



TOWN OF SCITUATE

Design Review Committee

600 Chief Justice Cushing Highway
Scituate, Massachusetts 02066
Phone: 781-545-8730
Fax: 781-545-8704

JB JR 11.01.23

Meeting Minutes

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Date: June 26, 2023, 6:30 pm @ the Scituate Public Safety Complex

ATTENDEES:

Karen Joseph	Town Planner
Patricia Lambert	Planning Board
Jamie Kelliher	Axiom Architects
Chris Bruce	Option C Properties LLC
Sean Stockbridge	Option C Properties LLC
Kenn Sanchez	Option C Properties LLC
Bill Ohrenberger	Ohrenberger, DeLisi & Harris
John Buckley	DRC
Craig Mutter	DRC
Paulette O'Connell	DRC

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PRESENTATION AND REVIEW OF NEW DESIGN OF 817 COUNTRY WAY

The project at 817 Country way is comprised of four multi-family buildings. Three new 4-story buildings and the renovation of an existing 2-story building that fronts Country way.

Building 2 was completely revised. It was downsized from a 4-story to a 3-story building and reduced the unit count by 4 units.

Building 3 was revised on the exterior to include a new entrance portico and some additional façade changes. One unit was added to the first floor.

The property allows for 34 units by right, possibly expanded to 55 units by special permit. The revised unit count is total of 52 units.

While the DRC appreciated the removal of some units and the changes to Building 2, the overall impression is that the project is still too large for the property.

A question was posed as to what public amenities were being added to warrant the Density Bonus. No particulars were given at this time. There was a comment that new sidewalks were to part of the project, but there rendering shows a sidewalk dead ending at the edge of the property. The rendering should

reflect any actual improvements and it was discussed that the Town expects to see, at minimum, the addition of a true concrete sidewalk with granite curb.

Building Height.

The DRC has asked for a cross section of the property with the buildings. This was not submitted as part of the new materials. The DRC would like to see this at the next meeting.

The calculation of the overall building height at Building 4 seems incorrect and does not account for any changes in grade. This needs to be reviewed and updated.

Building 1 – The DRC felt that the existing building essentially works with the scope of the overall project.

Building 2

- The reduced height and shifted floorplate (which opens up the entry toward the street) were both positive changes. The lower eave line also helped bring down the scale of the building. Perhaps this design element can be carried over to buildings 3 & 4. One thought was to lower the eave line and to look at the condominiums on Ladds Way by the Herring River Marina. The large roofs bring down the scale/height of the overall structure.
- Mechanicals are to be set into a flat area on the roof - need to show this design in more detail on the drawings to ensure that they are in fact shielded.

Building 3 – This is a long narrow building and the proposed façade changes did not really address the issue that the building seems too big for its location on the site. This building is very prominent from the street view.

The DRC thoughts were as follows:

- Create more of a “U” shaped building so it doesn’t appear so long. This could be done by changing the circulation and revising the parking at the front.
- Maybe a few of the units can become smaller (1 bedroom becomes a studio and so forth) to reduce the overall mass of the building itself.
- Accentuating the ends of the building rather than the center - flip the location of the gables.
- There is concern that there is not enough room for mechanical units around this building. If they become ground units will that take away from the already limited open space?
- Suggested possibility of reduction of units.

Building 4 – No changes were made to this building. However, the comments above should be taken into consideration.

- Location of mechanicals
- Lower the eave line – continued articulation of façade
- Overall size and scale still seem to be large
- Building height confirmation
- Suggested possibility of reduction of units.

Site Landscaping and open space had not been addressed since the initial meeting in May. Comments noted below.

- Dumpster area is far away, make sure ease of use (amenity requirements behind dumpster does not really meet intention)
- Request of lighting plan
- Wanted another look at the open space/amenity requirements
- What does the electrical transformer and the retaining wall look like
- Buffer requirements – confirm that they meet zoning?
- Grading – makes buildings appear taller is there a way to mitigate this?

Wetlands

The site is partially covered in wetlands toward the rear. Building 4 is located within the 50-100 foot buffer. This will be going before the Conservation Commission for review.

Septic Design There was a comment that the septic is located under the parking lots and the leeching field is actually part of the open space requirements. The design seems tight. This is not of the DRC's explicit purview, but it is something the Planning Board/Board of Health should review.

The DRC took public comments from abutters. They were to address the design of the project. Comments were as follows

- The size of the overall complex is too large in comparison the single family homes in the area
- Light spillover onto the abutting properties
- Mechanical noise spillover
- Grading along rear is too tall
- Loss of trees/visual buffer between properties

The DRC felt there are still several design issues that need to be addressed before submitting a formal recommendation to the planning board.

- Cross Section of site
- Overall size of buildings (especially 3 & 4)
- Further articulation of buildings (especially 3 & 4)
- Mechanical locations
- Open space and landscaping – need further detail on overall size to make sure it meets requirements (this shall be calculated with consideration of mechanicals, dumpster and other site elements which may limit space).

In its current state, the quality of the design does not justify the proposed increased density on the site.

OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS/ADMIN.

The plan is to go to the Planning Board meeting, but the project shall come back to the DRC for additional review and comment. The next meeting is to be held on August 29th.

END OF MINUTES

