

Design Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Date: February 26, 2015

Time: 6:30 PM

Location: Deep River Town Hall

Attendees: Alan Paradis, Pamela Potter, Sue Watts

Absent: Jeff Hostetler, Peter Howard, Mike Cole

Guests: Joanne Hourigan, Kristin Irwin, Lisa Johnson, Christopher Widmer, Mary-Lynn Radych

Chris Widmer presented elevations and a street rendering for the proposed expansion to Kirtland Commons.

The Board had a general concern with the overall massing of the building. The existing building is manifold times larger than all of the surrounding properties which are predominantly one and two-family, two-story, wood framed homes. The proposed project nearly doubles the size of the existing building. Unlike the Piano factory nearby, this project is not the adaptive reuse of an existing historic building and requires very careful consideration of what the massing has on the streetscape. It is recommended that the applicant look at the aggregate streetscape on Main Street, and in particular, the series of joined small structures that make up the street wall between Calamari's Tavern and the skate board shop. As an aggregate, these attached small buildings comprise a similar mass but the variation in materials and fenestration allow each to be legible as an individual structure. While there is some variation in materials, projections, and roof form on the Kirtland Commons expansion, more variation would be beneficial. The uniformity between the existing structure and proposed addition with the same roof forms, horizontal datums, materials, and window treatments exaggerate the size of the building and the incongruity of the scale with the immediate neighbors. The DAB made the following recommendations to reduce the apparent size:

Vary the roofline

Vary the use of building materials

Break up units – possibly add more vertical elements

Trim windows

Bring brick base to ground level

Vary fenestration - possible false doors/balconies/bring windows to floor to read more like front of building

Add brackets or detail to cantilevered element at garage opening

Change water table

A primary objective of the Design Guidelines, as well as the town plan, is to make the Village District and primarily Main Street pedestrian friendly. The project would benefit from strategies for traffic calming and augmenting the pedestrian experience for both residents and Deep River citizens. DAB made the following recommendations relative to improving the streetscape, parking, and pedestrian experience:

Add latticework to all open garage walls to screen view of interior of garage – especially at night

Reduce curb cut to narrow driveway

Review practicality of 4 outside parking spaces on Main Street side of building – consider relocating spaces along the curb

Study grading of driveway from the back of sidewalk to garage. A trench drain will likely be required at the entrance to the garage to prevent ponding.

Add pedestrian area/benches to Main Street side

Review color/textures in relationship to streetscape

Add appropriate lighting

Possible signage

Another primary objective of the Design Guidelines for Deep River is the preservation and enhancement of natural landscape and context. Deep River runs immediately behind Kirtland Commons and is the type of natural amenity that should be protected and improved when possible. Effort should be made to make this natural feature an amenity on the site for residents and for the public. Efforts should be made to make Deep River (which is a tributary to the Connecticut River) accessible for passive recreation. This small river/stream runs parallel to Main Street and strings together numerous public and private venues including the library, firehouse, Keyboard Park, the Whistle Stop, etc. The proposed addition further conceals this often forgotten namesake. It would be desirable to acknowledge this natural feature in the landscape design.

DAB indicated that board members are available for additional consultation on any design issue for the project, such as lighting, color, site planning, etc.

Mary-Lynn was in attendance and is interested in serving as a DAB member. The Board requested she provide a copy of her resume to send to Dick Smith.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30.

Minutes compiled by: Pamela Potter