

7/12/10 (7)

**Christine Joyce**

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**From:** Ann [annsmail4@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 07, 2010 10:47 AM  
**To:** Christine Joyce  
**Subject:** re: New DRB charter + old for mtg on 12th

Hi Christine –

Here's the new DRAFT DRB charter for the meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup>. (the packet)  
I've also attached the OLD if anyone enquires about that.

Thanks for everything.

Ann  
978 790 7776

7/7/2010



## DESIGN REVIEW BOARD CHARTER

February 26, 2007  
May 19, 2010 revised

### Purpose

The mission of the Design Review Board (DRB) is to promote attractive pedestrian-friendly development that enhances town character, property values and overall quality of life for residents of the Town.

As part of this mission, the Board publishes Design Review Guidelines. These guidelines show the direction Acton wants development to take in the future. They suggest ways for development to be contextually sensitive, respecting the Town's unique past and historic building traditions while being open to all styles of design and architecture. The Guidelines form the basis for DRB review of all projects. The DRB is available to review commercial projects, municipal projects, residential projects of four-units or more or other town projects as requested by the Board of Selectmen or other Town boards or departments.

### Membership

The Board of Selectmen will appoint a Design Review Board, consisting of five full members and two associate members. Two of these members will be a Planning Board Member and a Planning Board Alternate. All members will be Acton residents with a professional background or general interest in the following areas:

- Architecture or Planning
- Real Estate Development
- Landscape Architecture and Design
- Interior Design
- Graphic Design
- Civil Engineering
- Land Use Law

### Process

Upon referral to the DRB by the Board of Selectman, Zoning Board of Appeals, or Planning Department, the applicant should appear before the DRB and present drawings and renderings of the project as well as photos of existing context. It is recommended applicants meet with the DRB as early as possible in the development process.

Board members will make suggestions regarding the design of the project including possible changes to make it more consistent with the Design Review Guidelines. Follow-up meetings shall be scheduled as deemed necessary by the DRB or recommended by other Boards.

All DRB comments on the Proposed Project will be compiled in a Memo, forward to the referring Board, the Applicant, and posted on the Town website for public access.

All DRB meetings are open to the public.

## **Administration**

Decisions of the Board shall be consistent with the intent and purpose of the Design Review Guidelines and Town Master Plan. The DRB may periodically revise and amend the Design Review Guidelines subject to Board of Selectmen approval.

The Design Review Board shall follow all Town bylaws and State regulations for the Open Meeting Process including posting requirements, public hearings, record keeping, quorums, recording of minutes, etc. The Board shall adopt Rules and Regulations to govern their activities and meet on a regular basis twice monthly.

The Design Review Board, or designated members, shall be available to meet informally with applicants or potential applicants. The Design Review Guidelines shall be posted on the Town's website. Copies of the Design Review Guidelines shall be made available to all relevant Town Departments for distribution to potential applicants.

The Design Review Board shall elect annually from their membership a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Clerk. The Board shall be responsible for all administrative tasks associated with their duties and not rely on support from Town staff.

The Design Review Board Chair shall remain in contact with the Board of Selectman Liaison.

Full members of the Board will be appointed to three year terms and Associate members to a one year term.



## **DRAFT DESIGN REVIEW PROPOSAL**

February 26, 2007

### **Purpose**

To establish a Design Review Board for the purpose of streamlining the approval process for commercial development while promoting attractive, pedestrian-friendly development that enhances the overall quality of life for residents of the Town. The Design Review Board shall serve the Board of Selectmen in an advisory capacity by reviewing and commenting on proposed Special Permit applications submitted to the Town.

As part of this mission, the Design Review Board publishes Design Review Guidelines for Commercial Development. These guidelines show the general public as well as potential applicants the direction Acton wants development to take in the future. The guidelines suggest ways for commercial development to be contextually sensitive, respecting the Town's unique past and historic building traditions without being enslaved or "frozen in Time" by them.

### **Membership**

The Board of Selectmen will appoint a Design Review Board, consisting of 5 full members and 2 associate members. Membership will be comprised of Acton citizens with a background or interest in the following areas of expertise:

- Architecture or Urban Planning
- Commercial Real Estate
- Landscape Architecture and Design
- Interior Design
- Graphic Design
- Builders/Construction Professionals
- Planning Board Member
- Citizen at Large
- Local Businessperson or Commercial Property Owner

### **Process**

Prior to filing an application for a Special Permit it is recommended that the applicant present concept drawings, and/or photos of the proposed project and meet with the Design Review Board for a preliminary

discussion. Board members will review the proposal and make suggestions regarding the design of the project including possible changes to make it more consistent with the Design Review Guidelines and citizen preferences. Follow-up meetings may be scheduled as desired and applicants are invited to return for further input at any time in the process. It is recommended that all permit applicants and those making exterior alterations to their commercial property come before the Design Review Board.

The applicant may then revise their design and present it to relevant town boards and departments for further review. This input can then be used by the applicant to develop and submit a formal application.

The Design Review Board will receive a copy of the final Special Permit application, review it and promptly submit written comments to the Board of Selectmen as is currently done by all advisory boards. The Selectmen shall consider these comments when rendering their decision regarding the application.

### **Administration**

The Design Review Board shall be familiar with all zoning bylaws, historic district guidelines, overlay districts, wetlands, and wastewater requirements, and consult with the other town boards as necessary to review an application. The Board should avoid recommendations and decisions that are in conflict with other standing Town bylaws and State regulations. Decisions of the Board shall be consistent with the intent and purpose of the Design Review Guidelines which the Board may revise and amend periodically.

The Design Review Board shall follow all Town bylaws and State regulations for the Open Meeting Process including posting requirements, public hearings, record keeping, quorums, recording of minutes, etc. The Board shall adopt Rules and Regulations to govern their activities and meet on a regular basis twice monthly.

The Design Review Board, or designated members, shall be available to meet informally with applicants or potential applicants. The Design Review Guidelines shall be posted on the Town's website and updated as it is revised and amended. Copies of the Design Review Guidelines shall be made available to all relevant Town Departments for distribution to potential applicants for a Special Permit.

The Design Review Board shall elect annually from their membership a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Clerk. The Board shall be responsible for all administrative tasks associated with their duties and not rely on support from Town staff.

Full members of the Board will be appointed to 3 year terms and Associate members to a 1 year term.

### **Summary**

The objective of the Design Review Board is to help align commercial projects with the goals and objectives as stated in the Town's Master Plan, citizen preference surveys and other planning documents. The purpose of the Design Review Guidelines is to help commercial property owners efficiently expend their resources and expedite the permitting process with projects that will meet with a high degree of town acceptance. Ultimately, the goal is to save applicants time and frustration, improve the quality of new development, while enhancing the long-term architectural character and livability of the Town of Acton.