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WRENTHAM
PLANNING BOARD
May 12, 2023

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2023 MAY 15 PM 3:37

Exhibit # 2

FROM: John F. Glossa P.E.
Glossa Engineering Inc
46 East Street
East Walpole, MA 02032

TO: Village Hall LLC
P.O. Box 2
Wrentham, MA 02093

RE: 13 Franklin Street
Wrentham, MA
Narrative to accompany application for Special Permits/Site Plan Approval
Wrentham Planning Board

Project Purpose

The applicant, Village Hall LLC plans to renovate, update and add to the existing building at 13 Franklin Street, Wrentham, MA.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Location

The existing lot of land with a building is on the west side of Franklin Street (Route 140) about 300 feet north of the intersection of Route 140 and Route 1A.

Zoning

The lot as well as the abutting lots are within the Village A Subdistrict (VZA). The lot also is located within the Aquifer Protection Overlay District Zone II.

The purposes of the Village Zone (VZ) are to:

- A. Promote an extension of the historic Town center into the former Crosby Valve/Tyco/FMC site by encouraging a master planning process that respects the village street pattern.

This proposal is to renovate an existing building on an existing lot on Franklin Street.

B. Promote development of a mix of nonresidential and residential uses in downtown Wrentham, particularly on the former Crosby Valve/Tyco/FMC site. These uses should be appropriate to the needs of community and to the scale of the downtown. Redeveloping this site for all-residential use is not the Town's vision or goal.

The proposed restaurant and office space uses are appropriate for downtown.

C. Promote an active pedestrian environment and innovative approaches to parking.

The lot abuts the public sidewalk. The building is about 1.4 feet back from the sidewalk.

D. Provide opportunities for housing, employment and shopping in close proximity to residents, municipal facilities and other services.

The proposal provides employment opportunities for local residents.

E. Maintain a consistently high level of quality design throughout the Village.

The design of the building renovation is of the highest quality as can be seen on the Architect plans.

F. Preserve the historic character of the Village and encourage compatible development.

The design of the building renovation preserves the historic character of the building.

G. Provide a process for predictable and prompt public review and project permitting.

The building renovation project should be able to receive prompt permitting.

The pertinent required lot dimensional requirements area as follows:

Existing Dimensional Schedule for uses in the VZA Zoning Subdistrict

Lot Area – 10,000 s.f.

Lot frontage – 50 feet

Lot coverage by structure – No minimum requirement*

Lot coverage by all impervious – 50% maximum*

Min. Usable Open Space – No requirement

Setbacks

Front setback – 0 feet

Side yard – 5 feet to 15 feet

Rear yard – 10 feet to 25 feet

Building height – 35 feet and no more than 2 1/2 stories

Parking – 0 stalls required

*For underlying zoning – the maximum lot coverage in the Aquifer Protection District is 15%

Current Use

There is a building on the existing lot of land at 13 Franklin Street. The building was constructed in 1853 and is most recognized by its Italiante style architecture with a second story veranda that has a roof overhang fronting on Franklin Street which is supported by posts, beams, trusses and three arches. There is a curb cut on the north side of the lot with a paved driveway that leads to Sweatt Park which abuts the rear of the lot. There was at one time a barn located at the southwest corner of the lot. The remaining portions of the lot is compacted fill with sparse ground cover. There are 8 mature trees of various size and species on the lot.

The building is currently used as the site of an antique shop. There are also 6 bedrooms on the upper floors which were previously in use as that portion of the building was used as the home of the previous owner. The building is serviced by on site sewage disposal (cesspool) and a municipal water service. The building is heated with oil heat and the electric service is overhead.

In the past, the building was used as an Auditorium, General Retail Store, Market or Grocery Store, Meeting Hall, Multiple Family Dwelling, and Restaurant according to Massachusetts Historical Commission records.

Zoning Schedule for existing lot size / dimensions

Lot Area – 9,757 s.f.

