South Elevation [Rt. 3A side]

- Suggest a setback of Unit 7 and adjoining stair. Finish materials appear unresolved.
- More elevations needed to properly evaluate what is the largest of the 3 buildings.

cc:

Attendees

Board of Selectman

Planning Board

Applicant