



TOWN OF WINCHESTER

Design Review Committee

Town Hall, Winchester, Massachusetts 01890

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

MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, August 2, 2023, 7:30 PM - MYSTIC VALLEY ROOM, TOWN HALL

PRESENT: Spencer, Burhans, Casciari, Devol, Riemenschneider

1. Open Meeting. Vote to approve minutes of July 12, 2023

Vote: All in favor 5-0

2. Crescent Road

PETITION NO. 4001 - That of PATRICK and AMANDA CAMPBELL concerning the property at 3 CRESCENT ROAD, 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 side property line than permitted as of right. The property is in the RDB (Single Residence) zoning district and contains 6,122 +/- square feet.

Guest Presenters: Architects Aaron Weinert & Joe Fratoni of Studio Draw
Patrick Campbell, Owner

Architects reviewed slides of the project which is adding a covered porch closer to the lot line than allowed for which approval was received from the Planning Board.

Members noted that it's already non-conforming and the design is nice and user friendly.

Ms. Devol asked what materials would be used to which the architects indicated it is all wood construction in keeping with the existing front.

Ms. Casciari moved to approve the design as drawn; and recommended favorable action on this petition as the house is already non-conforming, the changes in the porch structure will not add to that, and the design and materials are in keeping with the design of the house.

Vote: All in favor 5-0

3. 75 Bacon Street

PETITION NO. 4002 - That of JON and EMILY O'DONNELL concerning the property at 75 BACON STREET, WINCHESTER, MA. The petitioners seek a Special Permit from Section 5.1.10(1) of the Winchester Zoning By-Law in accordance with Chapter 40A, Section 9 of the Massachusetts General Laws so as to be permitted to have the width of the driveway entrances greater than 10 feet. The property is located in the RDB (Single Residence).

Guest Presenter: No guests presented.

It was noted that the Design Review Committee previously approved a garage at this location 1 ½ years ago. Members discovered a discrepancy between the drawing showing an 18ft opening and the slides of the property as viewed on July 20, 2012, that clearly shows it isn't or wasn't that large. The Committee is fine with moving it over but not with an opening larger than 10ft.

Ms. Casciari moved for unfavorable action because it is out of scale and character with the street, the driveway examples provided were not of Cottage Avenue, safety concerns relative to children, and the error in the drawings indicating it's 18ft. A variance should not be granted to make the driveway larger than what is allowed by the zoning by-laws.

Vote: All in favor 5-0

4. 158-162 Swanton Street, Revised

Guest Presenters: Att. Larry Murray / Ron Roy, Contractor
Neighbors: Paul & Jackie Masi
Richard Rohan

Attorney Murray stated the petitioner had created new plans for the project since they're last presentation before the Committee and displayed the revised photos illustrating the garages and retaining walls had been eliminated, the parking spaces were moved to the rear, the dormers were redesigned and a landscaping plan with 3 tree plantings had been added. He also mentioned they were no longer seeking site plan approval but all other special permits were still in place.

Members concerns included:

- The rendering and plans as presented are not in synch with one depicting one continuous farmers porch yet the floor plans indicate 3 separate porches. If approved, it would be with the understanding that the farmers porch would be as shown in the rendering. The "eyebrow" in the middle should be smaller as shown on the plans.
- The trees in the front yard should be moved closer to the street so they would eventually overhang the street.

- In favor of less parking and more green space though Attorney Murray pointed out a special permit would be required by the ZBA to reduce the parking.
- Adjustments to the parking spaces to prevent damage to and preserve the existing maple in the rear.

Neighbors' concerns included:

- Protecting the large maple in the back corner which was addressed
- A utility pole currently providing electricity in the neighborhood-Att. Murry and renderings indicated that it would remain.
- The height of the structure adding their preference for a two-family unit as opposed to the proposed three family unit. Committee members stated that fell under the ZBA.
- Fencing which Att. Murray indicated would be removed.

While members agreed the plans were much improved, they could not approve it as is.

Ms. Spencer moved for favorable action with the following conditions: being presented with a revised front elevation drawing depicting a gable without the legs and a little bit wider, the corrected front porch line, adjustments to the number or the location of the parking spaces to save the maple tree in the back yard and to incorporate permeable pavers in two of the spaces, and a list of materials to indicate cedar shingles on the front with hardy board on the side, painted pvc trim and to show three single windows on the 3rd floor side elevations for consistency with no fencing beyond the front porch.

Vote: 4 in favor/1 abstained

5. Lynch Elementary School

PETITION NO. 4003 - That of the TOWN OF WINCHESTER concerning the property at 10 BRANTWOOD ROAD & 154 HORN POND BROOK ROAD, (LYNCH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL), WINCHESTER, MA. The petitioner seeks Site Plan Review under Section 9.5.1(3) and Section 9.5.1(7) of the Winchester Zoning By-Law in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws to be permitted to construct a new elementary school that will require more than twenty (20) parking spaces and to change the grade of more than 500 square feet by more than six (6) percent. In addition, the petitioner seeks a Special Permit under the following sections: Section 6.3.1 for the removal of earth materials and Section 5.2.5 for relief from the minimum number of loading bays (5.2.2). The petitioner further seeks a Variance from the following sections: Section 4.1 for relief from the maximum building height, Section 5.1.3 for relief from the number of parking spaces required, Section 5.1.9(7) for relief from the 2% minimum landscape interior area of parking lots and Section 5.2.2 for relief from the minimum number of loading bays. The property is in the SCI (Conservancy-Institutional) zoning district and contains 955,490 +/- square feet.

No representative was present to answer several questions the Committee had.

Committee members were displeased they were essentially given full construction drawings/plans without having had an opportunity to go through them with someone involved in their creation. Also, what was received did not appropriately represent anything members felt they could make design recommendations on. Members unanimously declined to take a vote on this project without further communication and visuals that truly explain its design.

Based on the designs presented, Committee members have the following comments: we're concerned about the noise and visuals of the mechanical systems on the roof, the dark entry, the existence of bathrooms over the entry, and interior spaces with no daylight. Even from the inadequate rendering provided, it looks forbidding and unfriendly. It should be remembered that it's an elementary school. There's no color and it's unwelcoming to young children. It appears you can drive from one side to the other which would be unsafe for grade school students. Members strongly believe the use of cheerful brick, larger windows, murals, etc. would be beneficial.

6. New and Old Business

Waterfield Lot

Using the mill as inspiration, Committee members recommend brick on all or as much of the façade as possible to help the building appear more in line with the town center, like a converted mill building. The amount of the dark grey exterior surfaces is too dark. The structure is four stories high and will be seen throughout town so it's important to make it work. The stone lintels and sills shown on the Waterfield side should be consistent throughout the entire building.

Committee members would like to review the plans in more detail to see lighting, towers, materials etc. and voiced their concern about its proximity to the other buildings, particularly in the rear.

7. Adjourn

Ellen Spencer moved to adjourn at 9:44PM

Vote: All in favor 5-0

Next meeting: September 6, 2023. Meeting in person at Town Hall, Room TBD.

Respectfully submitted by DRC Recording Secretary, Cheryl Dennis