



DRB Memorandum

Project: Walker Realty/Next Generation Child Care Facility, Main Street, Acton, MA

In Attendance: Holly Ben-Joseph (HBJ) Landscape Architect, Peter Darlow (PD) Architect, David Honn (DH) Architect, DRB members

Proponent Representative:
None in attendance

- At the request of the Acton Planning Board a Conceptual Site Plan prepared by Hancock Associates and dated 1.13.15 was reviewed by the DRB. At their meeting of February 18, 2015. The DRB had the following comments:

Comments:

- a) It was agreed that the plan submitted was inadequate for review purposes lacking even the most basic information such as contour lines and finished floor elevations.
- b) The DRB noted that the child enrollment stated for this facility is approximately two-thirds the size of a typical Acton elementary school (500 students), however, Acton's elementary schools are located on substantially larger properties. The DRB notes the scale of the building will appear massive for the site.
- c) The DRB recollects that the existing Kennedy Landscaping site slopes upward from Main Street so that unless the site is graded flat with retaining walls at the back of the site (no retaining walls are shown) then the building will be on a hill and appear even more prominent than its square footage would suggest.
- d) The site's layout is antithetical to the recently adopted goals of the Acton 2020 Master Plan and the Kelley Corner Initiative to de-emphasize the vehicle and promote a more pedestrian oriented environment. This site plan, with the parking prominently distributed along Main Street, simply extends the status quo from the commercial properties further down Main Street and along Massachusetts Avenue. The very issue that the Town of Acton is spending considerable time, effort and consulting fees to remedy.
- e) It was obvious to the DRB that there is a substantial lack of site and building design initiative being expended to adapt this facility to the particular site at hand. This is a "pro-forma" building whose size, type and configuration are merely being tweaked and then shoehorned onto an awkward property in the most expedient manner and to the neighborhood's and the town's detriment.

Design Review Board