

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP
PLANNING AND DESIGN COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING
Conference Room B
Town Hall**

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

MINUTES

Members: Paul Aho, Sondra Astor-Stave, Steve Bacon, Laurie Best (via Skype in Australia), Karla Fox, Manny Haidous, Jon Hand, Chris Kueffner, Peter Millman, and Betsy Paterson

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm

Guests: Linda Painter, Director of Planning and Development, Town of Mansfield; Howard Kaufman, Lou Marquet, and Debbie Lastro with LeylandAlliance; Jeffrey Resetco with EdR; Yaohua Yu and Bobby Finta from Humphreys & Partners Architects

1. Call to Order

Steve Bacon called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Approval of Minutes from February 18, 2014

Betsy Paterson made a motion to approve the February 18, 2014 minutes. Peter Millman seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

4. Review of DRAFT Storrs Center Phase 2 Plans

Mr. Bacon said that Howard Kaufman and Lou Marquet from LeylandAlliance, and Jeffrey Resetco from EdR, had presented the first iteration of plans for Phase 2 (Wilbur Cross Way) at the February 18, 2014 meeting. He said that March 18 was a critical meeting date for the Committee as it will review the preliminary zoning permit application before it goes to Town Director of Planning and Development Linda Painter.

Jeffrey Resetco introduced Yaohua Yu and Bobby Finta from Humphreys & Partners Architects. He said that he and the team from Leyland and Humphreys had incorporated some of the comments received from the Committee at its last meeting. Mr. Resetco said that Humphreys is well respected in the multi-family builder community.

Mr. Resetco passed out updated versions of the Phase 2 draft elevations. The goal is to try and create a new neighborhood on Wilbur Cross Way so that it fits well with the rest of Storrs Center but also can stand alone.

Yaohua Yu described the layout of Phase 2 with its five buildings with some at 5 stories and some at 4 stories. There will be some residential on the first floor in buildings closest to the transportation center.

Mr. Resetco said that the team had met with Mike Nintean, Town Director of Dept. of Building and Housing Inspection, to review the approach to building plans for Phase 2.

Mr. Resetco said that the VS-2 South elevation had received the most comments from the Committee at its last meeting. He said the team revised the colors and added stronger roof lines.

Lou Marquet said he will bring samples of building colors and materials to the March 18 Committee meeting.

Manny Haidous asked if the retaining wall between the proposed VS-2 and Storrs Commons will remain. Lou Marquet replied in the affirmative and said utility meters will be put in on the side of the VS-2 South building where Storrs Commons is located.

Jon Hand asked if windows could be varied in height. Mr. Resetco said that was discussed but they wanted to retain the ceiling height that they have in the current apartments. The larger windows are desired by the tenants.

Mr. Yao and Mr. Finta said that the windows will be varied across buildings and that the window trims will be different.

Peter Millman said he continued to have some questions about the VS-2 South elevation. He said he likes the VS-5 East and VS-6 East elevations. With VS-2 South, he sees unrelated elevations put together. Mr. Millman thought the elevations on VS-2 East and West were more appealing. Mr. Hand offered a different view, saying he liked the VS-2 elevations.

With respect to VS-2 South, Chris Kueffner and Mr. Millman expressed concern about the two facades that are each one in from the end of the perspective (facades "B" and "D" as designated in the meeting).

Mr. Kueffner thought a penthouse apartment would be appealing to a different clientele than is currently renting the apartments. Mr. Resetco said a penthouse is not currently being planned.

Mr. Resetco confirmed that the siding on the "C" building will be similar to the siding on Storrs Automotive. It will be batten material.

Mr. Resetco referred to the VS-5 East and VS-6 East elevations. Mr. Hand asked why there was not raised siding on all sections of this building. Mr. Resetco said there will be steel in lower bays which makes this more difficult.

Mr. Kueffner asked if any of the roofs will be sloped. Mr. Marquet replied in the negative except for VS-2 which will have slightly sloped roofs.

Mr. Millman asked where the entry to VS-2 will be located. Mr. Resetco said the entrances will be on the east and west – on Storrs Road and Royce Circle.

Mr. Bacon asked if there are any construction logistical issues with respect to the close location of VS-2 to the 1244 Storrs Road (Storrs Commons) property. Mr. Marquet said the VS-2 building will be 15 feet from the 1244 Storrs Road building.

Mr. Kueffner, with verbal support from Paul Aho and Mr. Haidous, asked about producing something playful and creative with one of the buildings on Wilbur Cross Way. It would be a landmark and/or a surprise element someone would come upon when walking down the road. Mr. Yu suggested doing some sort of feature in the alley between VS-8/9 and VS-10. Mr. Kueffner liked that idea.

Mr. Marquet said that VS-10 has not been changed much since the last iteration. Mr. Yu said they may want to play up the corner more.

Mr. Bacon asked if there was any room for a pocket park on the south side of VS-10 and Educational Playcare. Mr. Marquet said there is not room there but noted that the nearby residential area will have a green area adjacent to Wilbur Cross Way.

Mr. Kueffner asked if an interesting feature could be placed in the sidewalks. Mr. Marquet thought something might be able to be done in the alley and asked for other ideas. Mr. Kaufman asked if the Partnership could help with art in the alley.

Mr. Kaufman said the team is continuing to look at the parking options for residents on Wilbur Cross Way.

5. Update on Storrs Center

Mr. Kaufman said the Leyland team is preparing material to market for-sale residences to the public. They are looking at 3 story condos with an elevator and a variety of townhouse options. He referenced photos on the Partnership's website from the presentation given to the Town Council on February 24. A kick-off meeting with the public is scheduled for the first week in April. He encouraged Committee members to submit any possible buyers to Cynthia van Zelm.

Mr. Kaufman said Price Chopper is still planning a June opening.

With respect to the town square, Mr. Marquet said work needs to wait until the ground thaws so as not to disrupt the integrity of the site. Also, the temperature has to be consistently above 35 degrees for the pavers to be made in New York. All foundations and most infrastructure are in place.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 pm. *Minutes prepared by Cynthia van Zelm*