

483 Broadway Neighborhood Meeting Report

Date: April 18, 2024

Time: 6pm

Location: Zoom

Hosted by: John Wood (owner), Tavis Babbitt (presenter), Nathália Quirino (Designer)

Attendees:

Naima Sait (City Councilor Ward 5)

Sarah White (Senior Planner)

Derrick Rice

Pam Touloupoulos

Lidia Rego

Meghan Jendrysik

Mary of 474 Broadway

Meeting Discussion:

Naima Sait provided an overview of the purpose of this meeting.

Sarah White updated all present on the current status of the project in the approval process. She also summarized the need to apply for variances and the ones that have already been granted. Since there has been over a year since the last neighborhood meeting this meeting is now required. This will be a part of the full package review to get to Planning Board review.

Tavis Babbitt shared the current plans showing the design for the building. Site plans (existing & proposed), floor plans (existing & proposed), and elevations/3D renderings of the building were presented. Tavis described the design and changes based on the UDC recommendations. Also discussed is the need to get further hardship variances for less than 12' of sidewalk on Strathmore Rd (currently only 6'), 2' setback from the Strathmore Rd lot line (proposed is 0'), and 30' of commercial space building depth (only 11'-2" max. is available in Somerville). The addition of two parking spaces on Broadway and the additional efforts to improve the green score through a green roof planting area was highlighted. An overview of the proposed spaces and use of those spaces was made as well as a description of the exterior design.

Neighbor comments:

Pam Touloupoulos was concerned about graffiti on the old building, asked if new brick will match the old. Tavis pointed out that we would not be adding any new brick, the old will remain. Also concerned about parking for employees on Strathmore Rd. John Wood has 4 employees that are local and do not have vehicles, so not parking from employees and he parks in the Salvation Army parking lot as approved by them. Sarah did not have any knowledge of others gaining parking permits on Strathmore Rd, she will have to refer to Parking Commission. John said the graffiti has been painted over and he will keep an ongoing effort to counteract that.

Lidia Rego was glad to see something being done on the site. She asked if Is two parking spots enough, and can the spots in the front be kept as is? Tavis responded that the current spots are not compliant as parking spots since they need to be 19' deep and currently only have 18'-6" max. to property line.

Questioned trash storage and removal. John stated that trash or refuse gets taken off-site to his other location for disposal and the cardboard is stored inside until the day of removal.

Pam also had same concern about trash removal, and asked about the other retail space's trash. John said that they will have to have meet the same requirement for trash storage/removal.

Lidia asked how heigh will the roof if equipment be and the noise produced. Tavis mentioned that the units meet the STC requirements for street level decibel levels and John added that these are high efficiency units and are barely on in the winter. Tavis also pointed out the roof height for most 2 1/2 story homes starts at 20' off the ground so the second story would not bee affected by the sound of the units and the 1/2 story would unlikely hear much coming for that distance away. She also asked about the possibility of a marijuana dispensary going lto the second retail space. John said that was not going to happen, there will be no dispensary going into that space. Lidia asked if the second floor was going to be residential? Tavis said that was not in the plans and John confirmed that is not an option here.

Pam asked if the sign was going to be replaced or would be the existing sign? Tavis said that is is the same sign but has been repaired and updated to his business.

Sarah White concluded the meeting summarizing next steps for approvals.