

TOWN OF SCITUATE
Design Review Committee

Meeting Minutes for: Tuesday, May 10, 2016

Topics:

- **Design and Site-Plan Review of 93-97 First Parish Road**
- **Discussion of Completed Harbor Medical Sign**

*The meeting was held in the **Planning Board Office** and called to order at **7:02PM**.*

In Attendance:

Hal Stokes (DRC Chairman)
John Roman (DRC Secretary)
Robert Vogel (Planning Board & Bldg. Dept.)
Laura Harbottle (Town Planner)
John Barry (representing JMGH Family Trust)
Zarla Ludin and Ben Bornstein (abutters at 99 First Parish Rd.)
Jennifer Kuhn (neighbor on Carrie Litchfield Ln.)

First Order of Business:

- A) Establish a date for the next Design Review Committee meeting.*
- B) Approval of DRC September 8, 2015 Meeting Minutes.*

A) The DRC members decided on Tuesday, June 7th at 7PM for the next Design Review Committee meeting (decided via e-mail May 11-12).

B) The minutes for the September 8, 2015 meeting were approved by the two DRC members present.

Second Order of Business:

Design and Site-Plan Review 93-97 First Parish Road

John Barry, the representative for the JMGH Family Trust who is building the new structure at 93-97 First Parish Road, gave a brief description of this project's history and plans. Attempts were made and consideration given to restoring the existing 1,920 sq. ft. footprint (six apartment) building, but it was determined that upgrading the older building was not cost-effective.

Barry explained that the JMGH Family Trust initially went before the Zoning Board of Appeals with their plans to tear down the existing apartment building and to build a 5-unit condominium complex. The original positioning of that proposed structure had it aligned with First Parish Road, but set back much further than the present building. The area in front of the building was to be for unit parking.

At the ZBA hearing, the abutters at 99 First Parish Road complained about a parking lot being so close to their existing home (there exists only four feet separating the abutters' home from the property line where the parking lot would have existed).

JMGH's new plan, to be designed by architect, Richard Troland of Middleboro, MA, was presented to the Design Review Committee at this meeting. The plans furnished showed a structure sitting at 90-degrees to First Parish Road with only an end facing the street, a parking area to the east, and the rear of the units facing the abutters' home at 99 First Parish Road to the west. The new structure is planned to take up approximately 1,000 sq. ft. of *additional* footprint space, will be approximately 32 feet in maximum height with units staggered from each other along the front façade. The units are to range from one-bedroom homes to three-bedroom homes of approximately 1,200 sq. ft. of living space per unit, each with a garage on the lower level of the unit. In addition, each unit will have two parking spaces.

The abutters at 99 First Parish Road were pleased with the new layout yet voiced concern about a continual water-run-off problem that exists between the existing apartment building and their home. They expressed a concern about that water problem being addressed during construction. In addition, they requested some sort of (natural) buffer between their home and the rear of the units.

A neighbor (Jennifer Kuhn) who owns a home on Carrie Litchfield Lane complained that the scale of the new building was not in keeping with the neighborhood and that in lieu of the plans shown, a building should be constructed to replicate the size and style of the existing structure. John Barry explained that such an alternative was not feasible, and he supported his new structure's size and scale in relation to the existing and the surrounding buildings.

Design Review Committee Comments:

The Design Review Committee members present were pleased with the initial design as shown thus far, but felt the drawings presented seemed to depict "rough sketches" as opposed to actual plans. Some aspects of the designs were not clear and were unreadable in terms of specifics. For example, the front elevation shows a confusing placement of the unit garages and an unclear association of how those garages relate to the parking area and the stairs to the units' front doors. John Barry

attempted to verbally explain this configuration, but the committee members felt more explicit drawings and plans were necessary.

Verbal descriptions of the façade materials and designs were acceptable to the committee, but again, these points needed to be shown more clearly in accurate front, rear and side elevations. This especially with regard to the “end” of the complex that will face First Parish Road. The flavor and character of the building will need to be expressed on this most-visible end, noted the committee.

The committee suggested shed roofs over the garages for the units, and possibly shed-style roofs over the AC compressors *behind* each unit might be a possible feature (doubling as small trash and/or storage areas for each unit).

Of special concern, the committee suggested a reflection of Mission/Arts & Crafts architectural aspects to be incorporated into the final structure’s design. This in light of the fact that 93-97 First Parish Road sits among three Mission-style buildings: 99 First Parish Rd., to the right of the complex, is of the American Four-Square style, the old Library building, to the left of the new complex, is in the classic Arts & Crafts style, and the home diagonally across from the proposed condominiums is a reproduction Craftsman-style home. With this architectural influence so prevalent in the immediate area of the complex, the committee suggested that, at the very least, some aspects of the Mission and Arts & Crafts styles should be brought into the design of the new complex. (Note: this style need not dominate the character of the new structure, rather, touches of the Mission look could be added to the building to tie-in its look with surrounding Arts & Crafts properties.)

John Barry agreed with all DRC comments and assured that all concerns regarding facades, architectural styles, water run-off, and surrounding buffers would be addressed in the new plans to be drawn-up.

Third Order of Business:

Discussion of Completed Harbor Medical Sign

The new sign at Harbor Medical Building on The Driftway has been completed and is currently standing. This sign went through the approval process of the Design Review Committee in 2015, however, two members of the Planning Board in separate e-mails over the past few weeks mentioned that the completed sign does not look like it conforms to the design the DRC approved. Specifically, the lettering at the top of the tenant sign appears to be touching the top of the panel and is throwing off the aesthetic balance.

Committee member John Roman provided photos of the existing sign and explained his suggestions for rectifying the design discrepancy. He agreed to meet with applicant Steve Wyman at the Harbor Medical Building (sign) to explain the issue and to explain possible solutions. (This meeting is currently planned for Wednesday, May 18th at 9AM. Any other interested DRC members or Planning Board members are welcome to attend this on-on-one, on-site meeting.)

The meeting adjourned at 8:20PM.

John Roman
Design Review Committee Secretary
5.16.16