



DRB Memorandum

Morrison Farm Nature and History Center and Nara Park Picnic Pavilion

Date of DRB Meeting: 02/06/2013

During its February 06, 2013 meeting the DRB reviewed elements of two project proposals under consideration for CPA funding each incorporating proposed new public buildings.

Project 1: Morrison Nature and History Center

Project Location: Morrison Farmland, Concord Road

Project Documents Reviewed: Morrison Farm Trail Plan – schematic site layout, Morrison Nature and History Center schematic floor plan and schematic exterior elevations

The DRB is very impressed with and in general endorses the plans proposed for reuse of the Morrison Farm property. Committee members offer the following observations and suggestions with the intent to enhance and strengthen the proposed historic and recreational site redevelopment:

Noting the absence of the existing barn structure on the proposed site plan, and given the historic significance to the town of the Morrison farm, including its listing on the National Register, the board is curious as to whether a study has been undertaken to determine whether the existing barn structure can reasonably be maintained. If the cost to maintain the barn structure is not significant in relation to the cost to remove it, the board believes the site will more authentically represent the town's agrarian history by retaining the farm house with all farm related buildings in situ.

Members of the board, though generally pleased with the plan and exterior images reviewed of the proposed Nature and History Center, felt the proposed design for this building could be undertaken in a more contemporary language, so as to clearly delineate that this is a new structure, distinct and separate from the original farm property buildings.

It is the board's opinion that a study should be considered by the Morrison Farm design team to look at the possible relocation of the Nature and History Center structure further to the north on the site. While making this suggestion we acknowledge that we did not have access to a topographic survey to understand whether this suggestion is feasible. Relocation to the north will visually separate the existing historic building elements from the new structure, thus diminishing confusion as to the physical attributes of the original farm. Relocation to the north will also offer much less immediate impact to the existing Community Garden plots, including shadow development along the western side of the gardens.

The board noted that the orchard tree grove suggested to the east of the community garden plot can also have a shadow impact on the gardens and perhaps some or all could be relocated to another portion of the site.

Project 2: Nara Park Picnic Pavilion

Project Location: Nara Park

Project Documents Reviewed: Pavilion Site and Roof Schematic Plans, Pavilion 3D colored rendering image

The DRB is in agreement with the concept for constructing a permanent open air structure at Nara Park to be primarily used as a protected picnic area. The board believes the placement, scale and organization of the pavilion are appropriate as proposed. The board offers, however, that consideration be given to the style proposed of the post and beam frame to more comfortably blend with the adjacent pond bath house and the amphitheatre. It is felt that a contemporary framework, in lieu of the barn like image presented in the schematic drawings reviewed, will serve to integrate the new structure within its Nara Park environs and help develop a more consistent and memorable park image.

Respectfully Submitted by the Design Review Board

Members in attendance: Holly Ben-Joseph, PLA
David Honn, RA
Peter Darlow, RA
Conor Nagle, PE
Kim Montella, PE