

**Blackstone Neighborhood Association**

**Special General Membership Meeting**

**Minutes**

**October 20, 2021 5:30 pm**

**Via Zoom**

**Members Present: 18**

Mark Maser, president, called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm.

**Block 38 Presentation**

Guests: Stephen Sykes, Jessica Thomas, Joshua Hannum, Brett West, Collin Schwartz. All investors and contributors to the project.

Three existing homes on 38th south of Dodge will be removed and the lots redeveloped as a 7 story building with 131 units. The owners have owned the properties for a few years and had planned to restore and maintain them, but have concluded that the best use of the property is denser housing to fit with the city’s Transit-Oriented-Development (TOD ) aims. The area is currently zoned R8, which would allow for a 12 story building, but the development group determined that this was not financially feasible on this site.

Core Wiesmann with BVH is the architect, not present today. The building will be 172,410 square feet. The building will have 5 inhabited stories and 2 stories of below grade parking. There will be 1:1 parking, with 131 parking stalls in the garage plus 7 surface spots. A coffee shop and an office will be part of the development, facing Dodge. There will be 10 affordable housing units.

There will be planters and trees along the streets. The brick colors are similar to the existing house at 101. Ownership plans to hold the building for up to thirty years, likely beyond.

During the question-and-answer portion there was criticism of tearing down existing beautiful homes instead of building on existing empty lots or ugly commercial properties.

The developers said that parking will be included with rent so that people use it. Jim Farho raised the need for the design to incorporate acorn lighting like the rest of the neighborhood. Farho also asked about incorporating neighborhood ID logo in the balcony ironwork.

Several members complained about the increasing density in the neighborhood.

The design has been submitted to the city for review. They are requesting $3.8 million in TIF financing. The buildings will be deconstructed not demolished and materials given to Habitat for Humanity. Johnson Deconstruction will be doing the work for Habitat for Humanity.

The group replied to environmental questions. There will be ports for electric cars. The plan call for the ability to add rooftop solar units when feasible.

There are no expected lengthy street closures during construction.

It was noted that one home was owned by the Creighton family and one by the Harding family and asked if the developers would like help with the history so that they could acknowledge that in some way in the property. They agreed they would like to see the history.

Jim Farho proposed a resolution in support of this development project. It died for lack of a second.

Jim Farho suggested that the association consider its priorities concerning preservation. He suggested prioritizing properties for preservation. Maser stated that the executive committee will take up this suggestion at the next executive committee meeting.

Teresa Gleason, The Little Gallery in the Mansion at Blackstone, offered her spaces there for future meetings.

**Social**: There will be a tour of the Montessori school (38th and Jackson Streets) and a meeting followed by a social in the Brandeis Mansion backyard, weather permitting, on Sunday, October 24th. Please make your RSVP so that the committee can prepare.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at **6:45 pm.**

Respectfully Submitted,

**Mark Maser**

President, Acting Secretary, Blackstone Neighborhood Association