



DRB Memorandum

Project: 40B Housing on Power Mill Road

Project Location: 12 Powder Mill Road

Memorandum Date: 03.07.16

Drawings Reviewed:

Architectural Drawings, Acton, Various Dates, Layout Plan
Perspective, Feb. 2016 Powder Mill Crescent

Proponent Representatives:

Peter Conant – Architect and Developer
Ona Jonaityte - Assistant to architect

DRB Members:

Holly Ben-Joseph (HBJ), Kim Montella (KM), David Honn (DH), Michael Dube (MD) partial attendance

Date of DRB Review: 3-02-16

The DRB met on March 3rd, 2016 to review a proposed 40B project on Powder Mill Road at the Acton-Maynard border and across from Wendy's restaurant. The site layout was designed by Stamski and McNary. Adjacent properties are an abandoned factory which was recently bought by a paving company and the Last National Wine store. The area is a mix of commercial and residential properties; the site is ½ mile from the Stop and Shop Plaza. There is a 200 foot setback from the Assabet River which has pushed all of the development to the front of the property. The site layout shows a 'Barn' duplex along the frontage with housing two groups of five housing units behind in a slightly arced setting. The DRB fully supports the use of multi-unit buildings which achieve the desired density in an attractive manner. The DRB is also supportive of the more reasonable cost model. The following are the DRB comments:

Site Comments:

1. The DRB supports the site layout, and particularly appreciates the 'barn' with the cupola and weathervane and stone wall at the front of the property; these elements recall the historic buildings and wall types of Acton.
2. The DRB suggests adding plantings, small trees if possible, along the street and in front of the units to soften the streetscape.
3. The proposed turn around for the fire engines is very wide (with no protection between the drive and the housing), the DRB recommends reducing the width of the road as much as possible, or better yet, using grass-pave type paving material which would look like lawn. The grass-pavers would also help soften the streetscape.

4. The garage doors are the most prominent feature of the homes along the street instead of the front doors which are set back from the garages. To lessen the impact of the garage doors, the DRB suggests adding large roof projections over the garage door openings.

Building Comments:

1. In the 3rd floor space (attic space) no windows are shown. The DRB recommends not only adding side windows at the end units, but also framing for or offering dormers facing the Assabet River.
2. No materials have been selected yet for building finishes.

The DRB supports this project with revisions as listed above. We look forward to reviewing the project again once more details on the housing units is complete and a planting plan has been developed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Design Review Board