



TOWN OF MEDWAY
155 Village Street
Medway, Massachusetts 02053

Design Review Committee

*Matthew Buckley, Chairman
Julie Fallon, Vice-Chairman
Rod MacLeod
Karyl Spiller-Walsh
Rachel Walsh
Mary Weafer*

Planning and Economic Development Board

*Andy Rodenhiser, Chairman
Robert K. Tucker, Vice-Chairman
Thomas A. Gay, Clerk
Matthew J. Hayes, P.E.
Karyl Spiller-Walsh
Richard Di Iulio, Associate Member*

SPECIAL JOINT MEETING
Planning & Economic Development Board and Design Review Committee
Meeting Minutes – May 5, 2015 at Thayer Homestead

Call to Order: – With a quorum, the joint meeting of the Planning & Economic Development Board and Design Review Committee was called to order by Chairmen Andy Rodenhiser and Matt Buckley at 7:02 p.m.

Attendees: Planning & Economic Development Board - Andy Rodenhiser, Bob Tucker, Tom Gay, Matt Hayes, Rich DiLulio, and Karyl Spiller-Walsh; Design Review Committee - Matt Buckley and Mary Weafer; Planning & Economic Development Coordinator, Susy Affleck-Childs; Director of Community & Economic Development, Stephanie Mercandetti; Selectmen - Dennis Crowley, Mary Jane White, and Glenn Trindade; Finance Committee, Ellen Hillery; Community Housing Coordinator, Doug Haven; Josh Fiala of the Cecil Group; and Dan Hooper.

Design Review Committee (DRC) Chairman Matt Buckley reported that the DRC had a positive and productive meeting with representatives from the Medway Shopping Center last night. He said the applicant is interested in making improvements to the site, including implementing a master signage plan, updating the façade, and possibly adding stone walls to the front of the property. He said they discussed reducing the size of the monument signs and possibly using 3 signs instead of 2. Two of the signs would be single-sided and incorporated into the stone walls at the main entrance. The applicant may attend the next DRC meeting on May 18, 2015 to discuss the matter further.

Design Guidelines Community Workshop:

Josh Fiala of the Cecil Group introduced himself. He said he has been working with the Town to update and refine the Design Review Guidelines. He explained that the Design Review Guidelines Update Task Force has met several times and there was a joint meeting of the PEDB and DRC two weeks ago. Participants were asked to introduce themselves.

Mr. Fiala said the goal of the project is to update and streamline the current Design Review Guidelines and make them more transparent. In addition, they hope to streamline the process for applicants. They are at the beginning of the process and hope to finish by July 2015. Mr. Fiala provided the group with an overview of the creation of the DRC and the Design Review Guidelines. He said the DRC was created in 2003 and appointed by the PEDB. The DRC is an advisory board to the PEDB. The Design Review

Guidelines reflect a shared vision of Medway and provide a framework for discussions about design elements. The Design Review Guidelines apply to any project that requires Site Plan Review or Sign Design Review. Mr. Fiala briefly reviewed the zoning districts and how they relate to the Design Review Guidelines. He pointed out that zoning does not include elements like parking and landscape, which is why the Design Review Guidelines are so important. Mr. Fiala said the idea of retaining the feel of a small, rural New England town is a fundamental idea in the current Design Review Guidelines and needs to be further defined. Mr. Fiala said that throughout the process they will also identify elements in the current Design Review Guidelines that should be moved to the Zoning Bylaws. Mr. Fiala said the updated Design Review Guidelines should include clear categorization and definitions and simple language.

Mr. Fiala showed images of several sites in Town and highlighted some design aspects that could be improved and some that are notable. He highlighted the new Cumberland Farms as a good example and how components like dormers and landscaping help set it apart from a standard gas station.

The group participated in Visual Preference Study A and B. Visual Preference Study A focused on commercial, retail, or industrial buildings and Visual Preference Study B focused on residential or subdivision buildings. Images were selected by the consultant and contained varied styles, types of use, and density. Participants were asked to view the images and choose how they would feel if a similar design was proposed in Medway. It was important for participants to imagine where each design would be appropriate in Town. The scale was from 1 (objectionable) to 5 (very desirable). Visual Preference Study A was broken down into buildings and architecture, site design and landscaping, and signage and amenities. Visual Preference Study B was broken down into buildings and architecture and site, streets, and landscaping. Mr. Fiala pointed out several items in each image for participants to consider when rating. See attached presentation.

Next participants were asked to jot down some words or phrases that define “New England Style.” Mr. Fiala said the responses would be collected and input into a word cloud generator. This will help to better define the term. See attached word cloud worksheet.

Finally, Mr. Fiala asked participants to share their thoughts and concerns. The following is a list of some of the thoughts and concerns participants shared:

- Medway does not currently promote small retail.
- Need consistency with signage within commercial areas.
- Don't respect pedestrians. Need to pay attention to crosswalks, sidewalks, and pocket parks.
- Would like to see more contemporary architecture that is inspired by historical architecture in Medway.
- Integrating large industrial buildings and schools with smaller cottages and multi-families.
- Break down Route 109 into smaller pieces that are more pleasant and manageable. Possibly incorporate elements of a downtown and create nodes. Make sure the nodes are connected.
- Use indigenous materials and plantings and preserve existing trees. Dan Hooper said there are 4 red leaf beech trees in Medway that are approximately 150 years old.
- Soften impervious material and reduce asphalt.
- Important to remember New England architecture is really an eclectic mix, not just a particular period.
- Important to determine what is appropriate for certain areas in Town.
- Don't want to lock into one particular style-some of the most beautiful areas of town are very eclectic.
- Need to embrace landscape and need to avoid boring new developments.
- Avoid replicating Route 109 in its current state. Instead we want to replicate a mature New England village.
- Promote walking particularly within the Medway Shopping Center.

- Possibly incorporate refuge areas into crosswalks. Make sure the landscaping is to scale and safe for pedestrians.
- Make sure there is consistency on Route 109 including light fixtures and similar stone.
- Vary rooflines on small and large buildings.
- Need better definition for “modern.”
- Need to better define “good design.”
- Need to better define “density.” It is not necessarily a negative term.

Mr. Fiala reviewed the next steps in the process. He said they are going to include illustrations in the updated version of the Design Review Guidelines as much as possible. They are also considering organizing the document by zoning district. The next working session of the Design Guidelines Update Task Force is May 19, 2015. The group agreed that they need to discuss submission guidelines and requirements further.

Adjournment:

With no further business before this committee, a motion was made by Karyl Spiller-Walsh, seconded by Mary Weafer to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Reed
Recording Secretary

Reviewed and edited by,

Susan E. Affleck-Childs
Planning and Economic Development Coordinator.