



**CITY OF GLOUCESTER  
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS  
3 POND ROAD, GLOUCESTER MA 01930**

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**  
Remote Participation Special Meeting Minutes  
October 22, 2020

**Board Members Present:**

Joseph Parisi III, Chairman  
Catherine A. Schlichte, Esquire, Vice Chair  
Adria Pratt, Esquire, Secretary  
Michael C. Nimon  
Peter Cannavo -Late

**Also in Attendance:**

Bill Sanborn, Building Commissioner  
Alison Battle, Clerk

The Chair introduces the members and gives the public an overview of the proceedings that pertain to all open hearings.

**New Business:**

**71 Middle St.**

Petition of Young Men's Christian Association of the North Shore seeking Special Permit Comprehensive Permit Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 40 B, secs 20-23. Variance Comprehensive Permit Pursuant to M.G.L. 40B, sects 20-23 to allow demolition of the building and construction of a new building with 44 apartments for seniors age 62 years and over.

Stephanie Kiefer of Smolak and Vaughan, LLP, 21 High St. #30, North Andover, MA 01845, Legal advisor to the Board walks the Board through the process of a 40B.

The Chair notes that Peter Cannavo has joined the meeting and that there is now 5 members present.

Greg Cademartori, Planning Director for the City of Gloucester, informs the Board that the filing for this project was distributed to the municipal boards, staff and commissions that this project would have normally gone before. They were also encouraged to attend the meeting or listen to this evenings recording. He hopes that the Board will receive a response from them by the end of this month. He informs the Board of a pre-application received by the City staff over the summer in which the staff had the opportunity to modify the project. There are plans for an additional staff review meeting next week to give the staff the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the revised project. So far the Applicant has been to the Affordable House Trust, the funding side of the CPC Committee and the Historic Commission.

The Chair notes that he has already received a response from the Fire Department and questions the process in place for everyone to receive information.

Mr. Cademartori explains the process that has already been put in place. Everything will be put on the public drive.

The Chair reads the only petition before the Board this evening.

Deb Eliason, Eliason Law Offices, 63 Middle St. Gloucester, is the legal and zoning enforcement for this project.

Atty. Eliason shares her screen and introduces the project team and explains their part in the project, the background of the proposed project and chronology of why they are before the Board. Atty. Eliason gives the members an overview of the project program, a legal overview of the permit application process, explains the project design components and a summary of why they believe that this project meets the legal standards and benefits the Gloucester Community.

Atty. Eliason introduces the people that will be speaking this evening.

- YMCA is the owner and developer of this project.
- Chris Lovasco is the President and CEO of the YMCA.
- Tara Mizrahi Principal and Vice President of the development consultant, Affirmative Consultants, Inc.
- April Ferrara is the Senior Project Manager for this project for Meridian.
- Jen Hocherman is the Architect for S.V. Designs.

Chris Lovasco, 71 Middle St. informs the Board of the background and history of the YMCA and discusses why they do the work that they do and their vision. Mr. Lovasco discusses the development of the Fuller School site which will include 30 affordable housing units and a new YMCA and the proposed site that will include 44 affordable housing units for senior citizens.

Tara Mizrahi, discusses the timeline of the YMCA's move from Middle St. to the new site in Gloucester Crossing and breaks down the affordability levels for the (44) 1 bedroom affordable units for seniors 66+ years old that they propose to put on the site. She states that these will be Section 8 subsidies, Estate subsidies and Section 8 subsidies for Veteran's. The large number of elderly on the waitlist for other affordable housing units in the City are discussed. Ms. Mizrahi discusses the services that they plan to offer onsite and the membership and transportation offered to the new YMCA site. They would like to complete construction on this site by April 2023, which includes a 14 month construction period.

Deborah Eliason, 63 Middle St. discusses the purpose of the 40B. She states that 40% must be affordable. This project will be 100% affordable.

April Ferraro, discusses the existing conditions of the site while referencing the plans being viewed by all participants. She discusses the connections to utilities, drainage and sewer, runoff and the retaining wall. The grading plan is discussed as well as outdoor space. She informs the Board of her discussions with the City Engineer regarding stone water.

Jen Hocherman walks the Board through site plans/floor plans. This will be a 3 floor building with outdoor courtyard space with a garage sunk underground. The elevation of Middle St. and Hancock St. is discussed in comparison with the other buildings in the area. Ms. Hocherman discusses, awnings and different façades and materials that they have chosen for the different sides of the building, as well as, plantings, courtyard elevation, area traffic and parking.

