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August 21, 2014

MEMO: TO THE ZONING COMMISSION
CITY OF NORWALK

REVIEW COMMENTS

SETTLEMENT DRAWING DOCUMENTS DATED AUGUST 18, 2014

PROPOSED AL MADANY ISLAMIC

CENTER OF NORWALK

Drawing Topographic Map of Property

Drawing SP-1 thru SP-4, Drawings L-01, L02, TP-01

Drawings A-1 thru A-7

The above Settlement Drawing Documents dated August 18, 2014 were reviewed and compared to the Al Madany's Original submission Dated April 20, 2009. The most significant change is due to the elimination of the original classroom floor in the rear building and the creation of a first floor parking deck to be located under the multipurpose room which has been relocated on the second floor level. The following comments are also related to our "Comparison of Al Madany Islamic Center's Submitted April 20, 2009 Proposal to Their August 18, 2014 Submitted Plans":

PARKING:

1. The current total of 135 parking spaces is a substantial increase over the original 89 spaces in the original April 20, 2009 submission. It was achieved by creating a parking deck on the first floor of the rear building, locating 4 parallel spaces on a "grasscrete" surface within the front yard, and allowing valet spaces around the rear building and on the parking deck. During project's development between the original and August 18, 2014 submission 2 spaces in the Lower Level parking were eliminated due to reduction in width of rear building and 1 surface space was eliminated due to handicapped parking requirements.
2. The 135 parking spaces represent 1 space / 161 sq.ft. of usable floor area, a substantial improvement over the original submission of 89 spaces which provided 1 space / 331 sq. ft. of usable floor area.
3. Introduction of the 70 degree angled parking spaces at the West side of the property and on the Grade (first floor level) Parking Deck are adequately sized for comfortable use in one-way traffic flow.
4. The total number of fixed parking spaces per Connecticut State Building Code, required 5 accessible parking spaces where a total of 4 were originally shown. In addition, the Code required a 15 foot width for each accessible parking space instead a 13 foot width originally shown. The additional accessible parking space and required area has been provided.

SITE:

1. Drawing L-01 should have two pole mounted light fixtures in the grasscrete area relocated to as shown on SP-1 and SP-2. As the working drawings are developed we suggest installing a protective low height wood timber guard rail on the East side of the grasscrete parallel parking spaces.
2. Landscaping Drawing L-01- The incursion of the four grasscrete parallel parking spaces has caused elimination of two cherry trees and one sugar maple tree. We suggest compensating for the loss by changing the size of the 6 adjacent white pines to 7'- 8' height.

BUILDING:

1. Reduction in Usable Floor Area -
The 8,491 sq. ft. usable floor area in the Rear (multipurpose) Building is a substantial 46.7% reduction when compared to the 15,940 sq. ft. usable floor area in the original submission. The total 21,800 sq.ft. usable floor area in the overall (front + back) building is a 26% reduction compared to the 29,450 sq. ft. overall usable floor area in the original submission.
2. Reduction in East-West width of the Rear Building -
The suggested 4 foot reduction in East-West width of the Rear Building/Grade Parking Deck has been addressed but slightly reduced to 3 foot 10 inches.
3. Reduction in Building Lot Coverage -
The 8-18-2014 Submission notes a 23.88% Building Lot Coverage which is a reduction from the 24.74% noted for the original submission.
4. Reduction in Floor Area Ratio (F.A.R.) -
The 21,800 sq. ft. ± total usable floor area (of all floors) in the 8-18-2014 Submission is less than the 29,450 sq. ft. ± total usable floor area for the original submission. This translates into a .321 F.A.R. for the current Submission which is less than the .434 F.A.R. for the original submission.
5. Building Height -
The height of the top of the rear building roof parapet has been lowered 1 foot 6 inches from the original April 20, 2009 submission. This was accomplished by lowering the clear height in the multi-purpose room and incorporating a more shallow depth roof structure.
6. Reduction in Visual Mass of the Building -
The 8-18-2014 Submission accomplishes a reduction in the visual mass or bulk of the building in four ways:

- The 3 foot 10 inch reduction in the rear building removes approximately 14,770 cubic feet from the building's visual mass above grade.
- The Height of the rear building has been lowered 1 foot 6 inches from the original 4-20-2009 submission. This eliminates an additional 9,585 cubic feet of volume
- Both stairways attached to the northeast and southwest corners of the rear building have been reduced in height by approximately 14.5 feet removing 4,953 cubic feet from the rear building's mass and help to soften the visual transition to the top of the adjacent multipurpose roof.
- The front building no longer needs a third level elevator and interior stair because there is no third level in the rear building. This reduces the height of the perimeter exterior walls approximately 14.5 feet and affords a meaningful reduction of building mass where the front building connects to the rear building.

The elimination of 14,770 + 9,585 + 4,953 cubic feet from the rear building is a 11.3% reduction in visual mass (in rear bldg.) from the original April 20, 2009 submission.

7. Drawing A-4 Roof Plan show locations of roof top HVAC units (RTU's) and confirms that no RTU will be placed on the high Multipurpose/gymnasium roof.

RECOMMENDED CHANGES:

1. We suggest installing a protective low height wood timber guard rail on the East side of the grasscrete parallel parking spaces.
2. We suggest compensating for the loss of two cherry trees and one sugar maple by changing the size of the 6 adjacent white pines to 7'- 8' height.
3. Topographic Map of Property - As this drawing is in the settlement documents, the "top of wall @ gymnasium" noted in the upper left corner of the drawing should be corrected to be el. 147.50' or 39.46'. The correct gymnasium wall height is shown on Drawings A-5 - A-7.