



TOWN OF WINCHESTER
Design Review Committee

Town Hall, Winchester, Massachusetts 01890

Juli Riemenschneider, RLA, ASLA, Chair
Ellen Spencer, Vice Chair
Adrian LeBuffe, LEED
Eileen Casciari, RA
Mary Grassi
Tracy Burhans
Jamie Devol, RA

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, June 8, 2022, 7:30 pm - Town Hall, Mystic Valley Room

Present: Riemenschneider, Spencer, Burhans, Devol, Grassi
Recording Secretary Nancy Upper

1. Open meeting. Vote to approve May 4, 2022, minutes - All in favor.

2. Petition 3962 - 11 Watson Place, Winchester – Review of Revised Plans

That of ZHONGJING DUAN and WEI JIANG concerning the property at 11 WATSON PLACE, WINCHESTER, MA. The petitioners are seeking a Special Permit under Section 3.5.5 of the Winchester Zoning By-Law in accordance with Chapter 40A, Section 9 of the Massachusetts General Laws so as to be permitted to construct an addition that will be located closer to the front property line than permitted as of right. The property is located in the RG (General Residence) zoning district and contains 4,932 +/- square feet.

Guest presenters: Tina Duan, homeowner
Kai Yin Yip, project architect

At their May 4, 2022, meeting, DRC members requested to see plans that more successfully integrated the proposed addition with the existing house. For details, see DRC's May 4, 2022, meeting minutes, pages 6-7.

- Tina Duan presented drawings of the petitioners' preferred new plan for the addition. The plan included:
 - A gable taller than the existing roofline.
 - The ridge line of the new roof higher than the top point of the gable.
 - Vertical trim boards descending from the lower left and right edges of the gable to the foundation.

- Duan showed pictures of other houses on Watson Place to emphasize that:
 - Gables are a common feature in the neighborhood.
 - The proposed new design harmonizes with historical elements of the vicinity.

Discussion:

- DRC member Ellen Spencer said that the new plan is a “great improvement” over the previous.
- Other members agreed. All members liked the symmetrical windows.
- Despite these positives, member and architect Jamie Devol commented that the new design looks like a “two-story house next to a bungalow.”
- Spencer questioned the vertical trim boards descending from the gable, saying they looked incompatible with the bungalow character of the house.
- Project architect Kai Yin Yip offered the idea of a Dutch gable, which would lower the roof ridge but give the petitioners the extra square footage they seek.
- Jamie Devol stated that the Dutch gable would not blend well with the existing roof.
- Devol repeated the suggestion she made in DRC’s May 4, 2022, meeting, and that all agreed should be explored: Match the ridge, eave, and roof slope of the existing house and add a wide shed dormer to the front of the addition.
- Kai Yin Yip had developed this suggestion and showed his drawings as a second design option. DRC members thought this option an improvement over the gable design, but recommended pulling the shed dormer in from the side, exposing more of the steep roof slope.
- Kai Yin Yip expressed the petitioners’ need for more attic space.
- Juli Riemenschneider proposed keeping the high roof ridge but eliminating the gable.
- Devol added that the addition roof should be lowered as much as reasonable.

During discussion, project architect Kai Yin Yip sketched offscreen a design of Riemenschneider’s concept.

- Kai Yin Yip asked to share his design with the Zoom audience.
- When DRC members viewed his revised design, all voiced approval, as did the petitioners.

Ellen Spencer made the motion—

Favorable action, with four recommendations:

- Remove the front-facing gable.
- Remove the vertical trim boards.
- Lower the eave (ridge) line of the roof a little.
- Keep the symmetrical windows.

All in favor – Vote 5-0.

3. Petition 3964 – 94 Church Street, Winchester MA

That of MICHAEL & KATHAN PIERCE concerning the property at 94 CHURCH STREET, WINCHESTER, MA. The petitioners seek Site Plan Review under Section 9.5.1(5) of the Winchester Zoning By-Law so as to be permitted to construct an addition where the total floor area of the single family dwelling will be greater than 5,000 square feet. The property is located in the RDB (Single Residence) zoning district and contains 22,631 +/- square feet.

Guest presenter: Richard Leaf, co-principal of Leaf Design Associates

- Leaf described this 1895 residence that commands the corner of Church Street and Sheffield Road as “one of the most historically significant” houses in Winchester.
- He continued, “The house has “one of the most incredible interiors you have ever seen.”
- The grand Queen Anne style of the residence features:
 - Steeply pitched roofs.
 - Large, full-width front porch.
 - Full-height round tower on the left front corner of the house.
 - Polygonal roof over the right (Sheffield) corner of the porch.
 - Columnar porch supports.
 - Cross gables (rooflines perpendicular to main roof)
 - Projecting bay windows.
 - An abundance of decorative elements.
- In 2007, a family room and garage addition were built onto the Sheffield side of the house.
- Kathan and Mike Pierce seek to extend the second floor of the existing house to create a master bedroom suite over the 2007 addition.
Goals:
 - Give Kathan and Mike their own bedroom suite.
Note:
Six people live in the house — Kathan, Mike, and their four children aged 8, 7, 4, and 1 (as of June 8, 2022). The existing house has four bedrooms.
 - Blend the master suite addition into the Queen Anne style of the main house.

