



TOWN OF WINCHESTER

Design Review Committee
Town Hall, Winchester, Massachusetts 01890

David N. Storeygard, AIA, LEED AP, Chair
Juli Riemenschneider, RLA, ASLA, Vice Chair
Tracy Burhans
Eileen Casciari, RA
Mary Grassi
Adrian LeBuffe, LEED
Ellen Spencer

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, October 5, 2021, 7:30 pm - Town Hall, Mystic Valley Room

Present: Storeygard, Riemenschneider, Casciari, Grassi, LeBuffe, Spencer, Recording Secretary Nancy Upper

- 1. Open meeting. Vote to approve September 8, 2021, minutes - All in favor.**
- 2. Petition 3950 - 4 Abby Road (Lot 2), Winchester MA -** The petitioner seeks appeal under Section 9.3.3(3) of the Winchester Zoning Bylaw in accordance with Chapter 40A, Sections 8 and 15, of the Massachusetts General Laws from the Building Commissioner / Zoning Enforcement Officer's issuance of building permit #663 issued July 22, 2021, to construct a new single-family dwelling at 4 Abby Road (also referred to as Lot 2, Abby Road) and related site work.

The property is in the RDB (Single Residence) zoning district and contains 10,023+/- square feet.

Per [Wednesday, March 10, 2021, DRC Meeting Minutes](#), Agenda item 6.:

This site is part of a subdivision and development agreement negotiated among Town of Winchester Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, and the developer.

As part of the agreement, owners are required to request a variance to locate houses closer to the front of the property line than is allowed by zoning. The purpose of this is to allow a larger rear setback, and more space between the new Abby Road houses and the properties on Dana Road.

The plan presented showed a 20-foot front setback and a 21-foot rear setback between the proposed 4 Abby Road house and the rear property line.

At the March 10, 2021, meeting, DRC voted to recommend favorable action, 7-0.

DRC stands by its March 10, 2021, vote and has no further comment. All in favor 6-0.

3. 10 Converse Place, Winchester MA - Special Permit Application submitted to Winchester Planning Board August 10, 2021.

Project Team Members present:

Rob Clocker, Senior Associate at architectural firm Hacin + Associates

Ian Gillespie, President of real estate investment and development company Gillespie and Co., Inc.

Paul Soughley, Main Client Contact for real estate investment firm Ad Meliora

Rob Clocker showed a slide presentation giving the most recent overview of the project. Project goals relevant to DRC:

- a. Accommodate new retail space to reinforce the existing street character and promote an active mixed-use downtown.
- b. Achieve a FAR of 3.0 to maximize the Town's programming goals while providing a balance of building volume and open space.
- c. Create a meaningful publicly accessible open space along Mill Pond to tie into the Town's rich existing network of open spaces.
- d. Meet the objectives of the CBD design guidelines with regards to elements of form.

DRC comments:

- a. Impressed by the design and the thoughtful design process.
- b. Appreciate the project team's attention to quality and look forward to seeing further development of the design, especially the site and landscape.
- c. Need to understand better how the project will conform to the Aberjona Initiative. One member commented that the design is proceeding, but the building feels big and out of scale with downtown Winchester. This member would favor a reduction in the height or footprint of the building.
- d. Request to see sections of the steep bank descending from the site on the east and south water sides.
- e. Questioned the unsupported extension overhanging the entrance at the corner of Converse Place and Mount Vernon.
- f. Request the project team to coordinate paving materials with existing materials to maintain continuity with the rest of the Town, avoid abrupt contrasts, especially at walkways, and create a unified Town character.
- g. Suggest studying a two-story expression for the bay windows with the contrasting material on the building's east side, to give that side a more vertical proportion.

DRC looks forward to seeing more detailed designs for grading, lighting, plantings, and building, paving, and landscape materials.

4. Citizens Bank Sign - 791 Main Street, Winchester MA - The bank is changing all signage due to rebranding from "Citizens Bank" to "Citizens."

Citizens representative Makayla Ngoun distributed a packet to each DRC member showing modifications to Citizens signage.

- a. Design of the proposed free-standing sign was revised so the sign no longer needs a special permit.
- b. Proposed free-standing sign is 6' tall, existing sign is 7' tall.
- c. Proposed free-standing sign is the same width as the existing sign.
- d. Proposed free-standing sign will have no internal illumination. Building lighting will shine on the sign.

DRC has no comment.

5. The Gables at Winchester Signs - 299 Cambridge Street, Winchester MA - Sign Permit Application proposes two new signs, one located on each side of the entrance drive, to replace existing sign.

- a. Each proposed sign will be 96" tall from the ground up.
- b. Each sign is 64.75" tall and sits on a base that is 31.25" tall.

DRC recommendations:

- a. Illuminate the proposed signs externally.
- b. Lower each proposed sign's base, or plant shrubs around the bases to hide the blank slabs.

6. Adjourn.

SUMMARY of Design Review Committee VOTES — October 5, 2021			
Minutes #	Item	Address	Vote
2.	Petition 3950	4 Abby Road	All in favor 6-0.

Next meeting: Wednesday, November 3, 2021, 7:30 pm. Location to be announced.

Respectfully submitted by Recording Secretary Nancy Upper.