



TOWN OF ACTON DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Review Memorandum: McGovern Automotive at Nagog Park

Revised Proposal

September 13, 2023

DRB Members in attendance: Peter Darlow, (Chair), David Honn, Holly Ben-Joseph, Tom Doolittle, Dean Charter, (Selectboard liaison).

Public in attendance: David Martin

Documents reviewed:

- Planting Plan sheet L1.1, dated 2.22.23 and
- updated Planting Plan sheet L1.1, dated 8.23.23
- Site Development Plans – revision 01, dated 8.23.23
- Lighting Plan – revised 8.23.23

The project proposal has been significantly updated with the decision by McGovern to only develop one new auto showroom building along with its associated service and customer access, new car parking display aisles, and staff and customer parking all located on the southerly “half” of the 1 and 5 Nagog property. A substantial portion of the existing retail building on the northerly half of the property will remain, along with its existing parking substantially remaining in place as well as several perimeter commercial properties.

Documents submitted as a part of the revised proposal submission focus on the updated site work scope, updated landscape scope, and updated site lighting scope. DRB members reviewed pertinent site scope, landscape planting scope, and lighting scope updates and offer the following comments and recommendations.

1. At the approximate midpoint of the parking field that splits between the existing to the north and the revised to the south is a proposed primary drive leading toward the new auto dealership service arrival. The landscape island to the north of this drive is proposed to be simply treated with a grass seed. The landscape island to the south of this drive is proposed to have a pedestrian sidewalk and some plantings including a pair of trees.

The DRB recommends that this main arrival drive be treated more formally as an allee with landscaped islands inclusive of at least three trees each side. DRB members recommend the sidewalk be relocated to the northern landscaped island which will provide sufficient depth for both the north and south islands to accept landscaping and the trees as DRB is recommending. The DRB suggests that the review of the details related to this allee be undertaken directly with the project proponents when they return to the DRB with their full updated project proposal.

2. An existing informal walking path from the Nagog Woods residential neighborhood located to the south of the site currently allows the neighborhood to walk directly to the Nagog shops and restaurants. The site development proposal includes a significant expansion of the landscaped buffer on the southern side of the site to help separate the car dealership from the Nagog Woods neighborhood.

DRB members are in agreement with the Selectboard that the existing walking path be formalized and extended through the additional landscape buffer to allow for and encourage continued neighborhood pedestrian access to the shops and restaurants.

3. The DRB notes that the trees proposed are now shown to be typically of 3" caliper within the parking lot planted islands. The DRB is pleased to see this size tree as the minimum specification.

4. The DRB notes that the parking lot lighting is scheduled to be 3000K. The DRB are pleased to see this specification has been met.

5. To date no information has been provided on what the proposed new auto dealership building architecture will be other than the concept sketch presented to the DRB in March. As before, the DRB request that the project proponents be requested to return to the DRB to present the building design and be asked to respond at that time to DRB comments on the design to be presented.

6. DRB members anticipate that the car dealership will desire a significant sign at Great Road given the new dealership building will not be readily visible from Great Road. No information has yet been provided. Given the likely signage request will come the DRB recommend that this should be addressed as a part of the current review process.

7. To date no information specific to the reduced retail building façade, where it is proposed to be altered, has been presented. As before the DRB requests that the project proponents return to the DRB with this design update so that it can be reviewed.

DRB members will look forward to a future review with the project proponents to discuss each of the above recommendations.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Darlow, for the DRB