TOWN OF WELLESLEY MASSACHUSETTS

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
TOWN HALL WELLESLEY, MA 02181

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ZBA 96-24
Petition of Wellesley Hills Congregational Church
207 Washington Street

Pursuant to due notice, the Special Permit Granting Authority held a Public Hearing on Thursday, April 18, 1996 at 8 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room (Conference Room B) at the Town Hall, 525 Washington Street, Wellesley, on the petition of WELLESLEY HILLS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH requesting a Special Permit for Site Plan Approval pursuant to the provisions of Section XVIA and Section XXV of the Zoning Bylaw to allow a Major Construction Project including the following at its premises at 207 WASHINGTON STREET, in a Single Residence District:

1. Grading and regrading of approximately 9,000 square feet to include a new drop-off lane and a landscaped island.
2. Demolition of existing vestibule and construction of a one-story vestibule and three-story elevator tower totalling 815 square feet of footprint and 1,183 square feet of floor area.

On March 26, 1996, the petitioner filed a request for a hearing before this Authority, and thereafter, due notice of the hearing was given by mailing and publication.

Presenting the case at the hearing was Walter Hess, Chairman of the Church Building Committee; and Jeff Clark and Lawrence Borins, architects for the project. Using enlarged renderings, Mr. Clark walked the Board through the project.

Mr. Clark explained that the work would be at the rear and side of the church. The vestibule and existing hill will be removed, and a new vestibule constructed at the rear. Entrance will then be at a lower level through the handicap accessible vestibule and the new elevator. Mr. Clark showed the existing rear elevation and the proposed rear elevation, which depicted the new vestibule and elevator, and the removal of the hill. He said that the road would be widened slightly in front of the vestibule entrance to provide a better drop-off site, but Chapel Place and the traffic flow pattern would remain basically the same.

Mr. Hess stated that the focus of the project was to significantly increase handicap access to the building at different levels. The new entrance will be at the same grade as the rest of the church.

Mr. Clark said that the planting of the traffic island will consist of a grass lawn and large trees. Mr. Borins explained that the submitted landscaping plan is all that the Church has the budget to complete at this time. Discussion with abutters is ongoing to devise a plan in regard to

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plantings on the abutters' side of Chapel Place.

The Board asked if the plantings would present any visual obstruction to vehicular or pedestrian traffic. Mr. Borins said that the trees will be of the "high canopy" variety, so there will be significantly more visibility than at present.

Willliam Murphy, 15 Chapel Place, read a letter of approval with caveats into the record, with a copy to the Board. The Church has agreed that there will be no alterations to Chapel Place. The Murphys have agreed to allow the Church to reverse the traffic flow on Chapel Place only on Sunday mornings on a trial basis, so that traffic can access the parking lot without returning to Washington Street. Other items concerned future landscaping, lighting and signage.

The Board questioned the issue of reversing the traffic flow. Mr. Clark said that the traffic flow in the drop-off lane would always be maintained in the same direction. The change would be in looping around Chapel Place to access the parking lot only on Sunday mornings. There would be temporary directional signage installed just before Sunday morning services.

The Board noted that the turning radius back onto Chapel Place was tight and questioned whether stretch limos and/or hearses would manage the turn. Mr. Clark said the Church would test the reverse traffic flow to determine whether it would work.

Lorraine Murphy, 15 Chapel Place, stated her concern with the landscaping. The footprint of the new vestibule is wider than the existing one, and is sited in front of their home. They have requested that additional screening be provided, and the scale of the trees be reduced.

Statement of Facts

The subject property is located at 207 Washington Street, in a Single Residence District, on an 88,840 square foot lot, which is bounded on the east and north by single residences and on the west by property owned by the Church.

The petitioner is requesting a Special Permit for Site Plan Approval to allow the grading and regrading of 9,000 square feet to include a new drop-off lane and landscaped island. The elevation at the rear of the church will be lowered from 174 to 163. The existing vestibule is to be demolished and a new one-story vestibule and three-story elevator tower with a total footprint of 815 square feet and a total floor area of 1,183 square feet will be constructed.

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The following plans were submitted: Existing Conditions (X-1.2), dated 3/22/96, drawn by David Lamata, Professional Land Surveyor; Site Plan (A-1), dated 3/25/96, drawn by Lawrence Borins, Registered Architect; Plot Plan (X-1.1) dated 3/22/96, drawn by David Lamata,

Professional Land Surveyor; Proposed Site Plan (CE 1.1) dated 3/22/96, revised 4/9/96, drawn by Charles G. Samiotes, Registered Professional Engineer; Landscape Plan (L-1) dated 3/25/96, drawn by Richard Burck Associates; Ground Floor Plan (A-5), Undercroft & Sanctuary Plan (A-6), Top Floor & Roof Plan (A-7), North Elevation (A-9), West, East & South Elevations (A-10), and Building Sections (A-11), all dated 3/25/96 and drawn by Lawrence Borins, Registered Architect.

The following information was submitted: Official Development Prospectus; unsigned, undated Run-off Calculations; Proposed Fire Protection System Requirements dated 3/25/96, revised 4/9/96, produced by SED Associates; and Storm Drainage Calculations dated 4/9/96 produced by Samiotes Consultants, Inc.

On March 21, 1996, the Design Review Board reviewed the project and voted to approve the design as presented. All of the submitted plans and information were also sent to the Planning Board, Wetlands Protection Committee, Town Engineer, Board of Health and the Fire Chief as required by Section XVIA of the Zoning Bylaw. Written responses from each of the above were received and are on file at the ZBA office. The Planning Staff had no objection or comment.

Decision

This Authority has made a careful study of the materials submitted and the information presented at the hearing. The petitioner's proposed grading and regrading of 9,000 square feet of land constitutes a Major Construction Project pursuant to Section XVIA of the Zoning Bylaw.

It is the opinion of this Authority that the proposed plans listed in the foregoing Statement of Facts, which include grading and regrading of 9,000 square feet of land including addition of a drop-off lane and landscaped island, and demolition of existing vestibule and construction of a new vestibule and elevator tower, comply with the Zoning Bylaws of the Town, protect the safety, convenience and welfare of the public, minimize additional congestion in public and private ways, and insure adequate protection for water, sewerage and drainage. Furthermore, they are in compliance with Section XVI, Section XXI and Section XXII of the Zoning Bylaw.

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A Special Permit is hereby granted and Site Plan Approval is given by this Authority, as voted unanimously at the Public Hearing, pursuant to Section XVIA and Section II of the Zoning Bylaw, subject to the conditions attached hereto as Addendum A.

APPEALS FROM THIS DECISION, IF ANY, SHALL BE MADE PURSUANT TO GENERAL LAWS, CHAPTER 40A, SECTION 17, AND SHALL BE FILED WITHIN 20 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF FILING OF THIS DECISION IN THE OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK.

Kendall P. Bates, Acting Chairman

Robert A. Bastille

William E. Polletta

cc: Planning Board
Inspector of Buildings
edg

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ADDENDUM A

1. All work shall be performed in accordance with plans submitted and on file with this Authority.

2. All design and construction must comply with all applicable state and local codes.

3. All requirements of the Town of Wellesley Fire Department shall be complied with.

4. All requirements of the Department of Public Works shall be met, including, but not limited to, the requirement that water, sewer and electric connections, together with drainage connections be made in accordance with DPW standards and installed and maintained at no cost to the Town of Wellesley

5. Upon completion of the project, a complete set of Site Utility Plans shall be submitted to the Department of Public Works.

6. A copy of the Occupancy Permit issued by the Inspector of Buildings shall be submitted to this Authority at the time of issuance.

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