Lot frontage – 81.36 feet (Note the 11.30 feet dimension was discounted because the line is perpendicular to Franklin Street)

Lot coverage by structure – 24.2%

Lot coverage by all impervious - 52.1%

Min Usable Open Space – NA

Setbacks

Front setback – 1.4 feet

Side yard – 13.1 feet

Rear yard – 61.2 feet

Building height – 40.75 feet / 2 ½ stories

Parking 0 stalls

PROPOSED CONDITIONS

The proposal is to renovate the building to allow for a complex of offices or other nonretail uses. The current thought is that the other nonretail use will be a restaurant. All future uses will be as allowed by the Zoning Bylaw. The Wrentham Board of Health has approved the site for 3,980 gallons per day of sewer use.

The building will be renovated and there are proposed two additions to the building. One addition will be a 500 s.f. two story terrace that will be constructed on the south side of the building. The second addition will be a 411 s.f. three story addition to the west side (rear) of the building.

The purpose of the proposed terrace is to allow for outdoor dining, sitting, or other uses as allowed by the bylaw. The three story addition at the rear of the building is for the installation of an elevator plus added space that will be lost due to the two required stairwells to be installed within the current building.

Approximately 3,650 s.f. of impervious pavement will be installed at the site. The site will be somewhat leveled to accommodate 4 new parking stalls, an area for maneuvering, a 20 ft. x 20 ft. patio and an area for an enclosed dumpster. The leveling will render the slope at a rate of 6.1%. The rear of the lot will be built up through the installation of a low retaining wall. There will be no new catch basins or other stormwater mitigation devices installed at the site. A notch will be left in the retaining wall at the location of the existing paved driveway on the park land. Runoff from the site will be directed to the notch where the runoff will then follow more or less the same path as in the existing condition to the grassed and landscaped areas in the park. From there, the runoff will infiltrate into the ground in the same manner as the existing condition. The small amount of new impervious surface will not significantly increase the rate or volume of runoff to the downstream receptor.

Proposed Use

*The proposed use will be as per Section 390-21.3.C.5. – **Complex of offices or other nonretail business.** This use requires the granting of Site Plan Approval and a Special Permit by the Wrentham Planning Board.*

The applicant proposes to add to and renovate the existing building to allow for a 108 seat restaurant and miscellaneous office space. It is possible that based on market demand that these uses may change, but all uses will be ones that are allowed in the VZA as found in the Zoning Bylaw.

Zoning Schedule for proposed lot size / dimensions

Lot Area – 9,757 s.f.

Lot frontage – 81.36 feet (see note above)

Lot coverage by structure – 28.4%

Lot coverage by all impervious – 92.5%

Min. Usable Open Space - N/A

Setbacks

Front setback – 1.4 feet

Side yard – 2.7 feet

Rear yard – 49.7 feet

Building height – 44.83 feet / 3 stories

Parking – 4 stalls

Special permit approval criteria

A. Degree to which the proposed project complies with the goals of this bylaw, including the design standards and design guidelines, if adopted.

The proposed project is highly compatible with the goals of the bylaw.

B. Adequacy of the site in terms of the size of the proposed use(s).

The site is large enough and is in a location that is appropriate for the proposed uses.

C. Suitability of the site for the proposed uses(s).

The site is suitable for the proposed use. The location allows for proximity to off street parking plus four on site parking stalls. The Board of Health has granted a local upgrade septic system permit for the uses. Other utilities, gas, water and electric service are readily available to the site.

D. Adequacy of the provision of open space, its accessibility to the general public, and/or its association with adjacent or proximate open areas.

The site has and allows for direct access to Sweatt Park.

E. Adequacy of pedestrian access to buildings and between public spaces.

The site abuts the public sidewalk and abuts Sweatt Park.

F. Impact of the visual character of the immediate area and the surrounding neighborhood.

The visual character of the immediate area and surrounding neighborhood will be enhanced by the renovation of the existing building.

G. Preservation of existing historic assets.

The goal of the project is to preserve the existing historic asset.

DESIGN STANDARDS

- A. Context. To ensue development is in harmony with the historic downtown, the design standards for the Highway Commercial District (Section 390-19.9) for proportions, roof design, scale of structure, facades, etc. should be addressed.

