ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 10, 2009
Delancey Hall

Members Present:	**Michael Palma, Chairman** **David Wilklow** **Donald Raskopf** **Edward Isler**
Member Absent:	**Michael Trencher**
Also Present:	**Daniel Gallagher, Optimus Architecture** **Janice Will, Secretary**

Chairman Palma called the meeting to order. He stated that the Board would discuss and comment on the Planning Board application of Salem Hills for construction of an addition to the existing health care facility. He commented that the January 12, 2009 summary memo to the Planning Board from Hillary Smith of MDRA is very good, and the ARB could just go through that memo to cover everything. He added that he did not have many comments.

Ed Isler stated that the proposed addition to Salem Hills will be a big improvement over the existing façade.

The Chairman agreed, adding that he did note that some parking spaces on the plans are unusually placed or shaped.

Dan Gallagher told the Chairman that those are existing parking spaces.

Chairman Palma commented that one parking area requires an easement, and he asked if Optimus will make application for one.

Mr. Gallagher said they will do so. He told the Board that he was asked by the Planning Board to return to the last approved site plan from 1974 to justify everything that is different about the site now.

The Chairman asked if those things wouldn't have been approved along the way.

Mr. Gallagher said they would, but his client is a new owner and does not have a record of how the changes came about/were approved.

The Chairman said the ARB would not be involved in that part of the review. He said there appears to be more parking than required by the Zoning Ordinance, and Mr. Gallagher said there is more.

Chairman Palma said the one over-hanging parking space (B1) should be addressed.

Mr. Isler said Ms. Smith indicated that a more detailed parking plan with clearer handicap notations is called for.

Chairman Palma said directional markings (arrows) for traffic would be a helpful addition also.

With reference to Ms. Smith's comments about curbing, the Chairman asked if the existing curbing is asphalt.

Mr. Gallagher replied that it is.

Chairman Palma asked if asphalt is proposed to be used for the area around the landscaping also, and Mr. Gallagher said it is. He added that no existing curbing will be disturbed or require replacement.

Chairman Palma said that Ms. Smith recommends a higher quality curbing for the area of the new addition. He commented that this curbing will probably be marked with striping for fire zoning or no parking areas, so he does not think it is necessary to change to a different curbing material.

Mr. Isler asked if some sort of striping is also required for handicapped access to the main entrance.

Mr. Gallagher said the handicapped access spaces need access to the ramp, but the ramp itself need not be striped.

Chairman Palma reiterated his opinion that it would not be practical to change the curbing material only to paint it with stripes.

Pointing to the area in front of the main building entrance on the site plan, David Wilklow asked if it is grass now.

Mr. Gallagher said there are plantings, mulch and evergreen trees there. He pointed out that at the first floor level, the addition will only be about 2 ft. deep with 2 stories added above.

Mr. Wilklow asked if the front curb on the plan is existing, and Mr. Gallagher replied that it is.

Chairman Palma said he agreed with Ms. Smith that any curbing that is in poor condition should be repaired/replaced but with the same, existing material.

Mr. Wilklow commented that parking and accessways must comply with ADA standards.

Mr. Gallagher said there is only the one, main entrance to the building, and it will be handicapped accessible.

Regarding Ms. Smith's landscaping comments, the Chairman said she mentions the need for provision of a suitable area for a Kousa dogwood and suggests reducing the amount of paving to increase the landscaped area.

Mr. Isler pointed to a notation on the site plan near the front entrance that would seem to be the tree, and he said the concern is probably that there will be construction around it.

Mr. Gallagher said some existing plants will need to be removed for construction, but they will be replaced. He said new plantings will also be added in response to the memo.

The Chairman said that Ms. Smith refers to the central island and an area along the drive near the gazebo as places for additional landscaping with trees.

Mr. Gallagher pointed on the site plan to the areas referred to by Ms. Smith, stating that there is a rock out-cropping opposite the front entrance to the building which would limit landscaping, and there is landscaping by the gazebo.

Chairman Palma commented that creating a pull-off area would not reduce pavement. He disagreed with Ms. Smith's recommendation that the drop-off driveway be narrowed, stating that emergency access is more important than decreasing paved areas, and narrowing the drive would not increase safety. The Chairman added that sufficient room for handicapped access is also important. He said that Ms. Smith recommends curbing for delineation of the new handicap-accessible parking space, but he disagrees/feels striping is better. Chairman reiterated that he has safety concerns about access for emergency vehicles if the drop-off area were to be narrowed.

