



TOWN OF ACTON DESIGN REVIEW BOARD MINUTES OF JUNE 17, 2015 MEETING

7:30 p.m.
Room 126, Town Hall

Present: Holly Ben-Joseph (Chair), Michael Dube, Peter Darlow, David Honn, Kim Montella

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm.

Meeting minutes from the May 27 meeting were reviewed but they were incomplete and needed additional information and editing.

Action Item: Holly Ben-Joseph will revise minutes and submit at the next meeting.

Informal Review of multi-family housing project, 282 Main Street (across from Quill and Press):

Proponents: David Johnson and Scot Kenworthy

Drawings: Site plan by Stamski and McNary completed for previous owner of property (not the proposed site plan).

The DRB met the proponents on an informal basis to discuss general design goals for the town of Acton for multi-family housing projects (ie: what projects are more and less successful in town), and also the general housing trends and what is needed for housing in Acton now. The plan by Stamski and McNary (date?) proposes a central drive with three detached duplexes on either side. The units as proposed have parking at the ground floor with the main living quarters above. They will have three bedrooms with approximately 1500sf.

The DRB provided the following guidelines during the meeting:

- Guidelines for the Kelley's Corner area recommend that buildings address the street, with parking at the rear or on the side of the buildings. The buildings as shown on plans do not face Main Street.
- The site is sloping, and as shown on the plans, all of the buildings are relatively level, the DRB recommends stepping the buildings a bit more to take up the grade change, this would allow for smaller retaining walls at the back and front of the site.
- The proponents showed photos of a new project in Medford with concrete pavers for the driveway; the DRB supports the use of pavers for the drive.
- DRB suggests the proponents check out the housing development on River Street in Acton, we believe this project succeeds because the buildings address the street, the garages are hidden on the sides of the buildings, and paving is minimized because the driveways are shared. The DRB feels use of this site plan style could provide for a superior project in the prominent location.
- The DRB in general believes that multi-family housing projects that put the garage under the unit are less attractive and generally do not fit into their surroundings because the building rooflines end up being much higher than surrounding structures. The DRB would prefer to see a bank of garages at the rear of the site.

- The DRB recommends that before hiring an engineer to lay out the site, the project architect or a landscape architect be brought on board to do the site layout first, then work together with the civil engineer to finalize the design.
- Another interesting multi-family design is the Riverwalk project in Concord, MA.

The DRB thanks the proponents for coming in for a discussion with the DRB about the project in the preliminary phase. We believe this is a very productive way to work and look forward to meeting with the proponents once they have plans developed.

Review of Haartz Corp plans for building and parking additions. 87 Hayward Road

Proponents: Haartz; not present

Plans reviewed:

Architect Plans: R-1, A-1 dated 4-1-1

Engineering Plans: C-1.0 through C-10, dated May 28, 2015

In general the DRB supported the proposed addition of the café and parking lot and the efforts to make the building more 'green' with solar panels and on-site run-off containment but question the need for the net gain of 28 parking spaces. Refer to the DRB Memo for 87 Hayward Road, Haartz Corporation, dated 6-17-2015 for more detailed comments.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Next Committee Meeting:

Wednesday, July 15, 2015 (July 1 meeting cancelled).
Acton Town Hall, Room 126, 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by: Holly D. Ben-Joseph