

**New Hartford Architectural Review Committee
TOWN OF NEW HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, November 9, 2022 at 5:30 PM

New Hartford Town Hall, 530 Main Street, 2nd Floor – Sessions Conference Room, New Hartford

PRESENT: Chairman Donna LaPlante, Bill Baxter, Denton Butler, Bob Howson, Wes Marsh, and Zoning Enforcement Officer Mike Lucas.

ABSENT: Alternates Tom Buzzi and Brian Watson.

Chairman Donna LaPlante called the meeting to order at 5:30PM. The meeting was recorded digitally, and copies are available through Town Hall.

1. NEW APPLICATIONS:

A. Dhaval Patel of DHA Properties LLC - Applicant/Owner – Map 36B – Block 119 – Lot 004 – 2 Bridge Street & Map 36B – Block 119 – Lot 005 – 526 Main Street Rebuild New Hartford House.

Phil Doyle of LADA appeared before the committee, accompanied by his client Dhaval Patel of DHA Properties, LLC. Mr. Doyle reported that Architect John Manners of CASLE Corp. had designed the proposed building but as he was ill, would be unable to join the meeting.

Mr. Doyle reminded the committee that the building was lost from fire about a month following Mr. Patel's purchase of it. Mr. Doyle reviewed the history of the building, pointing out that the original structure had dated back to 1860 and noting its 6200 square foot footprint. He noted the oddity of the slope of the two parcels, totaling 10,000 square feet in total, pointing out how the street side of the land is 6' higher than the rear of it.

Mr. Doyle noted that the original shape of the building was a comma, with it being 60' deep in both directions. Mr. Doyle noted that the proposed new building will be filled in, allowing for a center hallway between the units. He explained that it will add 320 square feet to the footprint. Explaining the building had predated zoning, either a variance or a text amendment to the zoning regulations was required. Mr. Doyle reported that a proposal to modify the regulations was being considered by the Planning and Zoning Commission later in the evening on this date.

Mr. Doyle noted the boundary lines of the property and the challenges that will complicate the process, including the necessary permission from the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation to set up scaffolding during the reconstruction. Mr. Butler questioned the distance between the front of the building and the street curb. Mr. Doyle estimated it to be 7' to 8', noting the bump out for the curb that was planned which would also result in the loss of one to two parking spots. He explained the reason behind that bump out in order to make the handicap access work along with also providing better pedestrian safety. Mr. Doyle noted the addition of some landscaping on the Main Street side. He indicated that lighting would also be blended to match what has been used by the Town.

Mr. Doyle noted the building will go from three stories to four stories. He explained that where there had been seven units per floor, eight units per floor were being proposed. Mr. Doyle noted that the residential units on the fourth floor were necessary from an economic perspective for the owner.

Mr. Doyle reviewed why the 20' front yard setback required in the zoning district did not work. He explained how the architect, Mr. Manners, had played with the design to be sure the roof lines of the building complement the surrounding roof lines.

Mr. Doyle noted that dark hunter green trim would be used. Noting the color scheme of Town Hall, Mr. Doyle reported that Mr. Manners had included the same precast concrete color for the window sills and

capstones. Mr. Doyle explained that a first reveal of preliminary plan to the Planning and Zoning Commission had yielded a suggestion from a community member to lighten the color tone of the building's bricks. Mr. Manners had since modified the design to more closely match the color of the brick to that with Town Hall. Discussion ensued.

Ms. LaPlante questioned why the brick was not continued down, explaining that she had been contemplating how the proposed building will look from standing on the sidewalk. She supported the addition of the tree, noting that it was a nice element to break it up. Mr. Doyle noted that he was inclined to suggest an Armstrong Maple tree as it grows upright but does not get huge. Ms. LaPlante shared concerns with the series of glass doors and whether it will seem very modern from the sidewalk perspective. Mr. Doyle indicated that he would consult with Mr. Manners on how he might modify the design to make the building look less long. He noted that Mr. Manners might consider awnings, similar to North Main Street in West Hartford.

Mr. Baxter shared his support for the design. Mr. Marsh supported the design, too, but questioned whether the tree was necessary.

Mr. Doyle reviewed how the proposed reconstruction will unfold with the Planning and Zoning Commission in terms of a text amendment and the special permit. He noted that the design team will return to this board with details on the colors of the banding, the bricks, and the shingles.

Mr. Butler questioned whether there will be a working clock in the tower. Mr. Patel confirmed that it was his preference to have a working clock. Mr. Butler suggested the clock not be a digital one. Mr. Baxter noted that tower really defines the town.

Mr. Baxter indicated that parking may become a problem. He suggested an additional layer of parking be added to the lot behind Town Hall, noting that it could be paid for with ARPA funds. Mr. Howson agreed. Ms. LaPlante recalled Mr. Doyle's plan of the downtown parking revealing that there were adequate spaces in the downtown and that the problem lay more with people trying to park as close as possible to where they are visiting. Mr. Doyle reported 286 public/semi-public parking spots from the church lot down to near the pavilion and back of Town Hall. He noted that his study revealed that the average use was 28%, noting that the study was completed over a course of two weeks at different times.

MOTION: Mr. Butler, Mr. Baxter second, that the Architectural Review Committee enthusiastically embraces this project and accepts the preliminary design with the understanding that the owners will come back to us on comments and suggestions that were made with regard to the façade and the brick and share with us their future plans before we make a final acceptance; *unanimously approved.*

2. MEETING MINUTES - October 6, 2021:

MOTION: Mr. Baxter, Mr. Howson second, to approve the October 6, 2021 minutes; *unanimously approved.*

The meeting was adjourned at 6:22PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Pamela A. Colombie
Recording Clerk