



TOWN HALL
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DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
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January 13, 2010

DRB Memorandum #2010-1

Memo to: Bonnie Weeks, Building Commissioner
Jonathan Tucker, Planning Director
From: Christine Brestrup, Senior Planner
Subject: DRB Meeting – January 5, 2010

The Tuesday, January 5, 2010, meeting of the Design Review Board began at 6:35 p.m. in the First Floor Meeting Room of the Town Hall. Design Review Board Members Anita Licis, Kathryn Grandonico, Jonathan Salvon and Jim Wald were present. Walter Wolnik was also present.

Also present were Christine Brestrup, Senior Planner, Nate Cartel, representative of Vita Nova and Tom Davies, Director of Design and Construction for Amherst College.

Anita Licis chaired the meeting in the absence of Janet Winston, DRB Chair.

DRB 2010-00006, Nate Cartel for Vita Nova, 55 North Pleasant Street – installation of proposed sandwich-board sign for art gallery and place of worship

Recommended approval with conditions.

Nate Cartel, the pastor of Vita Nova, presented the application. Vita Nova is applying for approval of a sandwich board sign to be placed on the public sidewalk on the east side of North Pleasant Street near the entry to 55 North Pleasant Street. The reason for this request is that the space that Vita Nova is renting is on the second floor, above Stacker's Pub, and it is not visible from the street. The building owner does not want Vita Nova to install a sign on the second story (porch).

The Select Board granted approval to Vita Nova to locate a sandwich board sign on town property, in the "public way", on the sidewalk.

Mr. Cartel presented information on where the sign would be located, directly opposite the door to the Vita Nova space, out of the traveled sidewalk area.

Mr. Wald noted that a sign on the door to the upstairs space would not be seen by passers-by.

Mr. Cartel stated that art lessons are given for children on Saturdays and worship services are held in the space on Sundays. The sandwich board will let people know what is going on for each day.

Ms. Grandonico noted that the "moving, living font" is difficult to read. The green background is appealing, but a clearer font would make the sign more legible. Ms. Licis agreed and stated that the sign was "dynamic and artsy". Mr. Salvon suggested that a darker background and a wider, darker band at the top of the sign may make the lettering easier to read.

Ms. Grandonico suggested that the framework for the sign could be painted black. Mr. Cartel will look into whether the framework is made in black.

Ms. Licis MOVED to recommend approval of the sign, with the further recommendation that applicant increase the legibility of the font. Mr. Salvon seconded and the vote was 4-0.

Conditions:

- 1) The font should be made more legible, either by choosing a different font, modifying the font to increase its legibility or by making the background darker, or a combination of these methods.

DRB 2010-00007, Tom Davies of Amherst College for the Amherst Inn Company, The Lord Jeffery Inn, 30 Boltwood Avenue - review of plans for renovation of existing building, including minor exterior changes and addition of one-story assembly space, plus associated site improvements, including seasonal outdoor dining.

Recommended approval with conditions.

Tom Davies presented the application. Mr. Davies noted that the Design Review Board had reviewed a previous application for a larger project at The Lord Jeffery Inn in 2008. Ms. Licitis was the only current Board member present at this meeting who had reviewed the previous application.

Mr. Davies stated that this is a renovation of the existing building. The previous application was for a much larger building. The current renovation will return the building to a more historic state. Over the years there have been “in-fills” and things added to the building that will be removed as part of this project. The new, significant addition to the existing building will be the ballroom, to be added to the rear of the building, in the courtyard. The applicant is on an ambitious schedule and is hoping to start construction in four months. The building will look essentially as it does today, except that the former open breezeway on Spring Street, which now has a garage door, will be restored and will become the entranceway to the ballroom. There will be two sets of glass doors. A double-door service entry will also be added. There will be changes made to paths leading to the front entry to make the main entrance handicapped accessible. Gentle walkways will be added, at less than a 5% grade, which will not need handrails and will be flush with the ground and flanked by lawn areas.