The goal of the project is to preserve the existing historic asset.

B. Entrances.

- (1) For visibility and accessibility, all primary commercial building entrances shall be visible from the right-of-way and the side walk, and shall have an entrance directly accessible from the sidewalk.

The primary building entrance is from Franklin Street.

- (2) Directional signage to the building entrance(s) shall be installed. All entrances are to have sufficient illumination at nighttime.

Directional signage will be installed at the building entrance and the entrances will be lit at nighttime.

C. External materials and appearances

- (1) External building treatments shall relate to and be in harmony with surrounding structures.

The external building treatment will be in harmony with the historic appearance of the building.

- (2) Ground-floor commercial building facades facing streets shall contain transparent windows encompassing a minimum of 35% of the façade surface.

The ground floor facade of the building will match the current historic appearance of the building as the proposal is to renovate the building and not to construct a new building.

- D. Landscaping and sidewalk amenities. To the extent possible, projects shall provide pedestrian-friendly amenities, such as outdoor seating, patios, porches or courtyards. Window boxes are encouraged. Large windows that open up to provide the experience of "open air dining" are encouraged for restaurant uses. Site landscaping shall be maximized and, to the extent possible, native plant materials should be utilized.

The project does provide for outdoor seating, a patio, 1st and 2nd floor porches. Window boxes will be added after construction. Site landscaping is shown on the site plan. As this is a small lot, the owner and or operator of the restaurant may provide additional potted planting along the street side of the building.

E. Pedestrian connectivity

- (1) Pedestrian passages/sidewalks designed to connect developments within the former Crosby Valve/Tyco/FMC site and to the historic downtown are required to promote walkable neighborhoods. These connections may be utilized to decrease the amount of required parking up to 5% at the Planning Board's discretion as part of a special permit approval.

The layout provides for walking through the site to Sweatt Park.

- (2) Surface parking lots and parking structures shall provide pedestrian walkways and connections to the sidewalk system.

The parking surface has direct access to the Town sidewalk.

F. Vehicle and bicycle parking

- (1) Parking area shall be located behind or beside the buildings wherever possible. On-street parking is encouraged. Clear and attractive pedestrian access shall be provided between rear parking areas and building entries.

Parking is located behind the building. The site has direct access to on-street parking. The building can be accessed from the rear parking through either the front or rear of the building.

- (2) Parking structures shall be designed to be compatible with adjacent buildings and architecture.

There are no parking structures associated with the building renovation.

- (3) Bicycle parking shall be provided for all new developments.

This is not a new development, however bicycle parking is proposed at the front of the renovated building.

- (4) Any property owner required to have bicycle parking may elect to establish a shared bicycle parking facility with any other property owner within the same block to meet these requirements.

This option will be explored with the other owners within the block.

G. Sustainable building design. It is desirable that new buildings incorporate green building techniques (such as those outlined by the U.S. Green Building Council) to the maximum extent feasible.

This project is not for a new building. However, the applicant will pursue all available and economically feasible green building techniques for this building renovation.

H. Environmentally friendly design/low-impact development (LID). It is desirable that site design incorporate low-impact development (LID) techniques to the maximum extent possible in order to achieve the following goals: maintain water balance on the site, reduce impervious cover, preserve natural areas, treat stormwater locally and integrate wastewater treatment into the site design.

Given the size of the site and the requirements of the State regulation (Title 5) to upgrade the septic system, there is no available opportunity to incorporate LID techniques in the site design.

I. Historic structures

(1) Existing historic structures on the site shall be preserved and renovated for use as part of the development.

The goal of the project is to preserve the historic structure.

(2) Any alteration of or addition to an existing historic structure shall employ materials, colors and textures as well as massing, size, scale and architectural features that are compatible with the original structure. Distinctive features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize an historic property shall be preserved. Awnings and canopies shall be compatible with the architectural style of the building.

