

**PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF WILLOUGHBY
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 13, 2013
SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES**

PRESENT: B. Fiala; C. Cox; Ken Kary, G. Merhar, Vice Chairman

ABSENT: B. Irvine, Chairman

OTHERS: Mike Germano, Ass't. Law Director; Jim Sayles, City Engr.; Janice Lipscomb, Econ. Dev. Mgr; Richard Smith, Chief Bdg & Zoning Inspector; Jerry Ranally, Ward 3 Councilman; Bob Carr, Ward 4 Councilman; Judy Smalley, DRB Chairman; Jeannie Gifford, DRB Board; John Perkovich, Vice Chairman, DRB Board; Al DiFranco, DRB Board; Greg Patt, BZA Board; Betty A. Nardelli, Secretary

Vice Chairman Jerry Merhar called the special meeting to order at 6:00

**PLANNING COMMISSION /
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

Vine St.

**Resid. Devel.-
Next to Ct. House**

Bob Fiala led off the discussion saying that he suggested having this meeting with the Design Review Board to discuss the City owned property between the Jehovah Witnesses assembly hall and the Court House on Vine St. Mr. Fiala requested everyone to look outside of the box and not follow the context of downtown Willoughby but to look at something different. Mr. Fiala said that this parcel is important because it will set the tone for whatever happens to the balance of the Master Plan, multi-family and what will go at the rear of 2nd St. Mr. Fiala said that Council said that this parcel is important and what goes here will set the bar for what happens with the rest of downtown.

John Wagner, Architect, and Bill Martin of Barrington Homes presented this discussion for a proposed 4-story building with 60 units for multi-family residential with one and two bedroom apartments for the top floors and 9 units for commercial use for the ground floor with 62 parking spaces on a City owned parcel located between the Court House and the Jehovah Witnesses assembly

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hall. Mr. Wagner presented a conceptual drawing of the proposed building, a conceptual site plan and an aerial view of downtown Willoughby. The drawing of the building shows each elevation at staggering heights and of different colors. Mr. Wagner said that as you look out the window you aren't looking at just a roof but about two feet of it in response to Judy Smalley's question. Mr. Wagner said that there is also parking on Vine St. and in The Court House parking lot (after Court hours). Parking is calculated using 1.03 parking spaces per one unit.

Mr. Wagner said the building consists of metal, masonry and prefab in response to Vice Chairman Merhar's question. Mr. Wagner said that the maximum height of the building is 50' in response to Judy Smalley's question. Mr. Wagner said the intention is to make the building the same height as the Court House.

Vice Chairman Merhar said that the building fits in at the West end of Willoughby and the surrounding area and this project is needed to bring in people to live in downtown Willoughby.

Chuck Cox, John Perkovich, Jeannie Gifford and Al DiFranco said they like the building but Mr. DiFranco said it really comes down to materials. Mr. Perkovich said he especially likes the site plan but the materials are very important. He would like the addresses of sites that were done so he can visit the sites. Jeannie Gifford said that she likes it and currently she lives in a historic home in downtown Willoughby.

Judy Smalley said that this property is part of the entry way coming into town and into the Historic district. Judy Smalley said that the materials are the main thing to make it work, that the concept is great but the metal sticks out like a sore thumb. She said that she doesn't want that to be their downtown. Also the glass across the bottom of the building makes it look contemporary. She doesn't think the historic district is the place for this. Judy also said that the building being close to the street is another issue.

Ken Kary said that the building looks too contemporary especially the facade and entry way. He has a hard time accepting the way it looks now. It looks like sheet metal covering the facade to protect it from the elements.

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Vice Chairman Merhar said that they need to be more imaginative on the entry way and the building front which is a continuous row of glass windows. He thinks that awnings would look nice on the entry way. Vice Chairman Merhar said we're all in agreement with the concept but it's more about the detail and how it's made to blend in with the rest of down town Willoughby because of the materials. Vice Chairman Merhar said that presently the downtown buildings have different recesses which adds dimension to the building fronts. He suggested adding dimension to the conceptual building rather than making it flat.

Bob Fiala asked Mr. Wagner to bring pictures of other projects that were done and to show them to the Planning Commission and to the Design Review Board at another meeting. Mr. Wagner said that they have done projects like this in Cincinnati and Cleveland.

Vice Chairman Merhar said that there will be another work session in two weeks (June 27, 2013) and asked Mr. Wagner and Mr. Martin to bring pictures.

No action was taken on this discussion.

There being no further business the special meeting closed at 6:50 p.m.

Gerald Merhar, Vice Chairman

Betty A. Nardelli, Secretary