
LITTLETON PLANNING BOARD

TO: MARK, JEFF, BARTLETT, DELISA, AND ANNA
FROM: MAREN
SUBJECT: DEC. 14, 2022 – NORTHERN BANK
DATE: 12/12/2022

► **ITEM #7: 7:45: Continued Public Hearing for the Northern Bank Application:**

Please review the detailed Peer Review Comments with visualizations of the comments and recommendations from Utile

https://www.littletonma.org/sites/g/files/vyhlif8011/f/uploads/northern_bank_peer_review_20221201.pdf

Background: The Public Hearing for Northern Bank opened on Oct. 6, 2022, and continued on Oct. 25, Nov. 10, Dec. 7, and Dec. 14, 2022. Applicant has provided funds to cover the peer review cost estimate; initial review received and posted to project page.

Steps:

- (1) Reopen the continued Public Hearing.
- (2) Presentation from applicant.
- (4) Questions/Comments from PB members.
- (5) Questions/Comments from Public.
- (6) CONTINUE the Public Hearing to next meeting

Town Planner Recommendation, in consultation with Tim Love and Jessy Yang of Utile. The development proposal fairly well meets FBC design requirements, however, the details leave the Board with some trade-offs to consider. Moving more toward meeting FBC requirements would result in a development that better reflects a pedestrian-focused development, moving away from larger-feeling commercial buildings, and would be more reflective of the FBC requirements that Town Meeting adopted.

Noting that the Planning Board wishes to be intentional about any waivers granted, there are areas of give-and-take/negotiation for final design features.

After reviewing the peer review comments and detailed slides from Utile, think about possible tradeoffs for bringing the massing of Building C more into line with FBC and leaving the “angle” of the bank building and accounting for the unique shape of this lot and the public open space at the triangle. I recommend you leave the angled bank building as proposed, and allow for slight re-designs to Buildings B and C.

Tweaks to Building B, with tradeoff to allow the larger “rear” portion of the building, removing the unusual “box” from the front left corner, adding another entrance toward Great Road, and updating the side entrance vestibule would not impact usable building area while much better meeting FBC. Town Planner accepts the method used by the design architect to calculate the “fenestration” goals – basically how much glass is on the front of the building.

The Massing of Building C leans toward a large commercial-scale building, straying from the underlying “big-house-little-house-back house-barn” basis of FBC (Section 173-215D) “to ensure that new development retains the characteristics of an established neighborhood of buildings that accumulated additions over time.” One way to accomplish this is to add a dormer to the left-hand side of Building C, allowing for a longer-than-allowed building, but meeting the goals of the Master Plan to spur economic development in Littleton Common. Building C would then appear to be less of a large commercial building, and would be at a more pedestrian-friendly scale.

Northern Bank is using the architecture of the proposed bank building to show the brand of the bank rather than using a “standard bank sign” reflective of the usual suburban proposal. This clearly shows Northern Bank’s commitment to the design basis of our FBC.