



Town of Medway

**DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE**  
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*Matthew Buckley, Chair*  
*Julie Fallon, Vice-Chair*  
*Rod MacLeod, Member*  
*Karyl Spiller-Walsh, Member*  
*Rachel Walsh, Member*  
*Mary Weafer, Member*

**Approved: 7/27/15**

Meeting Minutes: May 4, 2015  
 Medway Library, Cole Room

**Call to Order:** – With a quorum, this meeting was called to order by Chairman Buckley at 7:02 p.m.

**Attendees:**

	1/5/15	1/12/15	2/23/15	3/2/15	3/16/15 Joint w/ PEDB	3/23/15	4/6/15	4/27/15	5/4/15
Matthew Buckley	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Julie Fallon	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Karyl Spiller-Walsh	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Rod MacLeod	X	X			X	X	X		X
Mary Weafer	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Rachel Walsh	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X

Stephanie Mercandetti, Dave D’Amico, and Susy Affleck-Childs also attended the meeting.

Planning & Economic Development Coordinator Susy Affleck-Childs reminded everyone that tomorrow night’s meeting is a joint meeting of the Planning & Economic Development Board (PEDB) and Design Review Committee (DRC). It is a workshop and open to the public. The DRC still needs to identify a second member for the Design Guidelines Update Taskforce.

The DRC reviewed the goal of tonight’s meeting and the Zoning Board of Appeals’ (ZBA) expectations. The applicant is requesting a variance for two non-confirming signs, which will be decided by the ZBA. The DRC is being asked to consider the design elements, including colors, placement, number of signs, and aspect ratio. The DRC will highlight the issue of the size of the proposed signs in their letter to the ZBA. The Committee reviewed Director of Community & Economic Development Stephanie Mercandetti’s memo clarifying the ZBA’s expectations. The initial Public Hearing on this matter was opened on October 15, 2014. The applicant was asked to meet with the DRC at that meeting. This is the first meeting with the DRC since October 15, 2014.

**Informal Discussion on Proposed Free-Standing Signs at Medway Shopping Center:**

Attorney Bethany Bartlett and Grant Michael from Barlo Signs attended the meeting on behalf of the applicant. The applicant is trying to secure a variance for the proposed signs because they are non-compliant due to their height and surface area. Attorney Bartlett explained that the design has been updated since last fall based on comments the applicant received from the ZBA, including reducing the size, eliminating clutter, and making it more readable. Planning & Economic Development Coordinator Susy Affleck-Childs said the new design includes a modest reduction in height, a uniform background color, and external lighting. Chairman Buckley urged the applicant not to make drastic changes until the ZBA has made a decision on the variance.

Deputy Director Dave D'Amico said the current signs are not currently in the right of way under the proposed Route 109 reconstruction. He said the Town was hoping to install a stone wall from the Shell gas station to Dry Bridge Crossing as part of the reconstruction. The Town was told today that the wall is considered a non-participatory item and cannot be included in the project unless the Town pays for it in total. The Route 109 Committee is meeting Wednesday night and will discuss whether they would like to proceed with the wall and discuss funding options. If the Town moves forward with the stone wall it would go through both proposed signs, which would require them to be moved. Karyl asked if the applicant would consider funding the wall. Attorney Bartlett said the property owner is open to negotiations but is adamant about installing ladder signs. The Committee said they do not recommend ladder signs. Instead they recommend naming the site and putting the name on the main monument sign and installing directional signs within the site. Attorney Bartlett said she does not believe her client would consider this option. Attorney Bartlett said they are not planning on any building reconfigurations or pad site additions at this time. The Committee said the applicant needs to take possible future additions into consideration so that the new signs do not obscure the buildings.

The Committee said the new font is much clearer. They encouraged the applicant to remove any extraneous words on the signs like "Chinese restaurant" and remove websites and phone numbers, which will help make the signs more readable. The Committee said bigger signs may be more visible but it does not mean they are legible. Rod recommended using all capital letters or all lowercase letters but not both. The Committee recommended eliminating the management company sign at the bottom of the ladder sign and instead adding a plaque to the stone base. They also recommended removing the pillars. Rachel said when the ladder sign at Gould's Plaza was redone the owner also redid the awnings, building signs, and installed gooseneck lighting, which helped tie the design together and create an updated look.

She said she thinks it would be very confusing to install two new ladder signs with a new design and color scheme that does not relate to the existing building. She said it may look like the new signs do not belong to the plaza. The group agreed that it is important for the applicant to create a Master Signage Plan for the site. Karyl said a few small surface changes, like changing the red façade of the building to a coordinating color from the new sign design, could make a huge impact. The group discussed the Route 109 reconstruction project and how this will impact the Medway Shopping Plaza. The entrance by the Shell gas station will be eliminated and there will be one main entrance across from the Mobil gas station. A traffic signal will be installed at the main entrance. Rachel said because of the new entrance it makes sense to have a single monument sign with the name of the site and then directional signs inside the site. The Committee agreed it would be very confusing to have two signs with different names on each sign for one site. The group discussed several different options, including doing three smaller signs. The Committee urged the applicant to create a Master Signage Plan in the context of a minor Site Plan Review. The Committee thinks taking a more comprehensive approach, including small surface changes, would show the applicant's willingness to improve the site.