Atty. Eliason summarizes the legal standards met. Middle St. LLC is controlled by the YMCA and the YMCA is the current owner of the site. She also discusses the funding that they have applied to the State for.

The Chair calls for questions by the Board.

Ms. Schichte confirms the numbers of support as; 700,000 community support, 200,000 Housing trust, 200,000 CPA and the N.S Home Funds

The Chair states his comments and concerns with the project, noting the oversight of the 40 B currently being built on Main St in the old Cameron's building, and the effects the neighboring buildings and store owners have had to endure due to runoff. He would like to see these issues addressed in the construction plans for this project as this project runs downhill and could negatively effect the buildings on Main St.

Ms. Schlichte would like to look into the design elements more closely to make sure that they fit into the neighborhood.

Ms. Hocherman will submit color images of the building for a better view of their plans.

Mr. Nimon states that he is not a fan of the shed dormers alongside the A-frame dormers and discusses them with Ms. Hocherman.

The Chair states that a traffic study was submitted and asks Mr. Cademartori to explain where the peers review will come into this process. Mr. Cademartori suggests that the ZBA Members view the HDC meeting held a couple of weeks ago and he states that he expects them to provide their formal comments to the Board in advance of the next meeting.

Deb Eliason speaks to the Chairs questions.

The Chair informs the Applicants that the Members will be interested on hearing more on the design and materials at the next meeting.

Ms. Schlichte asks why they decided to go 100% senior housing and Tara Mizrahi and Mr. Lovasco answer that they did explore different markets groups, however, they still have the capability to add Veteran's units as long as they still meet the other requirements and up to 70% Gloucester units.

The Chair establishes the next meeting dates for this application.

Mayor Sefatia Romeo Theken discusses how they came to this project. She discusses the difference between Affordable Housing vs. Section 8 Housing in regards to the Cameron's project and how they almost lost that opportunity. She feels that this is the best fit for the seniors of Gloucester. She discusses the 4 year wait to get into the Gloucester Housing system.

Chris Lovasco responds to the Mayor's question, what they are going to do with the old Thompkin's building stating that it is a separate project that they will begin to plan once this one is underway.

The Chair and Atty. Eliason discusses some housekeeping for the next meeting

Mr. Sanborn corrects the architect on the site plans setbacks in the rear yard. He has questions regarding the retaining wall, the Elevator size requirements, the garage doors and a man door. He

informs the Applicants that the City will send the plans out for a third party review before a decision is made.

Mr. Sanborn would like to know what is in the ground on Hancock St. and how they will manage their site. He also informs them that they can never block Middle St. as it is an emergency access street. This should all be presented in a plan during this process.

Mr. Sanborn also has concern that the courtyard will not get any as sunlight.

Tara Mizrahi will submit a sun study for the next meeting. Best part of day 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM it will get good light.

Tara Mizrahi confirms that Mr. Sanborn is requesting a Construction Management Plan approved as part of the Comprehensive Permit Approval and request that they be allowed to include a list of what he is looking for added into the approved plans without a full CMP.

Mr. Sanborn states that he is looking for the following so that the City doesn't have to negotiate issue, with the contractor that arise during construction.

- They cannot ever block Middle St.
- The Storage of Materials
- The unloading of Materials
- Parking of contractors/workers vehicles
- How the existing building is being demolished
- How the trailer trucks will be taking the demolished building out of town
- How the trailers trucks will deal with downtown traffic.

Mr. Lovasco is in agreement with Mr. Sanborn's listed items and states that they will put them into their contractor bid so that they don't get hit later in the construction of the project. He feels that the more that they can get specific in their bid, the least likely of an issue down the road.

The Chair informs Mr. Lovasco that items that are not included in their presentation will likely be listed by the Board as conditions of the decision.

The Chair goes back to Atty. Keifer to see if she has any comment on what was discussed this evening.

Atty. Keifer goes over some housekeeping items for the Board. She suggests that they keep the upcoming holidays in mind to be cognizant of member absences to insure that there is always a quorum.

Ms. Schlichte moves to continue this hearing to November 5, 2020 at 7 PM.

Mr. Nimon seconds

All in favor, 5-0

**Motion to adjourn was made at: 8:56 PM**

**Motion by:** Ms. Schlichte

**Second by:** Mr. Nimon