

From: Toni Gold  
To: Kenyon Street  
Subject: WECA Zoning Meeting for 31 Kenyon Street  
Date: Tue, 20 Mar 2007

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Hello, All,

This is just to catch you all up on Thursday's meeting of the WECA Zoning Committee with Scott Brody and Evan Berman regarding their proposal for 31 Kenyon Street. Victoria and Doug also attended, as did Sally Taylor and Phil Will from FAA. John Gale chaired, and Dorothy Buckley dropped in towards the end.

I was disappointed with the proposal; you should get Victoria's and Doug's opinions, too. They proposed seven \$150,000, two-bedroom, one and one-half bath condominiums of about 1100 square feet each. The condominiums are three-story, modular (factory-built) townhouses, raised one half story, with a one-car garage, and and steps and an entry door into the unit on the front facade of each one. The townhouses were in two groups -- of four and three -- with about ten feet between the two groups. All the townhouses faced south (towards Farmington Avenue) The driveway was along the south boundary of the lot. There are a total of 14 parking spaces counting the garage spaces, seven of which are at the back of the lot (I think). They didn't have a site plan or a street elevation (showing the relationship to adjacent buildings), so it was a little hard to be sure.

What fronted on Kenyon was one side of the end townhouse, with a few small windows in it, and no entries. It was set at the building line (that is, about even with the apartment house next door). This was the most disappointing feature of plan. Because of the raised nature of the units, the foundation wall facing Kenyon is about eight feet high (they said they would stucco it.) They also offered to build a lower wall -- at the sidewalk for decoration, I think -- and said we could choose the materials. The buildings are wood frame, covered in vinyl siding.

Those of us who saw the design for this site that was presented in 2002 by Carlos Mouta (which the Committee recommended that WECA support, which WECA did), generally seemed to think it was much better than the present proposal, and John said so quite directly to the developers. The entire meeting was cordial, and they agreed to go back and re-think the proposal.

As an additional point of interest, in the course of the discussion, they indicated that they have talked to the owner of the Kinko's-Dollar Store property about buying that property too, but the owner was not interested (he said he has "plans" for it). In connection with that possibility, however, they had been told by the city zoning administrator that an adjacent residentially-zoned property could be converted to the same zoning as a commercially-zoned property (and therefore used for parking or any other permitted commercial use) if the property lines were erased and the parcels combined. I am skeptical of this myself, but not positive. I plan to check the zoning code.

Toni

From: Doug Unfried  
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Neighbors:

I agree with Toni's assessment that Carlos Mouta's 2002 building design was more attractive. It was

however more dense with eight units and only had 1.5 parking places for each unit. Scott and Evan's current proposal has only 7 units and 18 parking places: 7 garages at ground level (1 under each townhouse), 7 parking places (one in front of each garage), and 4 guest parking places in the back of the lot.

Each townhouse has its own entrance to the left of the garage with an inside staircase to the second floor containing a kitchen in the front facing Farmington Ave., a living/family room in the back, and a half bath. The third floor has a master bedroom in the front, a second bedroom in the back, and a full bath. Each unit has its own heating unit, central air and its own laundry. Each town house is roughly 15 feet wide and 32 feet deep. And the floor plan also shows a second floor deck off the back.

The big downside to this proposal is the unattractive end of the building facing Kenyon St. The end of the building has an exposed first floor cement wall (the side of the one car garage). The second and third floor is all vinyl siding except for a small window on each floor to the left and a double window in the living room to the right (second floor) and another small window to the right in the second bedroom (third floor.)

This lot (65 feet wide and 160 feet deep) is very difficult to build on and still make a profit. My personal preference is that it doesn't become a parking lot for the Kinko/Dollar Store building.

Doug Unfried  
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