



**TOWN OF WINCHESTER**  
**Design Review Committee**

Town Hall, Winchester, Massachusetts 01890

Juli Riemenschneider, RLA, ASLA, Chair  
Ellen Spencer, Vice Chair  
Adrian LeBuffe, LEED  
Eileen Casciari, RA  
Mary Grassi  
Tracy Burhans  
Jamie Devol, AIA

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, August 3, 2022, 7:30 pm – Meeting by Zoom**

**Present:** Riemenschneider, Spencer, Burhans, Devol, Casciari, LeBuffe  
Recording Secretary Nancy Upper

**1. Open meeting. Vote to approve July 6, 2022, minutes** - All in favor.

**2. Petition 3972 - 11 Mystic Avenue, Winchester MA**

That of DIEGO BELLALTA and ALLISON KANGAS DE BELLALTA concerning the property at 11 MYSTIC AVENUE, WINCHESTER, MA.. The petitioners seek a Special Permit under Section 3.5.5 of the Winchester Zoning By-Law in accordance with Chapter 40A, Section 9 of the Massachusetts General Laws so as to be permitted to construct an addition that will be located closer to another building than permitted as of right. The property is located in the RDB (Single Residence) zoning district and contains 18,684 +/- square feet.

Guest presenters: Diego Bellalta, co-homeowner  
Allison Kangas de Bellalta, co-homeowner

- The house at 11 Mystic Ave was built in the 1920s. The family who owned the house in the 1980s extensively modified the interior.
- In recent years, the Bellaltas spent considerable time and money to update the interior and restore its historic charm.
- More recently, the Bellaltas enhanced the landscaping of their back yard. They do not want the addition to encroach deeply into this valued space.
- The improved interior and enhanced landscaping influenced design decisions for the proposed addition.

DRC members viewed current plans for the addition. Discussion ensued concerning the shape, rooflines, and windows of the proposed addition, and the proximity of the addition to the garage.

Members offered numerous suggestions for the addition's width, its three-story massing, gable vs. hip roof, roof pitches, windows, foundation stucco, and trim.

- Diego Bellalta said they had "played around with many different designs."
- Allison Bellalta specified: "We appreciate your architectural insights and comments, but we went through 15 to 20 versions of the designs" to come up with the most feasible one. "This has been a long, expensive design process."

**Jamie Devol moved to recommend –**

**Favorable action with five conditions:**

- Resolve the awkward roof lines ("corner condition") on the east elevation.
- Lessen the impact of the three-story block-like massing on the back side, which is wider than portions of the house and topped with a low-slope wide gable. To achieve this:
  - o Consider making the pitch of the gable roof steeper on a narrower portion of the addition;
  - o Or consider constructing a simple hip roof over the entire addition. The hip roof would lessen the impact of the massing and would resolve the awkward roof line at the corner.
- Continue stucco around the base of the addition in line with existing stucco. (The stucco can be applied to an insulated stud wall; no need to use a full-height concrete foundation wall above grade at this walk-out basement.)
- Match trim on the addition to trim on the existing house.
- Use windows with real or simulated divided panes to create shadow lines.

**All in favor – Vote 6 - 0.**

**3. Petition 3975 – 34 Oneida Road, Winchester MA**

That of ALEXANDRA and DOUG MURPHY concerning the property at 34 ONEIDA ROAD, WINCHESTER, MA. The petitioners seek a Special Permit under Section 3.5.5 of the Winchester Zoning By-Law in accordance with Chapter 40A, Section 9 of the Massachusetts General Laws so as to be permitted to construct an addition that will be located closer to side property line than permitted as of right. The property is located in the RDB (Single Residence) zoning district and contains 8,302 +/- square feet.

Guest presenters: Alexandra Murphy, co-homeowner  
Doug Murphy, co-homeowner  
Richard Leaf, architect

- The house at 34 Oneida Road was built around 1930.
- The Murphys bought the house April 1, 2020. Alex and Doug have three small children and seek to build an addition to accommodate three bedrooms and a master bedroom suite.
- The proposed addition will replace the current back deck.
- Architect Richard Leaf showed his plans for the addition and explained his design decisions.
- All windows and materials will match those of the existing house.
- Neighbors all around approve the addition.

**Jamie Devol moved to recommend favorable action with no conditions.**

**All in favor — Vote 6 - 0.**

#### **4. Petition 3974 – 26 Johnson Road, Winchester MA**

That of ANNEMARIE and ROBERT COLT concerning the property at 26 JOHNSON ROAD, WINCHESTER, MA. The petitioners seek a Special Permit under Section 3.5.5 of the Winchester Zoning By-Law in accordance with Chapter 40A, Section 9 of the Massachusetts General Laws so as to be permitted to construct an addition that will be located closer to the side property line than permitted as of right. The property is located in the RDA (Single Residence) zoning district and contains 17,127 +/- square feet.

