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Redevelopment Board Minutes 02/27/2012

Minutes of Monday, February 27, 2012, 7:00pm
Arlington Redevelopment Board
Town Hall Annex, Second Floor Conference Room
Approved: May 21, 2012

Present: ~Michael Cayer, Bruce Fitzsimmons (Chairman), Ted Fields, Christine Scypinski, Andy West
Also present: Senior Planner Housing Director Laura Wiener, members of the public

Jake Upton provided an update on development of the former Symmes Hospital site. He reported that the construction kick-off meeting was scheduled for February 29, the Neighborhood Protection Plan was updated, the Symmes Neighborhood Advisory Committee had reviewed the changes, confirmed by a telephone message to Ms. Kowalski from SNAC Chair Michele Barry. Mr. Upton further reported that coordination was underway with the Land Trust. Mr. Upton also sought the Board's approval for the expanded vista park, and approval of NEI as general contractor.

The Board asked about Upton & Partners' past experience with NEI and the percentage of receivables. Jake and Budge Upton responded that they had worked with NEI on the Chestnut Hill waterworks historic component. They would pose the receivables question to NEI. The Board asked for income and balance sheet, which Mr. Upton said would be available within one year of the documents' date. The Board confirmed that NEI would hire locally.

Mr. Fields then moved and Ms. Scypinski seconded a motion to approve NEI as General contractor for the residential project. All voted in favor.

The Board then turned to the Neighborhood Protection Plan (NPP). The discussion included the amount and nature of blasting required. BethAnn Friedman of the Symmes Neighborhood Advisory Committee concurred with Mr. Upton's summary of SNAC's support of the NPP. Ms. Kowalski confirmed that a telephone message from the SNAC Chair Michele Barry supported Mr. Upton's report of SNAC's support. Ms. Kowalski confirmed that the Designated Town Representative would be hired on a temporary contract until the Request for Proposal process can be undertaken.

Mr. Cayer moved to accept the NPP subject to SNAC reviewing comments and typographical change made by SNAC, ARB Chair, and the Director. Mr. West seconded and all voted in favor.

The Board then reviewed the landscaping plan for the expanded vista park. The number of parking spaces had been reduced in response to feedback. The details included stone dust walkway, split rail fence, programming a historical monument to the former Symmes nurses building, reported Mr. Upton. Ms. Scypinski reported on her discussion with a member of the team and pressed for chip seal with colored aggregate. Mr. Upton noted an informal mowed area, and promised benches once the view corridor was established. Board members recommended large boulders in the landscape. Brian Rehrig of the Arlington Land Trust commented that the Conservation Commission and Land Trust preferred that parking be on the road than off the road. Mr. Upton said that ADA requirements are not met by parking on the road. The Board noted that a single width driveway would be sufficient. Mr. Rehrig reminded the Board and Mr. Upton that this land had to be incorporated into the Forest Management Plan, the Interim conservation restriction, and the permanent conservation restriction.

On a motion duly made and seconded, the Board voted to approve the proposed landscaping subject to review at the 100% design phase except with the driveway and curbed area narrowed at the entrance, and subject to consideration of colored stone dust parking for hardscape path and tan colored chip seal for parking lot, natural seeding along mowed area, boulders at the mowed path, showing on a plan how the mowed area would connect to Summer Street Woods, showing quantity and placing of plant specimens on planting plan, and the requirement that split rail fence to be natural wood.

All voted in favor.

The Board then reviewed the Symmes sign design. "Symmes Citizen's Advisory Committee" was language in the Land Disposition Agreement, but never existed with that name, Mr. Upton reports. Mr. West moved to replace the existing sign with a placeholder for the approved lender and removing "Symmes Citizen's Advisory Committee". All voted in favor.

The Board then discussed zoning bylaw amendments, amending proposed requirements for the accessory apartment bylaw language. Ms. Wiener would provide the revised draft to the ZBA for the reaction and respond to the Board.

Ms. Kowalski updated the ARB on upcoming requests for space at the Central School. Ms. Kowalski would get an estimate on having a request for proposals prepared to rent out the space occupied by the state tenants for which the state will soon issue a new request for proposals for lease space. This is to prepare for the possibility that the state will not renew its lease with the Board.

Documents used: draft zoning bylaw language, revised NPP, draft lower park plan.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45pm

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Kowalski Secretary ex officio
Laura Wiener, Senior Planner