

## **Alternatives Analysis for Riverfront Area**

As prescribed in 310CMR 10.58(5) “Redevelopment Within Previously Developed Riverfront Areas” the regulations do not require an alternatives analysis when a project is in compliance with the section. Compliance with this section was outlined in the narrative submitted with the Notice of Intent. However, since the Department of Environmental protection has requested an alternatives analysis in its issuance of the DEP file number, we offer the following:

Project purpose: (included in NOI and prepared by applicant):

The *West Acton Village Ecology (WAVE)* is a combination of adaptive re-use and new construction on the vacant properties adjacent to our office, *OMR Architects*, located in the old St. Elizabeth’s Church building in West Acton Village.

Our proposal is the result of many conversations with town and village residents, business owners, community and cultural groups, Acton school and community education representatives, town boards and administrators, and elected officials. These discussions have revealed a strong desire for environmentally responsible, community-based development that enriches Acton’s cultural landscape, preserves its heritage, strengthens local business, and reflects the goals expressed in the West Acton Village Master Plan and Acton Comprehensive Community Plan Visioning Workshops.

We are committed to the Village and to achieving these community needs. We have been business owners in West Acton for 25 years, and are driven (and as in all of our work) to ensure that WAVE is environmentally sensitive, respectful of the past, and forward looking.

### Goals

The project name, “West Acton Village Ecology”, represents the central theme of *connection*. We want WAVE to help connect people to cultural opportunities, educational resources, the built and natural environment, local history, and a *shared sense of community*. We believe that reinforcing and strengthening these connections fosters a greater understanding, appreciation, and responsibility for each other and the places we live.

In addition to this overarching goal, we hope to achieve the following objectives:

- Preserve the existing historic village scale, rhythm, and spirit.
- Model environmentally responsible planning, design, construction, and occupancy.
- Support the long-term sustainability of local businesses and intergenerational community connections within the village.
- Establish a local home for the arts and community gathering.
- Link learning, cultural, recreational, and business opportunities with a safer, quieter, and more pedestrian-oriented public streetscape.

### Alternative #1 – No change to the Riverfront Area

If no work is done within the Riverfront Area (RFA), the sewage disposal system leaching area will be eliminated without an opportunity for an alternate location. The parking area within the RFA would be eliminated. Both of these would make the project unbuildable since there would be no opportunity for sewage disposal and there would be an insufficient number of parking spaces as required under the Acton Zoning Bylaw. Therefore this alternative was rejected.

Alternative #2 – Residential Building over the parking lot in RFA

This alternative was explored early in the process. This would have required municipal sewer to be available since the septic system location would be unavailable under a residential building. This alternative was discarded when the municipal sewer plans were put on hold.

Alternative #3 – Provide no parking in the RFA

This alternative would reduce the amount of impervious coverage in the RFA by eliminating the proposed parking spaces, but maintaining the access drive through the RFA. This alternative would make the project unfeasible since there would be an insufficient number of parking spaces as required under the Acton Zoning Bylaw.

Alternative #4 – Proposed Alternative.

The proposed alternative meets the project purpose and makes the project feasible. The criteria outlined in 310CMR 10.58(5)(a-h) are being met. The project will result in an improvement over existing conditions and will enhance the interests identified in the Wetlands protection Act.