The Committee discussed the following:

- The cap on the top of the signs that says Medway Shopping Center and whether this is necessary. If go with it make sure it is legible. In the proposed design it is hard to read.
- Remove pillars.
- Use fieldstone for base of signs. Make sure if there is a wall that the materials are consistent. Recommend incorporating signs into walls.
- Consider adding visual element like lighting at the top.
- Consider other sign formats. Rod found an example of a sign that is a ladder sign but has a medallion with the site name in it (Linden Street Plaza in Wellesley). Create a distinctive sign that will set a precedent for the area.
- Use logo but don't occupy entire rectangle. 2/3rds of the space should be text. Important to have negative space.
- Make sure sign panels are the same ratio.
- Remove any excessive or redundant text, such as "meat, deli, grocery" and "Chinese Restaurant."
- Remove phone numbers and websites.
- Consider renaming the site and use the opportunity to rebrand. The Town is trying to create a village feel and wants to move away from shopping centers.
- Need to resolve the number of signs and different names on each. The Committee recommended 3 smaller signs. 2 would be single-sided and at the

main entrance. Then a third sign at the west end of the site for Ocean State and the other stores that are at that end of the property.

- Use similar lighting that they are using for the Route 109 project. Tri-Valley Commons has said they will also use similar lighting.
- Tri-Valley Commons is adding stone wall to the front of property. Use similar materials so it is consistent.
- Incorporate an outdoor sitting area or pocket park that encourages people to stop.
- Change color of façade to something that coordinates with new signs or is neutral and won't create confusion.

The DRC invited the applicant to their May 18, 2015 to discuss the matter further and asked them to forward any changes by May 14, 2015. They also encouraged the applicant to begin to create a Master Signage Plan. The Committee said they would provide the applicant with some examples of successful signs. The DRC will send a letter to the ZBA after the May 18, 2015 meeting.

The Committee then discussed channel letters and if and when they should be used. Chairman Buckley said he is not inclined to recommend channel letters but would like members to consider this issue more so they can discuss further at a future meeting.

### **Tri-Valley Interim Letter of Recommendation:**

The committee reviewed the draft interim LOR for Tri Valley Commons and discussed revisions. The Committee is communicating to the Planning & Economic Development Board (PEDB) what has been agreed to and incorporated into the plans and what has been agreed to and still needs to be incorporated into the plans. The applicant will meet with the DRC again after the 1<sup>st</sup> series of Public Hearings are complete. The following items were discussed:

- The scale of the building is huge and needs to be reduced or specimen trees need to be incorporated into the plan to help mitigate the size.
- Architecture needs to be linked to landscape plan. The Committee still needs to review an updated copy of the landscape plan. It does not reflect what has been discussed in meetings.
- Landscaping plan needs to be specific. Honey locust still needs to be removed.
- Need sample of proposed lighting.
- Committee needs to review copy of tree surveys that are being completed. If no trees will be saved, additional trees will need to be planted particularly on the west side of Building A.

- The specimen tree to the east of Building A that is screening the garage bays needs to be 20-24 feet at planting and provide 4 season coverage.
- All trees that are proposed are deciduous at this point. Will any coniferous trees be used as discussed in the meetings?
- Need clarification on the monument sign and location. Committee recommended that it be incorporated into the stone walls at the entrance.
- Need to clarify dumpster enclosure. The vinyl fence needs to be 4 sided.
- If rhododendrons do not screen retaining wall and fence at their southern end then may need to add more.
- Committee needs to see sample of Versa-Lok that is proposed for 80 foot long retaining wall.
- The trees on the slope to the east of the guiderail should be welled if necessary. The slope needs to be taken into consideration when planting.
- Committee would like to see location and type of specimen trees on plans.
- The stone bases at the bottom of the buildings need to be consistent. DRC recommends consistent stone base in New England gray tone.
- Need to describe internal walkways within site. Internal walkways should be stamped painted asphalt.
- Recommend adding trash cans throughout property and recommend surrounds.
- If bollards are used they should be incorporated into decorative planters.

**Action Items:**

- Nominate 2<sup>nd</sup> member for Design Guidelines Update Work Group.
- Rachel will update the draft interim LOR for Tri-Valley Commons and forward to Chairman Buckley.
- Ideas for a message board at Choate Park, including location, design, fonts, illumination etc.

**Schedule:**

The next DRC meeting will be on May 18, 2015 at the Medway Public Library.

**Adjournment:**

With no further business before this committee, a motion was made by Karyl Spiller-Walsh, seconded by Mary Weafer to adjourn at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Reed