

TOWN OF SCITUATE
Design Review Committee

Meeting Minutes for: Tuesday, August 11, 2015

Topics:

- **Follow-Up Design and Site-Plan Review for the Scituate Public Safety Building (Police/Fire) at Mann Lot Rd. and Rte. 3-A**
- **Follow-Up Design and Site-Plan Review of the New Scituate Middle School, 606 Chief Justice Cushing Highway/460 First Parish Road**
- **Preliminary Site-Plan Review of 13 Ford Place**

*The meeting was held in the **Planning Board Office** and called to order at **7:05PM**.*

In Attendance:

Hal Stokes (DRC Chairman)
John Roman (DRC Secretary)
Laura DeLong (DRC Member)
Richard Taylor (Planning Board)
Laura Harbottle (Planning Board)
Jon Richardson (Dore & Whittier Architects)
Alan Brown (Dore & Whittier Architects)
Shane Nolan (Daedalus: Project Manager)
Mark Thompson (Scituate Police)
John O'Keefe (13 Ford Place Applicant)
Janice Lindblom (Scituate Resident)

First Order of Business:

- A) Establish a date for the next Design Review Committee meeting.*
- B) Approval of DRC July 14, 2015 Meeting Minutes.*

A) The DRC members decided on Tuesday, September 8th at 7PM for the next Design Review Committee meeting.

B) The minutes for the DRC's July 14, 2015 meeting were unanimously approved.

Second Order of Business:

Follow-Up Design and Site-Plan Review for the Scituate Public Safety Building (Police/Fire) at Mann Lot Rd. and Rte. 3-A

Jon Richardson (Dore & Whittier Architects) described in detail the specifics and changes to the original plans presented to the DRC at their June 9th meeting of the new satellite public safety building in terms of its site plan and building design. He verbally described and visually presented the changed building height, exterior details (see DRC comments below), re-design of the drive-thru equipment bays, and he explained the (five) various alternate plans for the building based on available funding. Options for the radio tower were discussed, as was creation of a new gravel berm at the rear of the site as a means to utilize inferior soil on the site. One police sally port was removed from the design for budget reasons, and one apparatus bay removed. Potentially a temporary storage building might be added to the rear of the complex to accommodate the loss of storage due to the elimination of the apparatus bay.

Design Review Committee Comments:

- The building's main sign near Rte. 3-A has not yet been finalized. The committee requested the final design to be reviewed by the DRC.
- A new radio tower will be erected behind the building. The DRC's suggestion for a monopole tower was not clarified. It was stated that the final tower would be 120' in height and a combination of fiber and microwave. The aesthetics of the actual tower to be constructed were not available for DRC review.
- The original canopies shown had a modern appearance. The DRC initially suggested the architects consider alternate canopy design(s). On the new plans, the pergola was removed from the design.
- The DRC suggested louvers or similar features at the main gables to breakup the significant amount of white panels shown on the first plans. Vented, louvered panels at the peaks of each roofline were added to the design. (One will be functional, the other two will be decorative.)
- The DRC noted a variety of building materials and colors used in the original plans (i.e. brick, stone, clapboard, shingles, and vertical panels). The committee suggested the architects give this point additional review and consideration for a more consistent, unified appearance. All brick was removed on the new design due to budget restraints. The new plan showed the structure entirely faced with fiber-cement siding to give the appearance of clapboard. Sample pieces were presented.

- The DRC requested material samples/examples to be submitted for review (brick colors, lamp posts, lamp post fixtures, etc.). The applicant complied with this request. The committee was in agreement of color selections.
- Design Review Committee addressed the numerous existing utility poles that flank the front of the new Public Safety property site. It was pointed out that there are several poles of varying heights, and wires at various elevations, creating the potential to detract from the beauty of the new Public Safety structure. The architects were in agreement with this point and noted that they had been fully aware of the visual distraction that the utility poles presented from the outset. Addressing the issue was beyond the scope of their project's parameters, however. The topic was raised by the DRC only to draw attention to the unsightliness of the utility poles and to prompt possible future thought on the subject. This issue was raised for possible future discussion by the Planning Board.
- Another topic that was raised at the initial review of this project was a concern with regard to the new public safety building's close proximity to the Whitcomb Pines Condominium complex and the definite potential for sound leakage coming from the building. The committee suggested a possible "rule" for fire safety personnel to keep the garage doors closed (especially in the evenings) to help prevent sound disturbances to adjacent neighbors. Mark Thompson (Scituate Police) stated that this request would be forwarded to town fire-safety officials. The DRC raised this issue to prompt further action from the appropriate town officials.

Overall, the Design Review Committee was very pleased with the revised aesthetics and functionality of the building's redesign, and the property's overall layout. The committee voted to unanimously approve the project.

