

TOWN OF SCITUATE  
***Design Review Committee***

**Meeting Minutes for: Tuesday, July 14, 2015**

**Topics:**

- **Preliminary Site-Plan Review of the New Scituate Middle School, 606 Chief Justice Cushing Highway/460 First Parish Road**
- **Preliminary Site-Plan Review of the MBTA/Conroy Project**
- **Follow-up Design Review regarding proposed monument sign replacement at the Harbor Medical Building, 56 New Driftway**

*The meeting was held in the **Planning Board Office** and called to order at **7:07PM**.*

**In Attendance:**

Hal Stokes (DRC Chairman)  
John Roman (DRC Secretary)  
Laura DeLong (DRC Member)  
Richard Taylor (Planning Board)  
Robert Vogel (Planning Board)  
Jon Richardson (Dore & Whittier Architects)  
Donald Walter (Dore & Whittier Architects)  
Shane Nolan (Daedalus: Project Manager)  
Joseph Lynch (Conroy Development)  
Adam Brodsky (DT&M Attorneys)  
Peter Sandorse (Phoenix Architects)  
Jeff Heger (Phoenix Architects)  
Steve Wyman (Atlantic Management)

**First Order of Business:**

- A) Establish a date for the next Design Review Committee meeting.*
- B) Approval of DRC June 9, 2015 Meeting Minutes.*

A) The DRC members decided on Tuesday, August 11th at 7PM for the next Design Review Committee meeting.

B) The minutes for the DRC's June 9, 2015 meeting were unanimously approved.

## **Second Order of Business:**

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

Jon Richardson (Dore & Whittier Architects), Donald Walter (Dore & Whittier Architects), and Shane Nolan (Daedalus: Project Manager) presented plans for the new Middle School which will be connected to the existing Scituate High School. Jon Richardson explained that there would be no mixture of high school students with middle school students. The complex will handle up to 710 students and 80 staff. Jon also noted that exterior palette was chosen to be compatible with the existing high school building, a simple range of materials: brick, glass, and metal panel. The building will be nestled into the landscape as one approaches, with a vernal pool 135 feet from the building as well as natural vegetation. The main brick is a blend of flashed red brick which is in the same range as the existing brick. This red brick forms the base of the new building in a traditional manner with 21<sup>st</sup>-century aspects emerging as metal panel covered classrooms. The administrative/ guidance wing is distinguished with a darker brick (still in the range of the darker flashed red bricks) in order to set it apart and emphasize the three classroom wings. Exterior metal will be painted with a kynar finish, in uniform gray matching the metal panel roof edge. The shape of the entry canopies and the structure of the overhangs at the science classrooms will be subtle references to Scituate's maritime legacy, with a boat-like volume, but clad in durable metal paneling.

In addition, a new 750-seat auditorium will be constructed, the existing bus drop-off loop (west side) will be doubled in length, 160 parking spaces will be added overall, a new main entrance and drive loop will be added to the middle school, and a 3-story glass tower will be the focal point at the center of the middle school entrance.

### **Design Review Committee Comments:**

The Design Review Committee was unanimously pleased with the overall scope and appearance of the proposed structures and their surroundings.

- The main 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. In addition, the plans lacked any indication of signage, which may have helped the new auditorium's appearance. (All signage for the middle school will come before the DRC at a later point in time.)
- Also on the new auditorium, the emergency door is in a contrasting color drawing the eye toward the door (which is not a usable doorway from the outside). It was

suggested that perhaps a more compatible color to the brick would tone down the door's presence on the façade.

- Another small 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 draws too much attention to the rooftop.
- A suggestion arose regarding a new traffic signal at Chief Justice Cushing highway, but 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 show up in the architectural drawings, and the DRC felt that their use and placement do not seem to fit into the setting well (as shown). The planners assured the DRC that this design feature would be better thought-out in reality in later landscape 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.

The planners, managers, and architects were quite receptive to the suggestions of the DRC and stated that the DRC's ideas would be brought into the next round of designs.