- Make the 2007 addition less prominent.
- Richard Leaf presented photos, plans, and meticulous details of the existing house and proposed new addition. He said, "Fifty to 100 decisions go into every drawing."
- DRC members unanimously agreed that Leaf's designs for the addition are elegant and are harmonious in every respect with the existing house.

Ellen Spencer made the motion —

Favorable action with no recommendations.

All in favor — Vote 5-0.

4. Petition 3965 – 16 Lorena Road, Winchester MA

That of JAMISON and COURTNEY PESCHEL concerning the property at 16 LORENA ROAD, WINCHESTER, MA. The petitioners seek Site Plan Review under Section 9.5.1(5) of the Winchester Zoning By-Law so as to be permitted to construct an addition that is less than 500 square feet but where the total floor area of the single family dwelling is greater than 5,000 square feet. The property is located in the RDB (Single Residence) zoning district and contains 12,112 +/- square feet.

Guest presenter: Jamison (Jamie) Peschel

- Peschel opened with an apology. He said, "My project is so small, it's not worthy of our collective time."
- The Peschel's "project" is a 280 sq.ft. art studio addition to their house.
- Peschel explained that he is actually seeking a Site Plan Waiver, but to obtain the waiver, the Town requires him to go through the Site Plan Approval process.
- He directed DRC's attention to the Zoning Bylaw, Section 9.5.1A, which says, in full:
 - Notwithstanding subsections 9.5.1.4 through 6, if the proposed construction or expansion is 500 square feet or less, the Zoning Board of Appeals may waive site plan approval; provided, that it finds that the impact of the proposal on the neighborhood would not be significant. (STM [Spring Town Meeting] Art. [Article] 7, 4/30/2018.)
- As to the statement, "... provided ... the impact of the proposal on the neighborhood would not be significant," Peschel explained that:
 - The addition is on the back of the house and not visible from the street.
 - The roofline of the addition will extend the existing roofline.
 - Materials, style, and windows of the addition will match the existing house.
 - Tall, thick evergreen trees the Peschels cultivated over the

years rim the property. These trees will block the addition from view by the neighbors.

- Existing shrubs and deciduous trees will remain as they are.
- New river stones will match existing river stones.
- The addition will make the whole house more heat efficient.

Ellen Spencer made the motion that ZBA grant the waiver requested.

All in favor – Vote 5-0.

5. Petition 3966 – 82 Arlington Street, Winchester MA

That of DANIEL and JULIE TEMPESTA concerning the property at 82 ARLINGTON STREET, WINCHESTER, MA. The petitioners are seeking Site Plan Review under Section 9.5.1(7) of the Winchester Zoning By-Law so as to change the grade of more than 500 square feet by more than six (6) percent. The property is located in the RDA (Single Residence) zoning district and contains 23,231 +/- square feet.

Guest presenter: Brian Mulvehill, Landscape designer at Lynch Landscape and Tree Services, Inc.

Mulvehill showed photographs of the Tempesta's existing outdoor living and back yard spaces.

He followed the photos with pictures of Lynch Landscape's proposed transformation of these spaces.

- Over-arching goals of the project are to:
 - Make the back yard terrain more design-inspired, functional, and usable.
 - Create improvements that in turn improve abutting properties.
 - On the southern boundary of the lot, level the lawn by more than 500 sq.ft. and install a small fieldstone retaining wall to better control storm water runoff, which currently spills down the hill.
- Mulvehill noted that a basketball court may be added to the back yard in the future.
- Mulvehill's pictures showed magnificent landscaping and elegant terracing. So much terracing, his renderings prompted DRC member Ellen Spencer to ask if the lot is big enough to meet the Town's requirements for percentage of hardscape to greenspace.
- Mulvehill assured DRC members that, even with the addition of the basketball court, the proposed landscape plans for this more than 23,000 sq.ft. property are still "well under" the hardscape-to-greenspace ratio.
- He added that none of the renovations are visible to neighbors or from Arlington Street, and that neighbors approved the design plans.
- DRC member Riemenschneider asked about lighting. Mulvehill

replied that all illumination added to existing lighting will be recessed down lighting.

Ellen Spencer made the motion:

DRC recommends favorable action for Site Plan Approval.

All in favor: Vote 5-0

6. Vote on DRC representative to assist in the selection of members for the Master Plan Implementation Committee.

- Juli Riemenschneider nominated Ellen Spencer.
- Spencer agreed to serve as DRC representative.

All in favor – Vote 5-0.

7. Adjourn.

SUMMARY of Design Review Committee VOTES – June 8, 2022			
Minutes #	Item	Address	Vote
2.	Petition 3962	11 Watson Place	Favorable action 5-0, with four recommendations.
3.	Petition 3964	94 Church Street	Favorable action 5-0, with no conditions or recommendations.
4.	Petition 3965	16 Lorena Road	Motion to grant the Site Plan Waiver requested. All in favor 5-0.
5.	Petition 3966	82 Arlington Street	Recommendation of favorable action for Site Plan Approval. All in favor 5-0.
6.	Nomination of representative to assist the Master Plan Implementation Committee		Juli Riemenschneider nominated Ellen Spencer. Spencer accepted. All in favor 5-0.

Next meeting: Wednesday, July 6, 2022, 7:30 pm, by Zoom.

Respectfully submitted by DRC Recording Secretary Nancy Upper.