Guest presenters: Robert Colt, co-homeowner  
Annemarie Colt co-homeowner  
Fulton Harley, architect

- Annemarie and Robert are long-time Winchester residents, and their three children settled in Winchester.
- The Colts seek to add a sunroom / playroom to their house so they can enjoy frequent visits from their four (as of August 2022) grandchildren.
- Architect Fulton Harley showed his plans for the addition and explained his design decisions.
- Materials and windows will match existing.
- DRC member Eileen Casciari voiced the Committee's consensus that the addition improves the house.

**Ellen Spencer moved to recommend favorable action with no conditions.**

**All in favor — Vote 6 - 0.**

## 5. Petition 3973 – 15 Tufts Road, Winchester MA

That of 15 TUFTS ROAD LLC / WILLIAM MAHONEY concerning the property at 15 TUFTS ROAD, WINCHESTER, MA. The petitioner seeks Site Plan Review under Section 9.5.1(6) of the Winchester Zoning By-Law so as to be permitted to construct a new two family dwelling where the total floor area of the two family dwelling will be greater than 3,600 square feet. The property is located in the RG (Single Residence) zoning district and contains 16,107 +/- square feet.

Guest presenters: Robert Annese, attorney for the developer

William Mahoney, developer

- The existing two-story house at 15 Tufts Road was built in 1950 as a single-family residence.
- Developer Mahoney seeks to remove the existing house and build a 2½-story, two-family house on the site.
- Mahoney and Annese showed a slide, titled “Landscape Plans and Zoning Information,” prepared by 686 Architects, a Boston-based for-profit corporation.
- The landscape plan indicated removal of nine mature trees (locust trees and Norway maples) to accommodate the footprint of the proposed two-family house.
- DRC members viewed drawings of the proposed two-family exterior. The drawings showed the proposed to be considerably larger than the existing house.
  - DRC members compared the proposed house to the immense two-family house next door. They opposed building another massive structure side by side to that one.
  - Mahoney said that their proposed two-family would be smaller than the one next door.

DRC members’ comments:

- Juli Riemenschneider noted the significant grade changes across the property and asked Mahoney if he had a grading plan. Mahoney replied, “No.”
- Jamie Devol said that the proposed house feels “too massive” and that “too many trees are being taken down for me to support this.”

Attorney Annese asked, “What would your group like to see on this site?”

DRC members’ further comments:

- Riemenschneider said, “One of the things we look at is the neighborhood” and how the proposed house fits into it. “The architect should take cues” from other houses in the vicinity.
- Ellen Spencer concurred.

- Riemenschneider emphasized that the developer should have a landscape plan that includes:
  - Trees that will grow to equivalent height as the trees removed.
  - Trees in the front yard that will grow to shade the street. Recommended examples are oak and maple.
  - At the edges of the property, particularly between the garage driveway and the neighbors, a tall evergreen buffer.
- Eileen Casciari noted that the proposed L-shaped design is “fairly successful,” but the height and massing should be smaller. To achieve this, she suggested a modified hip roof and adding dormers.
- Jamie Devol suggested keeping the existing house and adding a suite or “another house that size” behind the existing house.
- Devol advised keeping mature trees.
- Riemenschneider questioned if the driveway was wide enough for cars to turn into the proposed garage. Mahoney said they would widen the driveway.
- Riemenschneider suggested the developer consider providing garages close to the rear property line. Such garages would reduce the footprint and the mass of the building.

Mahoney said they will work on a redesign and get back to DRC members.

Riemenschneider asked Mahoney and Annese to email drawings to DRC members before their next meeting: September 7, 2022.

**No motion nor vote.**

## 6. Old Business

**Petition 3969** - That of ERIK VAN STRY and SYDNEY TAYLOR SMITH concerning the property at **5 Pilgrim Drive, Winchester MA.**

[See July 6, 2022, Design Review Committee Meeting Minutes, item 4.](#)

Guest presenter: Gail Alden, landscape architect

- DRC members viewed Alden’s revised design for the 5 Pilgrim Drive back yard. Her plan included a rectangular 9’ x 38” pool, a sport court, and a covered cabana with an outdoor kitchen.
- The pool’s main purpose is to serve as a water feature for motion and sound.
- As of August 3, 2022, the petitioners had not discussed pool depth. They are considering 5 feet deep, so the pool can serve as a lap pool.

**Juli Riemenschneider moved to recommend favorable action for the revised pool design only.** DRC members need more information before they can vote on the covered cabana.

All in favor — **Vote: 6 - 0.**

**7. Adjourn.**

<b>SUMMARY of Design Review Committee VOTES – August 3, 2022</b>			
<b>Minutes #</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Vote</b>
<b>2.</b>	Petition 3972	11 Mystic Avenue	Favorable action 6 - 0 with five conditions.
<b>3.</b>	Petition 3975	34 Oneida Road	Favorable action 6 – 0 with no conditions.
<b>4.</b>	Petition 3974	26 Johnson Road	Favorable action 6 – 0 with no conditions.
<b>6.</b>	Petition 3969	5 Pilgrim Drive	Favorable action 6 – 0 on pool redesign only.

**Next meeting: Wednesday, September 7, 2022.** Location to be announced.

Respectfully submitted by Recording Secretary Nancy Upper.