Mr. Davies described the proposed changes to the sidewalks and parallel parking along Spring Street and Boltwood Avenue in the town right-of-way. There will be “bump-outs” to define the parking spaces. There will be four parking spaces along Boltwood Avenue and nine or ten parking spaces along Spring Street that will be rebuilt. Sidewalks along Boltwood Avenue and Spring Street will be rebuilt to the standards developed for downtown Amherst, including concrete and brick and town standard lighting fixtures. The curbs at the front of the building will be flush with the street in order to make the parallel parking spaces accessible for wheelchairs and luggage. Granite curbing will be used throughout the project.

The existing large trees in the front of the building (along Boltwood Avenue) will be maintained. There will be street trees added in the “bump-outs” along Spring Street. The sidewalks on Spring Street and Boltwood Avenue will be 6 feet wide.

A 20-car parking lot will be constructed behind two houses on Spring Street. There will be landscaping installed behind the Inn and the existing large trees behind the Inn will be protected during construction. A large oval area will be created, behind the Inn, on College property, that can be used for outdoor events and for setting up tents. There will be a paved space located to the east of the new ballroom that will be surrounded by low plantings and a green lawn area.

In the front of the Inn (on the Boltwood Avenue side) the existing sitting area will be maintained. An outdoor dining area will be recreated in front of the building that will be more formal than the outdoor dining area that was there in the past. It will be directly adjacent to the restaurant and will be paved, with a low privacy hedge on the west side, to separate it from the more public space.

The existing enclosed porch on the south side of the former tavern will be opened up and will become an outdoor, covered space.

The “windowed hearth” room will be maintained, but it will not be a restaurant. The front doors at the main entry will be maintained or recreated.

Signs will consist of the existing sign for the “Lord Jeffery Inn” being restored and returned to its former location. There will also be a sign for the new restaurant, in the same location as the “Boltwood Tavern” sign, but with different wording showing the name of the new restaurant.

The brick building areas will be returned to the “white-washed brick” color that they are now. In fact, the entire Inn had been originally painted white and the paint has chipped and faded over the years. There are no plans to paint it white again, but to return it to its current visual condition. The shutters and trim colors will also remain as they are now.

The lighting will consist of Town of Amherst standard light fixtures and poles within the town right-of-way and Amherst College standard light fixtures and poles within the property, including the two light poles in the new parking lot. Existing light fixtures attached to the building will be restored. Mr. Davies presented photographs of the light fixtures that will be installed on the building and showed a set of façade drawings indicating where each would be located.

Ms. Licis recommended that the applicant bring back to the Design Review Board any detailed work that has not yet been designed or chosen, such as metalwork, railings and outdoor furniture.

Mr. Davies stated that Marvin wood storm windows had been chosen with a fixed light on top and a fixed screen on the bottom and one movable panel. The roof will remain mostly slate. There will be a “green roof” on the addition. The remainder of the roof will be copper or slate. The existing roof will remain and be repaired where necessary. Solar panels may be added at sometime in the future.

Ms. Licis MOVED to recommend approval of the application as presented with the request that information about street and site furniture, including railings, that had not been presented as part of this application be brought back to the Design Review Board for review and recommendations. Ms. Grandonico seconded and the vote was 4-0.

Conditions:

- 1) The street and site furniture, including railings, that was not presented as part of this application shall be brought back to the Design Review Board for review and recommendations.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Future Meetings Scheduled:

Tuesday, January 19, 2010. (Ms. Grandonico is not available on January 19th.)

Cc:	Anita Licis, DRB	Tom Davies, Applicant, for Amherst College
	Janet Winston, DRB	Nate Cartel, Applicant, for Vita Nova
	Jim Wald, DRB & HC	Nate Malloy, Associate Planner
	Jonathan Salvon, DRB	Aaron Hayden, Select Board Liaison
	Kathryn Grandonico, DRB	Larry Shaffer, Town Manager
	Jeffrey Bagg, Senior Planner	