



DRB Memorandum

Date: 16 July 2014

Project Location: 267 Great Road, Acton, MA

Package Reviewed:

Stamski and McNary, Inc

Site Plan for Acton Management Inc. 267 Great Road, Date: June 27, 2014

- Existing Conditions Plan
- Grading and Drainage Plan
- Layout Plan
- Construction Details (didn't review)
- Landscape Plan

Drawings from Website reviewed:

Architect - EJ Rempelakis

Building

- Plans- Section A-A - No Date
- Elevations - No Date
- Floor Plan - No Date
- Right & Left Side Elevation - No Date

Proponent Representatives in attendance:

none

DRB Members in Attendance:

Holly Ben-Joseph (HBJ)(Landscape Architect); Peter Darlow (PD)(Architect); David Honn (DH)(Architect)

Date of DRB Review: 07-16-2014

The DRB met on the above date to review the drawings. The project is a new office building with parking on a lot with an existing single family home. It is located across Great Road from the Donelans shopping center and adjacent to another small commercial plaza to the west, and a 40B housing project to its east side. The property is shaped like an 'L', and a portion of the property lays within a wetland setback. The majority of the proposed development is located closest to Great Road, with the other heavily vegetated area being left undisturbed. The building is facing the road and parking is set to the side and back of the building.

The Design Review Board has the following comments:

Site Comments:

- The site plan works well, with most of the development closest to Great Road, and the vegetated area being left in its natural state.
- It is difficult to determine from the drawings if the existing residential building is to remain; there is no demolition plan that shows this, and there seems to be no access drive to the existing back building.

The plans submitted show conflicting information - the Grading Plan shows access via the new parking lot and the Planting Plan does not show access.

- The Design Review Board believes the site-plan works well and follows DRB Guidelines - the building is the prominent feature from the street and parking is tucked to the side and back of the building.
- The number of parking spaces is reasonable for the size of the office building.
- The DRB suggests using a material such as concrete or pavers for the walk to the building rather than an asphalt path - this would upgrade the look and quality of the pedestrian entrance to the building.
- There is an existing 18" Maple on site and it is not clear if the intent is to save this tree. On the Landscape Plan the 18" maple is shown in a planting island within the parking, on the Grading Plan, the Maple is removed for the parking lot drive. The DRB highly recommends adjusting the parking layout to keep this existing mature tree.
- The DRB suggests using a different tree other than Flowering Pear along the access drive for several reasons: 1) it is weak wooded and limbs splinter; 2) it has become an unofficial invasive plant; 3) its fragrance is offensive to many.
- The DRB recommends replacing Rugosa Rose with another flowering shrub since this plant is now an official invasive plant.
- The DRB suggests to add an outdoor seating area near the building for employees; for instance at the front or east side of the building.
- There is no North Arrow on the plans.
- What type of lighting fixtures will be used?
- Will there be any signage and if so, where?

Building Comments:

- In general, the architecture design is acceptable, though notably very simple; the quoins on the building corners over the brick is a nice detail.
- The DRB suggests more money and design effort could be invested in a proportionately stronger entrance porch and decorative treatment at the entrance doors.
- The DRB suggests flipping the building to also point out that by doing so the office windows on the end of the building would then face toward Great Road.

In general, the DRB had a favorable opinion of the project and will support moving forward with the project if the following suggestions are incorporated into the plans.

Respectfully Submitted,

Design Review Board