



TOWN OF ACTON
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
Review Memorandum: 47 Conant Street
Amanda Lane, Map 12, 56, 50-1 & 50-2

March 25, 2021 Virtual Meeting

Design Review Board (DRB) Members in attendance: Peter Darlow (Chair), Holly Ben-Joseph, David Honn, Thomas Doolittle, Richard Keleher, and Jon Cappetta, (Planning Board Liaison)

Proponents in attendance: None

Documents Reviewed:

6320B- DEFINITIVE APPLICATION PACKAGE reduced.pdf

6320B SW Report + Maps reduced.pdf

6320B.DEFSUB.A.2 reduced.pdf

Sheet 1 – Title Sheet

Sheet 2 – Record Plan

Sheet 3 – Existing Conditions Plan

Sheet 4 – Site Development and Grading Plan

Sheet 5 – Site Plan and Profile

Sheet 6 – Construction Details

Sheet 7 – Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan

6320B.PROOF PLAN.pdf

It is proposed by the project proponents to develop a private way serving three single family dwellings in a Residential Compound on a 1.94-acre site. Existing 2 story single-family dwelling and associated paved driveway located off Conant Street. The site is primarily forested with open space around the existing dwelling. There is a bordering vegetated wetland on the northeast portion of the site. There is a bordering vegetated wetland on the northeast portion of the site. The three residences are proposed to be accessed via a Common Driveway.

DRB comments:

1. They are saving the existing house, which is nearest to the street.
2. The northernmost residence is partially within the 100' buffer zone for the wetland and that therefore this project is required to be reviewed by the Conservation Commission.

3. There are very steep new slopes leading directly down to the wetlands. It is unclear how these slopes will be retained against erosion. It is unclear what is being done to remediate the impact on the wetlands in the long term and how to control runoff from the drive and other fertilizers from flowing into and polluting the adjacent wetlands. The developer should be asked to put into writing how road salts will be kept out of the wetlands and how erosion of the steep slopes will be prevented and how vehicles will be kept out of the wetland.
4. The DRB considers the elevation of the first floor of the two northernmost houses as unresponsive to the site. They are sitting on mounds of earth, with steep slopes, which will be hard to maintain. The extensive amount of fill and steep slopes might be lessened if a different house design was chosen, one that was appropriate to the site. For instance, consideration could be given to entering the two northernmost houses on the second floor. This might actually be a less expensive approach, reducing the amount of fill on the site and allowing some of the existing trees to be saved, which would be an amenity for the new owners and increasing the retail value of the project.
5. It is unclear what will keep vehicles (including fire trucks) from ending up down a steep slope in the wetlands if they should skid in the winter.
6. Due to the proximity to the wetlands and the steep slope leading down to them, no salt should be allowed on the driveway (note the increased risk for vehicles sliding into the wetlands) and no chemicals should be allowed on the lawns. The developer should be asked to put into writing how road salts will be kept out of the wetlands and how erosion of the steep slopes will be prevented and how vehicles will be kept out of the wetland.
7. Amanda Way does not currently exist. There are two street trees within the driveway that will have to be removed,
8. The lots are achieved by using narrow strips of land in concentric rings. This is possible because, unlike other surrounding towns, there is no minimum lot width at 47 Conant Street in Acton. This should be reviewed for appropriateness as a general Town policy.
9. A T-shaped turn around is proposed for fire trucks, rather than a loop turn around which in the tight site and steep slopes at the edge of the drive seems to be an unsound design.
10. The DRB recommends that the minimum number of trees be removed; only as necessary to do the work. The DRB recommends that the existing trees over 6" caliper be shown on the plan- both those that will be removed and those that will remain.

Respectfully submitted,

The DRB