



DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Meeting Minutes

May 17, 2023

7:00 PM

Acton Town Hall

Room 09 – In Person

Present: Peter Darlow, (Chair), David Honn, Richard Keleher, Tom Doolittle

Public Attending: Terra Friedrichs

1. Opening

Chair, Peter Darlow opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

2. Regular Business

A. Meeting Minutes:

March 09 minutes were reviewed and unanimously approved as amended. David will incorporate the amendments and submit to the Town Clerk.

March 30 minutes were reviewed and approved unanimously as drafted. Richard will submit to the Town Clerk.

3. New/Special Business

A. Proposed Land Clearing and Tree Preservation By-Law review:

Peter has met twice with the Planning Board to introduce the proposed bylaw outlines for Land Clearing Management and Tree Preservation on single family lots and to elicit feedback.

The proposed bylaw outlines for Site Alteration Special Permit and Land Clearing Guidelines were generally considered very favorably. Board members discussed several modest edits to clean up some of the outline language for clarity of intent. Peter will update each ahead of presenting to the Select Board.

The proposed Tree Preservation bylaw was also looked upon favorably as to its intent. Several PB members as well as town citizens attending the Planning Board meeting raised concern about the proportionally heavier burden such a regulation will have on the smallest lots in town. DRB members discussed this concern and agreed to adjust the proposed language to exempt single family lots of less than 20,000SF which are generally located within the village districts.



B. Town Meeting 2023 Article 45 concerning Odd Shaped Single Family Lots

A discussion was undertaken on the approved citizen petition to address the lack of lot width definition within the zoning code that results in opportunistic development utilizing extremely narrow lot widths to maximize the fit of multiple house lots on tracts of land.

It is understood that the Select Board will maintain a secondary priority list incorporating the approved citizen petitions. No further action was taken by the DRB on the topic of Odd Shaped Lots at this time.

4. Adjournment

At 8:06 p.m. it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
The DRB



TOWN OF ACTON DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Review Memorandum: Acton Senior Park
June 8, 2023

DRB Members in attendance: Peter Darlow, (Chair), Richard Keleher, Tom Doolittle, David Honn, and Dean Charter, (SB liaison).

Proponents in attendance:

Dennis Dale, Dale Design, Landscape Architect
Stephen Trimble, Senior Park Sub Committee Chair
Michael Chautin, Council on Aging Board

Documents reviewed (presented by Mr. Dale):

- Site Plan and associated sketches dated June 2, 2023
- Senior Park Design Update 6-02-23
- Senior Park Take-off Main St. Campus Graphic 5-4-23
- Planters & site furniture concepts

The Senior Park is proposed for the parcel of land between the proposed McManus Manor housing and the proposed Dog Park at 352 Main Street as part of the “Main Street Campus.”

The project is not funded yet.

There was extensive discussion regarding whether or not to direct connect with (in lieu of the lack of a direct connection to) the McManus Manor site.

The senior park will be designed for people of various abilities and accessible routes will be provided.

The park will be at the scale of an urban park. Examples were given: Rambler Park and Hyde Park in London.

Features of the park will include:

- Planters: a gardener at NARA Park will maintain them. A herb garden may be included (for seniors at McManus Manor?).
- Picnicking area
- Walking Paths.... appropriately graded for seniors
- Large central lawn for gatherings and for hosting performances
- Areas for Tai Chi and active exercise.
- Porch swings.

Utilities:

- There will be no lighting (there will be a blue light).
- Water will be provided for watering the plants.

There will be a storage shed for maintenance equipment and supplies, tables and chairs, etc.

The large uncolored area on the plan to the left of the park will be a meadow.

It was suggested that rock outcroppings be left exposed, if possible, in addition to the use of stones form the site to create stone walls.

Mr. Dale noted that in his review of the Complete Streets drawing that he received he noted that they show no buffer between the street and the sidewalk.

The applicant is ready to prepare a cost estimate and is getting a fee for civil engineering.

DRB Findings:

- Continue to advocate for the parking lot to be finished in gravel as a more low-key environmental impact and better visual. (Also prefer the same for the Dog Park parking lot as previously advocated). Will reduce the pervious surfaces on the site(s) which in turn will help mitigate the need for water retention engineering.
- Seek a legal resolution to the shared use of the right of way as a drive into the parking lot, in order to reduce the quantity of impervious surfaces and reduce the additional curb cut off of Main Street
- Advocate for a direct connection path between McManus Manor and the Senior Park... integrate more with the McManus Manor landscape concept.
- Provide a shading structure for the picnic area.
- Advocate the integration of a 5ft buffer adjacent to Main Street for the proposed sidewalk extension that the town is separately designing. This is important consideration for safety of the Seniors and Dog Park users. As well it will continue the street edge design concept that is being developed within Kelley's Corner.

The DRB thanked the proponents for the opportunity to review the proposed project. The proponents thanked the DRB for the comments and will consider them as they move forward before the Select Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Keleher, for the DRB