



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 Lulio, Associate Member

SPECIAL JOINT MEETING
Planning & Economic Development Board and Design Review Committee
March 16, 2015
Thayer Homestead – 2B Oak Street

Call to Order: – With a quorum of both groups present, the meeting of the Planning & Economic Development Board and Design Review Committee was called to order by Andy Rodenhiser and Matt Buckley at 7:01 p.m.

Attendees: Matt Buckley, Julie Fallon, Karyl Spiller-Walsh, Rod MacLeod, Mary Weafer, Rachel Walsh, Andy Rodenhiser, Bob Tucker, Tom Gay, Matt Hayes, Rich DiLulio, Susy Affleck-Childs, Stephanie Mercandetti, Dan Hooper, and Jim Wieler.

Discussion: Jim Wieler welcomed everyone and introduced himself as the meeting facilitator. Jim is a former member of the Planning & Economic Development Board and currently a member of the Community Preservation Committee and Upper Charles Conservation Land Trust. He explained that he spoke with all members of the Planning & Economic Development Board (PEDB) and Design Review Committee (DRC) prior to the meeting. He also spoke with applicants that had both positive and negative experiences. He said the main goal is to improve the communication between the groups and applicants and also to enhance the perception of the boards. He invited each member to introduce themselves and provide a brief “elevator” speech as to what motivated them to join their respective boards.

Jim reviewed the mission statements of each group and discussed the inception of the DRC. The DRC was created around 2002 after the development of Medway Commons. The PB at the time realized that they needed additional support to handle design aspects of projects, which had consumed a significant amount of time. They also realized they may not always have members on the PB with design experience and wanted to make sure future projects reflected Medway. The Design Review Guidelines were created in 2008. Issues that arose during the Medway Commons project, including roof lines, naturalized detention ponds, and buffered access roads, were incorporated into the Design Review Guidelines and Site Plan Regulations.

The group discussed some of the feedback that Jim received from applicants. He said it is evident that the purpose and importance of the DRC needs to be more effectively communicated. He said he heard many times that applicants were unaware that they needed to go in front of the DRC. Applicants also felt like the process was lengthy. He said it is important for members to realize applicants are coming to them at a very critical time and often have invested a lot of time and money in their designs. The group discussed the Cumberland Farms project and aspects of the project that required several meetings, including the non-conforming canopy and resistance from abutters. In addition, the DRC did not have administrative support at this time, which put them at a huge disadvantage. However, in the end the project was a huge success because of the enormous amount of work that went into it. The group agreed that a more comprehensive set of Design Review Guidelines will help alleviate some of the issues but that it is imperative that the new Guidelines are drafted and supported by both the DRC and PEDB.

Members discussed how applicants approach the process and the role of the DRC. The DRC is an advisory committee and can make recommendations to the PEDB but cannot require applicants to make changes. DRC Chairman Buckley said often applicants are reluctant but frequently they incorporate many of the DRC's recommendations and walk away with a better product. The DRC has the ability to manipulate sign designs during a meeting and share their recommendations with the applicant. Often sign fabricators are not designers and cannot help their customers with this particular aspect. Chairman Buckley said they made a simple recommendation to Starbucks for their drive-thru sign that didn't cost them any additional money but had an enormous impact aesthetically. The group agreed that it is very important that new businesses know that this sign design service exists.

The group had a lengthy discussion about the communication and perception issues that exist between the PEDB and the DRC. They said these issues were highlighted during the Tri-Valley project. A significant frustration for the DRC is that the Guidelines are only a guide and cannot be enforced. The group agreed that going forward it is imperative that ambiguity in the Design Review Guidelines is eliminated and that both boards fully support the new guidelines. They agreed that it would be helpful to get the DRC's recommendations and concerns on a project much earlier in the process. The DRC agreed to create a template and provide the PEDB with status updates similar to the report that planning consultant Gino Carlucci submits. The DRC will also continue to identify how their recommendations tie to specific sections of the Design Review Guidelines. The group also discussed the difficulty in dealing with an uncooperative applicant and the need to establish consequences for these situations. Matt Hayes said it is important for the group to define what a complete pre-application packet is. The group agreed the requirements may differ depending on the scale of the project. The group acknowledged that the process

needs to accommodate all types of applicants. The group agreed that the new Design Review Guidelines must be a joint effort and both boards must be involved in the process.

Note - Bob Tucker left the meeting at 10:15 p.m.

The group created the following action items:

- PEDB to define what a complete packet for a pre-application discussion is.
- DRC to send PEDB a status memo on project early in the process with issues and concerns.
- DRC will draft a status template similar to the report Gino Carlucci submits.
- Both the DRC and PEDB need to own the new Design Review Guidelines.
- PEDB needs to be clear on the DRC's role and what they are asking them to review.
- DRC and PEDB need to increase their communication and make sure it occurs early in the process.
- PEDB will revise Site Plan Rules and Regulations and possibly add what documents should be in the pre-application. What is required may depend on the scale of the project.
- PEDB will share timeline/schedule for projects with DRC.
- Secure a member of the Medway Business Council to join the DRC.

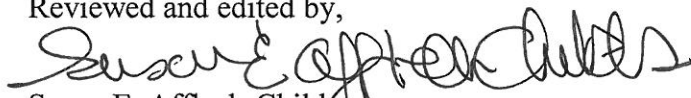
Adjournment:

With no further business, a motion was made by Karyl Spiller-Walsh, seconded by Rachel Walsh to adjourn at 10:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Reed
DRC Recording Secretary

Reviewed and edited by,


Susan E. Affleck-Childs
Planning and Economic Development Coordinator