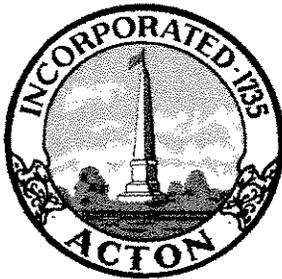


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Planning Department

**INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATION**

**To:** Don P. Johnson, Town Manager **Date:** October 3, 2005  
**From:** Roland Bartl, AICP, Town Planner *R. B.*  
**Subject:** Site Plan 08/26/05-404; 403-411 Massachusetts Avenue

The applicant proposes to demolish two office buildings on the site and replace them with one new bank building. The land area is 71,335 sq.ft. per the legal description furnished in application. Street frontage is on Mass. Avenue. The "no-name" street that abuts the site is not a street under zoning definitions and does not provide frontage.

The total building floor area would be reduced as follows:

	Total building net floor area	Floor Area Ratio (FAR):
Current:	27,095 sq.ft.	0.38
After Demolition:	18,339 sq.ft.	0.26
Proposed:	21,000 sq.ft. +/-	0.29

The site is presently pre-existing nonconforming. The maximum FAR is 0.40, but only if the site complies with special Kelley's Corner design provisions set forth in section 5.6.3 (incl. subsections) of the zoning bylaw. Otherwise, the maximum FAR is capped a 0.20. The site is either nonconforming to the special design standards or nonconforming to the FAR ceilings - probably both. Nonconformities are protected and allowed to continue in their present configuration, but law and practice anticipates that they will disappear over time as changes are made. The demolition of buildings erases the protections for any nonconformities. The demolition by itself will reduce non-conformity. But, the Building Commissioner will have to determine if an entirely new building can be erected after the demolition has occurred in excess of FAR 0.20 and without bringing the site into compliance wit the design standards of section 5.6.3 ff.

Given that Kelley's Corner is designated as a business center area where the Town wishes to concentrate further development in a more urban and pedestrian friendly setting, divestment as is proposed here must be troublesome even if the new building may be worth more than the buildings it would replace.

In addition, the proposed site layout and design for the bank building, if approved, perpetuate a non-descript suburban, strip-development character. The building design may be compatible with a Route 2A setting, but it clashes with the Town's vision of Kelley's Corner. The placement of a building in the middle of parking lots and driveways is about the most pedestrian-hostile design imaginable.

Should the plan go forward, I recommend these changes:

1. Install a driveway connection to Quill & Press. This is a requirement under section 5.6.6.2 of the zoning bylaw. It applies to all developments in Kelley's Corner regardless of FAR, and it can only be waived due to conditions on the abutting lot. Even with such waiver, the site must be laid out with a provision for future connection. Similarly, the requirement should apply to connecting with the Exxon station, and with the office building parking lot on the same site but closer to Mass. Avenue.
2. Install a crosswalk with wheel chair ramps on the "no-name" street connecting with the sidewalk on the other side.
3. Resurface and widen the sidewalk on the north side of Mass. Avenue from the "no-name" street to the Main Street intersection.
4. Extend the sidewalk on the "no-name" street past the Exxon station to Main Street, and install a crosswalk at Main Street with wheel chair ramps.
5. Relocate the proposed building closer to the no-name street and put parking to the rear or side.
6. Revisit the parking calculations. It seems that the proposed number of spaces is in excess of what zoning requires. For lack of detailed information, I am unable to follow the statement in the application that asserts that the minimum is 84 spaces. Also, consider that there are currently fewer parking spaces for a more intense use of the land. From my own experience, which of course has only anecdotal value, there was always parking available when I needed it. As for the proposed use, banks are typically not parking intensive, especially if there is a drive-up window.

Cc: ✓ Planning Board  
Building Commissioner  
Engineering Dept.

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