



DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Meeting Minutes
In-Person Meeting, Town Hall, Room 204
May 3, 2022
7:00 PM

Present: Peter Darlow (PD)(Chair); David Honn (DH); Richard Keleher (RK); Tom Doolittle (TD)

Absent: Holly Ben Joseph (HBJ); Jon Cappetta (JC)(Planning Board Liaison); Dean Charter (DC)
(Select Board Representative)

1. Opening

Chair, Peter Darlow, opened the meeting at 7:05 pm.
Chair reads Covid-19 Statement

2. Regular Business

- A. Citizens' concerns – none
- B. Approval of Meeting Minutes – The meeting minutes for March 01, 2022 were discussed and approved by 4-0 vote”. RK to send to the Town Clerk.

3. Special Business

- A. 115 River Street Project Presentation:
 - Lavalley/Brensinger Architects presented drawings for the demolition and re-building of a warehouse facility.
 - DRB members offered comments on the design.
 - Refer to the DRB memo concerning this project dated May 02, 2022.
- B. Tree Clearing Presentation:
 - RK gave a Power Point Presentation regarding tree clearing in Acton pertaining to new construction sites. Refer to the Power Point Presentation slides.
 - It was noted that the Select Board deferred to take any action on this topic at their recent Board meeting.
 - It was agreed that RK would prepare a DRB memo to the BoS in support of the initiative.



C. Changes to Acton's PCRC Zoning Article:

- The DRB has previously prepared summary memos regarding suggested changes to the PCRC bylaw and lot configuration parameters in the existing Acton Zoning Code. It was generally agreed that the DRB memos were sufficiently comprehensive enough to begin discussions with the Planning Board and subsequently and hopefully, the Select Board, Planning Department and Town Counsel towards the development of revised zoning bylaw language suitable for Town Meeting approval.
- It was noted that the Select Board deferred to take any action on this topic at their recent Board meeting.
- No action was taken by the DRB regarding this topic.

4. Adjournment

At 8:20 p.m., it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting.
The motion was approved unanimously.

5. Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting

- Meeting Minutes of March 01, 2022.
- 115 River Street Project Presentation by Lavallee/Brensinger Architects
- Tree Clearing Power Point Presentation



TOWN OF ACTON
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
Review Memorandum: 115 River Street
May 03, 2022

DRB Members in attendance: Peter Darlow (Chair), David Honn, Richard Keleher, and Thomas Doolittle

Proponents in attendance: David Bamforth - Property Owner, Joseph Gaiko, Patrick Manning – DC Beane & Associates, Chris Drobat – Lavalee/Brensinger Architects, George Mihov – Howard Stein Hudson

Documents Reviewed: A power point presentation prepared by Lavalee/Brensinger Architects, Howard Stein Hudson, and DC Beane titled: Proposed Storage Building 115 River Street, Acton, MA 01720, dated 5/03/22.

Slide titles:

- 1 Title Sheet
- 2 Existing Site
- 3 Existing Site Context
- 4 Existing Exterior
- 5 Existing Elevations
- 6 Propose Site Plan
- 7 Renderings
- 8 Renderings
- 9 Renderings
- 10 Proposed Elevations
- 11 Proposed Floor Plans

It is proposed by the proponents to replace an existing storage building located on the property at 115 River Street with a new updated storage building within the identical existing approximate 19,360SF building footprint. 115 River Street is a parcel of land that is bounded to the north by River Street and to the South by the MBTA tracks.

The replacement structure would be designed with a larger overall volume by raising the height from 20ft to 38ft, to accommodate a mezzanine for office space and to expand the potential for storage capacity or possibly a light industrial use opportunity of a future tenant. The building is proposed to be built with attention paid to reduced carbon energy consumption as an all electric systems property, inclusive of daylight harvesting Kalwall translucent wall panels on the south facing façade and rooftop solar panels, with the intention to produce as much of the energy needed to operate on site as possible.

The proposed new storage/light industrial building will be a steel structure clad with insulated metal panels. The west facing arrival end of the building will include the main entrance, accentuated by a full height glass curtain wall providing views of the building lobby and mezzanine areas, and a loading door for trucks. The proposed metal panel and curtain wall material finishes are tones of gray as the proponents desire for the building to visually disappear from River Street views behind the surrounding wooded landscape that separates the building from the street. Mechanical equipment will be mounted within the building interior with the intention of providing as much unimpeded space on the roof for solar panels.

The proponent is planning for the redevelopment of the storage building to have a relatively low impact to the balance of the existing property. The existing residential structure and adjacent garage located tight to River Street are to remain unchanged. The drive in from River Street, the existing bridge crossing Fort Pond Brook, rebuilt in 2017, and the current paved parking area to the west of the storage building are proposed to be maintained. The drive and parking areas will be repaved with attention paid to management of water runoff directed away from Fort Pond Brook and immediate wetlands to an infiltration tank array installed below the paved parking area, through the use of pavement pitch and curbing to direct the water flow. The proponents intend to expand the paved parking modestly onto a portion of the current gravel parking area and seed the balance of the surrounding graveled area. The development work has been conceived with the intention to minimize any impact to the wooded area immediately surrounding the storage building to the east and north of the building.

It is understood the proponents have just begun to meet with other town boards and departments, and therefore plans for the redevelopment will potentially evolve.

Following are comments/recommendations made by the DRB:

- DRB members are comfortable with the simple, understated, exterior treatment of the building enclosure. The finish selection of tones of gray is a good choice for the building exterior to “disappear” behind the surrounding forested land to the east and north, minimizing visibility from River Street.
- The decision to invest in mechanical systems that can be mounted to the building interior is well conceived, enhancing the minimal visual impact of this industrial building,
- Given the desired entrance curtain wall faces west, Richard Keleher recommends that as low SHGC (solar heat gain coefficient), glass be used as possible, given it will be difficult to otherwise shade the sun from impacting the building interior environment.
- The quantity of proposed Kalwall should be studied on the South facing façade, as it is not typically necessary for the area of the translucent panel to be large to create a large impact of daylight transmission to the interior.
- DRB members did not see an exterior pathway delineated for egress from the east end of the proposed building, nor a suggested width for a firetruck to access either the south or north facing side of the building. The proponents acknowledge these are each conditions to be reviewed with the town and addressed as the plans are refined.
- DRB members recommend an accessible parking space be considered, given the building use is not defined and could potentially be a type that is publicly accessed.

- The proposal by the proponents to plant grass over much of the balance of the existing gravel parking area is well intentioned. Given how close the property is to wetlands, DRB members feel it is important for the town to establish and affirm with the proponents a limitation on additional pervious pavement.

Design Review Board members are otherwise comfortable with the general approach to the property redevelopment as proposed.

Respectfully submitted,

The DRB