### **Third Order of Business:**

#### **Preliminary Site-Plan Review of the MBTA/Conroy Project**

Joseph Lynch (Conroy Development), Adam Brodsky (DT&M Attorneys), Peter Sandorse (Phoenix Architects), and Jeff Heger (Phoenix Architects) presented their (new) plans for the proposed MBTA/Conroy mixed-use structures. The site will consist of two buildings: one retail as well as residential along the street (The Driftway), and one set back from the front building which will be 100% residences. In total, there will be 54 apartment units with 102 parking spaces. There will be a 15-foot wide paver walkway along The Driftway where shops will be located along the street front. There will be room for outdoor dining along the walkway. The building's height complies with town limits and the placement of the buildings and surrounding parking areas and walkways seem to fit the landscape well.

#### **Design Review Committee Comments:**

The Design Review committee was very impressed with the integrity of the design, even at this early stage of the applicant's process. The only design suggestions by the DRC at this point had to do with:

- An inconsistency in the column designs at the base of the building.

- The possibility of bringing in additional colored metal roofing to tie in with a larger section of the same roofing at the center of the façade facing The Driftway.
- The possibility of using the terrain to help accent and separate the two building sections that make up the second (rear) structure.
- Some discussion arose about the applicant using the attic of the main structure for utilities, and if this were to become part of the final design, the DRC recommended louvered windows/openings along the street (presently shown as glass).
- There also may be a future need for the applicant to visually disconnect their tenant parking area from the remaining MBTA commuter parking area that will abut their property. This will a topic for future consideration, however.

The applicant will need to come before the Design Review Committee again when their plans have evolved further. At this preliminary stage, however, the DRC is very satisfied that the applicant is and will continue to create a tasteful project design that fits in well with the new Greenbush Streetscape.

#### **Fourth Order of Business:**

#### **Follow-up Design Review regarding proposed monument sign replacement at the Harbor Medical Building, 56 New Driftway**

Steve Wyman of Atlantic Management Corporation (representing the applicant) presented new plans for the proposed sign change for the Harbor Medical Building which complied with all the suggestions made by the Design Review Committee at the applicant's initial meeting before the DRC on May 5, 2015.

Steve Wyman showed all the proposed changes and modifications to the existing sign: 1) A new color scheme for the restored sign as well as design solutions for the new bracing system needed to raise the current sign higher in its position. 2) A verbal description of new landscaping planned around the base of the current sign. 3) New lighting to be incorporated into the landscaped area. 4) Elimination of the large "For Lease" sign positioned next to the current sign (as discussed at the May 5<sup>th</sup> meeting) with a "For Lease" slat to be created to fill in positions on the sign when vacancies exist in the Harbor Medical Building.

#### **Design Review Committee New Comments:**

The Committee was pleased with the follow-up designs for the Harbor Medical sign. A few minor graphic design issues were brought to Mr. Wyman's attention that would make the overall composition of the sign's top and bottom sections compatible.

- The white verticals on the top of the sign do not align with the white verticals on the bottom of the sign. The DRC recommended indenting the white verticals on the bottom portion of the sign to align with the white verticals on the top portion.

- The font size for the Harbor Medical tenant on the bottom of the sign is too different from the names of the other tenants on that section of the sign and gives the impression that the name Harbor Medical Associates is a repeat of the “title” of the sign. The DRC suggested that a more uniform treatment of the tenant’s name on the sign be considered to avoid confusion, but handled in a way to comply with the applicant’s wish to give that tenant more visibility on the sign (as that tenant takes up an entire floor of the building).
- Numerous horizontal white lines appear on the bottom portion of the sign’s design print. This may have just been a way to show that the names on the bottom of the sign are printed on removable horizontal slats. The DRC suggested that the overall sign would look better without the inclusion of those horizontal white lines and that the removable horizontal slats should all be the same color (blue) without any designation as to their junctures.

My Wyman was in total agreement with all the ideas presented to him by the Design Review Committee and he agreed to address each point that was raised prior to his upcoming, final meeting with the Planning Board.

#### **Additional Topics of Discussion:**

While not on this meeting’s agenda, with the architects for the new Public Safety Building being present (for the above-noted Middle School project), a member of the Design Review Committee asked if any thought had been given to addressing 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 for that barrage of poles and wires 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 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 further, future thought on the subject.

*The meeting adjourned at 9:03PM.*

**John Roman**  
*Design Review Committee Secretary*  
DRC Meeting 7/15/15