

Newton Center for Active Living (NewCAL) project

NewCAL Working Group Meeting					
Date: Tuesday, May 10, 2022					
Date: Zoom Meeting (online)					
Time: 9:30 AM					
Attendees:					
Working Group		Present	City Staff		Present
Susan Albright	City Councilor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Seth Bai	Veteran's Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sandra Butzel	Community Member	<input type="checkbox"/>	Devra Bailin	Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jayne Colino	Senior Services Dir.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nicole Banks	P&R Commissioner	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jini Fairley	ADA Coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/>	Amanda Berman	Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bea Goldsmith	Community Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Barney Heath	Planning Director	<input type="checkbox"/>
Joan Belle-Isle	COA Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ellen Ishkanian	Mayor's Office	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maureen Lemieux	Chief Financial Officer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Zachery LeMel	Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brooke Lipsitt	Community Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jack Neville	P&R Commission	<input type="checkbox"/>
Norm Meltz	COA Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rachel Sherman	City IT	<input type="checkbox"/>
Josh Morse	Public Buildings Comm.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Linda Walsh	Public Health	<input type="checkbox"/>
Richard Rasala	Community Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tom Rooney	Public Buildings	
Sue Rasala	COA Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Consultants		
John Rice	Community Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tom Murphy	NV5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nancy Scammon	P&R Department	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Melissa Gagnon	NV5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Alex Valcarce	Public Buildings	<input type="checkbox"/>	Frank Kennedy	NV5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Jonathan Yeo	Chief Operating Officer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Joel Bargmann	NV5	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Dan Chen	BH+A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			Ruofeng You	BH+A	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Camile Wimpe	BH+A	<input type="checkbox"/>

Josh Morse opened the online Zoom meeting at 9:30AM.

The intent of this meeting is to further review roof line options as a follow up to the last meeting on April 26 as well as to prepare for the upcoming DRC meeting on May 13.

DRT Meeting and Site Plan Approval

It was noted the project team met with the Development Review Team (DRT) last Wednesday, May 4, as a first step towards design review for 5-58 Site Plan Approval. The DRT is on board with the project design. Comments and questions were based on a curiosity point of view and there were no suggested modifications. Draft letters are being prepared to submit to the City Council Programs and Services and Public Facilities committees in June as a precondition to the ultimate review, and hopefully approval, by the full City Council in July.

It was noted that the DRT will advise, not approve, and will prepare the 5-58 report to be included with the Site Plan Approval packet submitted to the City Council for review and consideration.

Site Plan and Landscape Update

Dan Chen (BH+A) provided an update on the site plan and landscape plan as well as design and exterior materials specifically regarding the stair towers. An existing site plan was presented with annotations indicating current thoughts about which trees would be removed, saved and/or salvaged and replanted. The following highlights were noted:

- Due to the size and configuration of the new building footprint, many of the existing trees will likely need to be removed and replaced with new similar trees although likely of an overall smaller caliper.
- Currently there are 16 trees of varying calipers and varying conditions. Of these 16 trees, the following have been identified as in good condition and in working with the building design, the following determination was made:
 - 11" Yellowwood (corner of Walnut St and Highland Ave.) - would be good to save if feasible, whereas it is not within the footprint of the new building
 - 16" Littleleaf Linden (corner of Walnut St and Walnut Pl) - shall remain and will need to be protected during construction.
 - 4" Stewardia (facing Walnut St) - will be salvaged and replanted
 - 11" and 12" Norway Maples (along west property line) – would be good to save if feasible, protection options will be considered
- Given adjacency to parking lot construction, it may be challenging to save the 11" and 12" Norway maple trees along the west property line. Although the suggestion was made to possibly incorporate some smaller compact parking spaces (8'x16'), the City does not recommend having too many smaller spaces. Locations for the standby generator and transformer need to be considered when factoring in viability of saving these two trees.
- For future site plan presentations, the two (2) Norway Maple trees should be rendered to remain. Funds will be held aside in the project budget to put into the City tree bank in the event the trees do not survive during and after construction.

- Saving trees with a 6" or less caliper will be studied. However, it was noted there will be a 50% chance of survival.
- In the event the Stewardia tree does need to be removed, the tree will be replaced in kind with the same species.
- The question was raised as to whether impervious synthetic turf, at the terrace area along Walnut Street, would hold up to foot traffic and furniture.
- BH+A will work with the landscape architect to incorporate green scape into hardscape at the entry plaza and along Walnut Street, with focus on the following:
 - Pervious hardscape materials at the entry plaza
 - Incorporate green space into hardscape area along Walnut Street to reduce the amount of hardscape from Walnut Street back to the building, such as built-in planters
 - BH+A to study Bram Way for ideas of how to incorporate green to hardscape

Furniture and Site Lighting

Dan Chen presented options for benches as well as tables and chairs. The following highlights were noted:

- Benches recently installed in Newtonville shall be referenced as part of the selection process.
- Benches shall have closed backs to prevent personal items from falling through.
- Benches shall have an intermediate arm support.
- Consideration shall be made to the bench arrangement to encourage conversation.
- Chairs shall have arms.
- Trash bin locations shall be determined.

Images were presented with proposed site lighting. It was noted that site lighting will be highly efficient with complete cut off and no light pollution to neighbors. There will be one (1) pole light with the remainder of exterior lighting mounted to the building. The following comments were noted:

- Snow removal is a potential issue with bollards, in lieu of a light pole
- The following suggestions were noted to address concerns re: too much light:
 - Majority of exterior lights be activated for event use only.
 - Wall sconce quantity may be reduced, and height lowered, at the Walnut Street, Highland Ave and Walnut Place elevations.
 - Occupancy sensors shall be provided, in addition to programmable function.
 - Lighting beneath roof deck could be controlled to be activated only when there is an event.

- Footcandles provided from streetlights will need to be measured at new property line to determine need for wall sconces along Walnut Street elevation
- Lighting shall be determined at the cupola - whether there will be exterior up lighting or interior
- A slide was presented with a diagrammatic parking plan and future garden area (located where uncovered parking is currently proposed) in the event the adjacent property is acquired at some point in the future.
- Trash bins are currently located closer to the kitchen area, as opposed to Highland Ave. Trash bins would be taken out to Highland Ave or Walnut Place for pick up.

Stair Elevation Study

Rendered elevation and perspective images were presented with focus on the two stair towers, at the North (Highland Ave) and West elevations. The following material options were presented:

1. Stone panels - all same size in running bond layout as well as larger panels of varying sizes
2. Brick - all red brick to match the majority of the building
3. Brick and cladding - The cornice line banding between the 2nd and 3rd floors would carry to the stairs, separating materials with red brick below and cladding above. Carrying the horizontal banding across would help to blend the stair tower into the main building.

There was consensus that Option #3 is not preferred as the top of the tower comes up above the roof line and therefore there should be focus on options #1 (stone) and #2 (brick).

A suggestion was made that the Highland Ave and West elevations may be good canvases for public art.

Dates for City Council Programs and Service and Public Facilities are to be determined.

Upcoming Meetings: (all online with remote participation via Zoom):

- 05/11/22 Design Review Committee Meeting – 6:00PM
- 05/19/22 Community Update Meeting – 6:30PM
- 05/24/22 Working Group Meeting – 9:30AM

NV5 shall coordinate with the City of Newton in distributing Zoom info for all meetings noted.