Mr. Gallagher said he thinks directional arrows/signs will work to improve circulation, and the Chairman agreed.

The Members were essentially in agreement with all of Ms. Smith's comments about site layout notations.

Chairman Palma asked if the drop-off area to the patio is to be brick paved.

Mr. Gallagher said it is, adding that it might not be labeled on all pages of the plans.

Mr. Isler asked about silt-fencing details, and Mr. Gallagher responded that the information is in the storm-water protection plan.

Mr. Isler asked if the ARB should see elevation drawings of the proposed wood deck, although he noted that it will only be 2 ft. 11 in. off the ground.

The Chairman commented that there would not be much to see in elevation drawings.

Mr. Wilklow asked if there shouldn't be stairs and a handicapped access ramp for the deck.

Mr. Gallagher explained that patients will only access the deck from inside the building, and only maintenance people would step off the deck onto the ground.

The Chairman asked Mr. Gallagher to check on the necessity of having access for patients as well, and Mr. Wilklow added that he felt it would be necessary in case of a fire on the deck.

Mr. Wilklow asked what the deck will be constructed of, and Mr. Gallagher replied that his client hasn't decided yet.

Mr. Wilklow pointed out that part of the ARB's approval process has to do with materials and colors.

Mr. Gallagher asked if the ARB would accept Trex (a wood and plastic composite product) or mahogany.

The Chairman said he thought Trex would be fine, and Mr. Wilklow added that they just want to be sure the deck will be durable.

Pointing on the site plan, Chairman Palma indicated a refuse area adjacent to Parking Area C, and he asked if it will be screened in some way.

Mr. Gallagher said he did not know, and the Chairman asked him to make a note of it, because the area may require fencing.

Chairman Palma asked the other Board members for further comments.

Mr. Isler asked what the 500 ft. boundary drawn around the site is for, and Mr. Gallagher explained that it delineates the area that must be covered by Notices to Property Owners as part of the Planning Board application process.

Mr. Isler commented that the conceptual rendering varies from the various elevation drawings.

Mr. Gallagher admitted that he was right, and he pointed to where the second and third floor offices will each be located next to a day room. *(This vertical line of new offices is not shown correctly on the conceptual rendering.)*

Mr. Isler expressed confusion about the calculations used to determine average elevation and building height. He said the line on the drawing indicating average height looks high.

Mr. Gallagher said it could be a little off, and he will re-check it.

Chairman Palma said the ARB could recommend that the Planning Board also check the height calculations.

Mr. Gallagher said he did not think it would be a problem, as the building is calculated to be 30+ ft. high when completed, well below the 35 ft. maximum.

The Chairman asked what colors will be used on the exterior of the addition/new entry.

Mr. Gallagher said the exact colors haven't been decided on yet, but the contractor will do a mock-up before actual construction begins. He said the existing building is of red brick with bark/wood-color asphalt roof shingles.

Mr. Wilklow asked if the siding on the addition is to be painted to match the existing brick, and Mr. Gallagher said that was correct.

The Chairman asked if the brick is red, and Mr. Gallagher replied that it is somewhat lighter than red.

Chairman Palma said the ARB would like to see a proposed color scheme, and Mr. Gallagher said the Board members will be welcome to view the on-site mock-up.

Mr. Wilklow asked if Mr. Gallagher was sure he would want to do a mock-up without showing the ARB the proposed colors first.

Mr. Gallagher said that is the plan, adding that it is hard to know what colors/materials will look like until they are on the building.

Mr. Wilklow commented that this seemed expensive to do, but it was fine with him.

The Members all said they will go and look at the mock-up when it is done.

The Chairman asked for the square footage of the addition, and Mr. Gallagher said it will be 2300 sq. ft. consisting of additions to the day rooms and nursing station/office areas. He explained that all the patients are in wheel chairs and more space is needed to accommodate them in the common areas.

Mr. Raskopf asked if the project only requires a variance for the front setback, and Mr. Gallagher said yes. He explained that an existing variance was granted for a 119-ft. setback, which will be reduced to 114 ft. by the addition.

The Board agreed that a memo containing their comments will be sent to the Planning Board and Optimus Architecture, and they will review the revised plans when they are provided.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice E. Will

Janice Will, Recording Secretary