

Jean Fraser - Fwd: Planning Board Meeting on 133 York St is scheduled for TONIGHT at 5:30 PM

From: Susan Kaplan <birmanmom@gmail.com>
To: Jean Fraser <JF@portlandmaine.gov>
Date: 9/24/2013 11:40 AM
Subject: Fwd: Planning Board Meeting on 133 York St is scheduled for TONIGHT at 5:30 PM

Good morning Jean,

Please add this to the public record.

Forwarded conversation

Subject: Planning Board Meeting on 133 York St is scheduled for TONIGHT at 5:30 PM

All,

for P.S.
The Planning Board Meeting on 133 York St is scheduled for **TONIGHT at 5:30 PM in room 209 at City Hall**. Below is a summary of the two recent meetings along with concerns raised by abutters. If you share any of these concerns, please try to attend tonight's meeting.

Sep 4th: Meeting with Jeff Tarling, city arborist

Jeff Tarling did not raise concerns about the removal of the large tree near the Townhome property line. Note: the tree appears to be sitting on the property line between 133 York and McCormick Place (behind 133 York).

Jeff did raise the concern about the lack of privacy / screening in the design and may recommend a green wall between 133 York and the rear of the Flats.

August 30th: 133 York Street (Public Information Meeting)

Below are my revised notes from the August 30th meeting followed by Bruce Baker's observations.

Notes from Susan Kaplan

- Proposal is for a 6 unit, 26' x 89.5' building with a max building height of 41'
- Tom Greer of Pinkham & Greer states that no variances or waivers will be required for this project

Water abatement plan includes:

- Standard 6" curb with a catch basin for runoff from property
- Driveway will slope downward with the highest side towards High St
- Piping system in roof to control runoff from flat roof
- The driveway will include tree wells and a storm drain

New structure and surrounding land:

- Updated plan will be the same height as Townhomes
- New plan is 8' - 11' feet higher than current building, blocking water views behind the property
- Current plan will remove the large tree next to Townhomes (and all other trees on property)
- There will be a 13' setback to Townhomes
- New plan doubles the footprint of building

Observations / Concerns from Abutters:

1. Concerns raised in the first meeting regarding privacy, screening, and the maintenance of the large tree near the Townhome property line were not considered by developers
2. The developers stated that there are no provisions being made to maintain screening or privacy for the rear residents of the Flats

3. Headlights from underground parking area will shine directly into the windows of the rear Flats first floor residences
4. The water abatement plan is of serious concern given the present volume of runoff into the Flats basement
5. Storm water in the last 6 months alone have caused flash flooding on York Street at the base of the 133 York driveway and a manhole cover near the York / High intersection to burst open.
6. Questions were raised regarding access to the construction site. Who will be granting this access?
7. Abutters in Townhomes have not been notified of public meetings; they have learned of the meetings from the Flats residents.
8. This public meeting was scheduled on a Friday night before Labor Day weekend which negatively impacted public input and turnout.

The tentative plan is to begin framing the structure in the fall with a meeting workshop in September.

Notes from Bruce Baker:

Thoughts from the Friday meeting.

I came to the meeting in order to support the Flats building due to the fact that several activists could not make it. My intent was to simply put forward three key concerns.

Those were:

- a) Maintaining privacy between the new building and Flats.
- b) To keep as many trees as possible
- c) To control any runoff from the new building/paving.

The folks representing 133 were the same as at the first meeting with Tom Greer doing the presenting.

It started fine but soon I heard points that were different from our first

meeting and, of course, they were impacting my three points above.

Tom said that the large tree on their property that stands near the fence beside Unit A in the "T'Homes" building probably could not be saved. He said that the builder thought it too close to the new building and that a large section would have to go. The remaining portion would be "unsafe" and should be taken down as well. He offered two new, much smaller, trees in its stead. I asked how close the new building would be to the property line. He said "13 feet". I pointed out that this was at least 15 feet different than what was described at the first meeting. He denied it. I told him how he had described it to me at the first meeting. "At the far side of the shed." It was now a good distance beyond the far side of the shed. As described at the first meeting I did not see a difficulty in keeping the tree.

The second point of contention was the height of the building. At the first meeting it was going to be 5' higher than the highest point on the current building. Now it is going to be 11' higher. This was also pointed out as a big difference relative to views. Tom basically said they did not have to do anything about it. I guess people could invest in shades and privacy fencing on their decks. That last point was my idea.

The third issue was runoff and Tom said that there would be a catch basin on the 133 side opposite the Willow tree, which was good but that the only other consideration would be a 6" curb running from the catch basin to where the driveway would be. It was pointed out by myself and several others in attendance that the land as it stands now absorbs a lot of the water but that the new building roof and the paving for driveway would overwhelm any "standard" effort like a 6" curb. It was pointed out that we expected no negative impact upon the Flats basement from this new project.

Tom did not have any response other than their recollection was different. I assured them that my memory was clear and that I, for one, did not appreciate being misled and I doubted that those not in attendance would be very happy.

Others can fill in more detail, I left at that point.

~~~~~  
Susan Kaplan