The architectural plans for the renovation are being developed by a highly skilled Professional Architect who has experience regarding the renovation and restoration of historic structures. The proposal is to employ materials, colors and textures as well as massing, size and scale and architectural features that are compatible with the original structure. All distinctive features of the building when possible will be preserved.

ARTICLE VII – SITE PLAN SUBMISSION

A. Site plan contents

1) Plan name, property boundaries, true north point, date scale and zoning district, along with any zoning district boundaries and overlay districts (i.e., Aquifer Protection, Watershed and Floodplain).

All are shown on the plan where applicable.

2) Names and addresses of the present record owner(s), the applicant, and the architects, engineers and/or surveyors who prepared the plan.

All are shown on the plan.

3) Certificates and seals of the architects, engineers, and/or surveyors who prepared the plan, together with a certificate that all surveying conforms to the requirements of the Massachusetts Land Court.

The site plan is stamped by the surveyor and the engineer who produced the plan. The building renovation plan is not stamped as it would be premature to produce final architect drawings at this time.

4) Suitable space to record the action of the Planning Board and the signatures of the members of the Board on each sheet of the site plan, and the date of such signature.

There is space on the site plan for Planning Board endorsement.

5) Existing conditions:

(a) Existing contours at two-foot intervals.

Shown on the plan

(b) Significant soil types.

Shown on the plan

(c) Water systems (including standing surface water, brooks or streams, the direction of drainage, wetlands, and the 100 year flood elevation).

Not applicable with the exception of direction of drainage which is shown on the plan.

(d) Trees exceeding five inches in diameter or the perimeter of heavily wooded areas.

Shown on the plan.

(e) Stone walls, fences, building.

Not applicable with the exception of buildings which are shown on the plan.

(f) Rock ridges or outcroppings.

Not applicable.

6) A locus plan of all land within 1,500 feet of any part of the tract and showing:

(a) All dwellings and principle buildings.

Shown on the plan.

(b) The land use of each lot.

Not shown on the plan. This is a multi use area.

(c) Lot and right of way.

Shown on the plan.

(d) Zoning district boundaries.

Shown on the plan.

(e) Recording easements abutting the tract.

Not applicable.

(f) Public facilities, such as conservation of recreation land, footpaths, bicycle paths, or streets.

Shown on the plan.

7) A utilities analysis showing:

(a) The location and size of the Town's existing water mains, fire hydrants, sanitary sewers, and storm drains relevant to the project.

Shown on the plan.

(b) The proposed location and approximate size of all utilities to be constructed on the site and their proposed connection to the Town's utilities, and any special features, such as culverts, or pumping stations, that might affect the ability of the Town to service the development.

Shown on the plan.

8) Plan prepared by a registered architect including building elevations and one or more perspective colored renderings indicating materials to be used.

Included with the submission.

9) Proposed landscape plan prepared by a registered landscape architect.

Not included with the submission. A waiver has been requested.

10) A table showing:

(a) Total land area.

Shown on the plan.

(b) Developable site area.

Not applicable.

(c) Common or usable open space, if any.

Not applicable.

(d) Site coverage of buildings.

Shown on the plan.

(e) Area covered with impervious surface.

Shown on the plan.

(f) Ratio of impervious surface to total land area.

Shown on the plan.

(g) The number of off street parking spaces and if applicable, loading bays.

Shown on the plan.

B. The approving authority may in any particular case, where such action is in the public interest and not inconsistent with the intent and purpose of this bylaw, waive strict compliance with the foregoing requirements. Any such waiver shall require a written request from the applicant and majority vote of the approving board.

The applicant is seeking certain waivers as the project is essentially the restoration And renovation of an existing historic building.

Site plan decision and enforcement

A. The Board may approve, modify, or reject the site plan within 140 days from the date of submission. The Board shall issue a written statement of reasons for its decision and shall endorse the plan. A decision to approve or modify the site plan shall require an affirmative vote of four members.