Third Order of Business:

Preliminary Site-Plan Review of the New Scituate Middle School, 606 Chief Justice Cushing Highway/460 First Parish Road

Alan Brown (Dore & Whittier Architects) described and presented changes to the design of the Middle School based on the DRC's initial review of the project on July 14th. New plans and material samples were presented. All topics raised at the initial meeting with the DRC were addressed (see DRC comments below).

Design Review Committee Comments:

- The main, initial issue with regard to visual impact was the façade of the new auditorium. It was felt there was too much brick, and the enormity of the structure gave a daunting first impression. This issue was re-designed and was accepted by the DRC. A large clock was added to the elevation.

- Also, on the new auditorium, the emergency door was in a contrasting color drawing the eye toward the door (which is not a usable doorway from the outside). It was originally suggested that perhaps a more compatible color to the brick would tone down the door's presence on the façade. This request was completed as per the plans shown to the DRC.
- Another suggestion for the building's designers was to use a different color screening for the utility units on the Middle School's rooftop. Using the same color as the metal-clad paneling and trim drew too much attention to the rooftop. This was addressed on the new plans shown to the DRC.
- During the first meeting with this applicant, a suggestion arose regarding a new traffic signal at Chief Justice Cushing highway. The DRC was told that an additional traffic signal at that location was beyond the town's jurisdiction, but the planners were contemplating traffic pattern options and potential issues regarding flow.
- Landscape boulders did not seem to fit into the setting well on the initial plans. The planners assured the DRC that this design feature would be better landscaped in reality in later plans.
- The DRC expressed a desire to see street and building lighting-fixture choices as well as color schemes for ground pavers and colored concrete ground cover. Photos and samples were shown and accepted by the DRC.
- A new issue arose regarding bench seating at the auditorium's entrance. The planners agreed to supply such bench seating to the final plans.
- Additional signage for the middle school may be coming before the DRC at a later point in time.

The Design Review Committee was pleased with the overall scope and appearance of the proposed structures and their surroundings. The committee voted to unanimously approve the project.

Fourth Order of Business:

Initial Design and Site-Plan Review of 13 Ford Place Commercial Building. John O'Keefe, Applicant.

The applicant, John O'Keefe, and his engineer for this proposed project, Paul Mirabito (Ross Engineering), verbally described the applicant's plan to add a commercial structure to the rear of his residential (rental) property at 13 Ford Place. This presentation was made via two architect's plan drawings. The new building will be targeted for contractor use (five planned units) and is not intended for public/customer use. Designed in the style of a barn, the structure incorporates

many barn-related architectural touches and emits a balanced, aesthetic flavor. The façade and treatment blended in nicely with the existing rental home.

The original plans showed the moving of an existing one-car garage, but the applicant stated that the latest plan is to retain the existing placement of the garage and adapt the new structure's parking around and alongside the garage. There will be fifteen parking spaces accompanying the new structure, which will be set back from Ford Place.

The committee was quite pleased with the concept of this project and was favorable to the applicant's presentation.

Design Review Committee Comments:

- The west wall of the new structure faces Ford Place and seems like a large expanse of shingles that can potentially reflect negatively on the building's final appearance. It was suggested that at least two artificial, non-functioning barn doors be applied to the length of wall to visually break up the appearance.
- The committee suggested having the new driveway sweep in toward the parking area as opposed to coming in straight off of Ford Place. This would allow for buffer plantings and would help save a significant tree located on the grounds in that area.
- It was noted by the committee that the rental home and the new structure are not aligned with each other. It was suggested that the applicant review this decision with his architect and consider ways to soften the impact of this misalignment with plantings, fencing, etc. This was not seen to be a major problem, but one member of the committee felt the two buildings and their alignment should at least be given further thought by the applicant and his architect in terms of the two structures and their visibility from Ford Place.
- Another DRC suggestion was to bring some of the design features of the new barn building to the existing garage.
- The applicant had no plans to number the five units on the new building. The committee suggested the inclusion of some sort of numbering system be included for delivery and emergency response reasons. The committee also noted that if in fact signage was to be incorporated at a later stage of the project's design, that the DRC have a chance to review such signage.
- It was suggested that the applicant return to the Design Review Committee for a follow-up review and to possibly provide a finished (color) rendering of his proposed building and its surroundings (this is an option for the applicant, *not* a requirement). The committee found it a bit difficult to visualize the final product from flat elevation drawings and site plans.

The Design Review Committee was impressed with this project and with the applicant's willingness to incorporate the best possible features to his site.

*The meeting adjourned at **9:25PM**.*

John Roman
Design Review Committee Secretary
DRC Meeting 8/14/15