B. Criteria for site plan approval. The Board shall grant approval for a lot or lots included therein if and when the Board finds that the applicant has submitted a complete site plan application for such lot or lots as provided in Section 390-7.2. The Planning Board may impose reasonable conditions in any such site plan Approval as it deems appropriate, including, but not limited to, conditions relative to:

1) The provision of adequate stormwater retention on the site.

Explanation regarding added impervious surface

The area behind the building to the rear property line will be location of the new leach field that has been designed and approved in accordance with Title 5 requirements. The area on the north side of the building will be the location of the new septic tanks. Title 5 regulations require that stormwater drywells be located at least 10 feet from septic tanks and 25 feet from leach fields. MA DEP Storm Water Regulations require that stormwater drywells be located at least 75 feet from leach fields, and at least 10 feet from building foundations that are above the drywell in elevation and 100 feet for foundations that are below the drywell in elevation. Therefore, it is impossible to install any groundwater infiltration or recharge devices at the site without violating Massachusetts Regulations.

However, even without the recharge component in the drainage design, the design is such that groundwater quality will not be degraded as the runoff will pass over a large area of grass and landscaping before infiltrating into the ground.

2) The provision of adequate access on the site for public safety vehicles.

The site provides adequate access for public safety vehicles.

3) Minimizing disturbance of existing natural features.

The site is very small. Some existing trees will need to be removed in order to upgrade the existing septic system as required by State (Title 5) regulations.

4) Minimizing air and water pollution.

Both the heating system and the sewage disposal system will be upgraded to meet existing regulations which will improve both air and water quality.

5) Facilitating collection and disposal of solid wastes.

The site will be served by on site trash and recycling dumpsters.

6) Maximizing pedestrian and vehicular safety and convenience within the site, and between the site and adjoining ways.

The site improvements allow for safe pedestrian and vehicular access.

7) Minimizing the visibility of parking, storage or outdoor service areas from public view, and minimizing glare from headlights and facility lighting, through planting and other buffers.

All parking, storage and outdoor service areas are at the rear of the lot.

8) Minimizing intrusion of light from stationary fixtures on the site into adjoining properties.

All lighting fixtures will direct light downward and not toward adjoining property.

9) The character or architectural appearances and arrangement of buildings.

The project will renovate and restore the existing historic building.

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

(1) Natural environment

(a) Air pollution

The heating system will be upgraded to meet current regulations thus improving the quality of the air emissions.

(b) Water, including quantity of drainage and pollution control

The on site sewage treatment and disposal system will be upgraded in accordance with current state and local regulations which include a nitrogen removal prior to discharge.

(c) Noise pollution

The site will not generate any significant levels of noise after construction. There are no sensitive receptors near the site.

(d) Land including the quantity of earth to be removed from the site.

There will be no earth removed from the site.

(e) Wildlife

The site has been developed since 1853.

The area is not an area of significant wildlife habitat.

(2) Man-made environment

(a) Surrounding use

The restoration and renovation of the existing building is compatible with the surrounding business and park use.

(b) Density

The restoration and renovation of the existing will not have an adverse impact on the density of the site.

(c) Zoning

The restaurant and business uses are allowed in the VZA district. Requests for Dimensional relief have been filed with the Wrentham Zoning Board of appeal.

(d) Architecture

The project is to renovate and restore the existing historic building. The architecture and building appearance will remain unchanged as much as is economically feasible.

(3) Public facilities

(a) Water supply and distribution

The building will be reconnected to the 16" watermain in Franklin Street. A new 6" fire service line will be brought into the building for fire protection. Both pressure and volume of water in the 16" water main are adequate to serve the renovated building and proposed uses.

(b) Storm drain facilities

There are no drainage facilities at this site. All stormwater runs to the municipal park at the rear of the site. Changes in the rates and volumes of runoff from the site will be minimal. The applicant is committed to work with the Town regarding alternative mitigation as State regulations block normal mitigation practices, ie stormwater recharge, from being installed at the site.

(c) Sewage disposal facilities

An upgraded on site sewage treatment and disposal system for the site has been approved by the Wrentham Board of Health.

(d) Solid waste disposal, including trash and garbage

Solid waste will be deposited into on site dumpsters. A private hauler will remove The trash and recyclables on a routine basis.

(e) Traffic facilities

The site itself is not a concern for increased or unsignalized traffic. There are Only 4 parking stalls to be constructed at the site. The site is on State Numbered Route 140 within proximity of State Numbered Route 1A. The restaurant use draws traffic during off peak hours. Parking will be either on street or in nearby municipal parking lots. A parking study has been submitted to the Town in order to identify and parking impacts and mitigation.

(f) Electric power

The renovated and restored building will connect to the existing power grid in Wrentham Center. The power grid is designed for commercial uses.

(g) Gas

The renovated and restored building will connect to the existing gas main in Franklin Street. There will be no impact to the gas system as a result of this connection.

(4) Community services

(a) Schools

The restoration of the commercial building will have no impact on local schools.

(b) Recreation

The restoration of the commercial building will have no impact on recreation.

(c) Police

The restoration of the commercial building will have no impact of police.

(d) Fire

The restoration of the commercial building will include a fire suppression system which is certainly a positive upgrade with regard to Fire Protection for Wrentham Town center.

(e) Public works

The restoration of the commercial building will have no impact on the Public Works.

(5) Economic considerations

(a) Cost-benefit ratio to the Town of Wrentham

Though hard to quantify at this time, the restoration and renovation of the commercial building will most significantly increase the value of the property. The commercial building requires no or little community services as listed above. Therefore, tax revenue to the Town from the property will increase significantly while the cost of community service for the site remains the same.

(b) Time schedule

Construction is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2023 and is expected to be completed in 12 to 18 months.

MITIGATION OF ADVERSE IMPACTS

Where significant adverse impacts are identified by the applicant or reviewing board, the Community and Environmental assessment must propose an acceptable program of mitigation.

No significant impacts have been identified.

CONCLUSION

The existing building at the site was built in 1853 according to the Mass Historical Commission. The current use is an antique shop and the building is in need of renovation. The size of the building, the proximity of the site to the Wrentham Town Center and the allowed uses in the VZA zoning district allow an economic opportunity to add to and renovate the building in order to create a structure of high prominence that will attract residents and visitors to the Town Center.

The economic need for the Village hall project in downtown Wrentham is multi-layered. As a building itself, it is a dilapidated, 19th Century building that requires significant improvements and updates to show its original intended beauty. A restored Village Hall will be an aesthetic gem in the heart of town and provide public good to all who can enjoy visiting in an ADA and code compliant environment. In addition, the Town of Wrentham is in need of new and creative methods to spur economic development and activity, and Village hall has the potential to be the driver for that. With plans for a mixed use building, the developer will make the building available for public use, including makerspace and collaborative workspace in her plans. This will help diversify the Town of Wrentham's commercial offerings while also making them more accessible for the general public, not only to patronize, but also to "set up shop".

The Village hall Project at 13 Franklin Street in Wrentham will generate a variety of economic benefits, each one centered around the project's core vision of making a beautiful and useful space for the good of the community. Just as the building itself is multi leveled, so too is its impact in the Town. A revitalized Village Hall will attract new business and provide a collaborative space where a diverse workforce and consumer base can engage in commerce and creativity. When it realizes its potential, Village Hall will decrease blight and serve as a model for further downtown development by inspiring other prospective business owners to locate in a commercially viable neighborhood. With its proximity to local thoroughfares and major highways, ample green and recreational space, and historic charm with modern amenities, downtown Wrentham is poised to prosper, as Village Hall can be the impetus to bring about significant change, steering economic development in a positive direction.

In addition to these outcomes, the owner of Village Hall also anticipates a rejuvenated interest in restoring historic properties and bring gems of Wrentham's past back to serve as modern vessels of business, housing, and recreation. This project will be pleasing to preservationists and fans of local history and will be a conspicuous sign of progress to those who may otherwise have been unfamiliar with the town and its notable historic structures. While looking towards the future of economic development and modern viability, the Village Hall Project remains respectfully steeped in local tradition and history.