



**TOWN OF ACTON
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
MINUTES OF JANUARY 4, 2012 MEETING**

7:30 p.m.
Room 126, Town Hall

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING: Wednesday, January 18, 2012
 Acton Town Hall, Rm 126, 7:30 p.m.

Present: Ann Sussman (Chair), Holly Ben-Joseph (Vice-Chair), David Honn, Conor Nagle, Chris Dallmus, David Clough (BOS Liason)

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 pm.

The committee reviewed and approved meeting notes from Nov. 2, 2011, with a few amended changes.

Action Item:

Chris will submit the minutes to the town. Holly will email Chris the email address of who to send them to and also a standard format.

Conor discussed elements of smarter commercial development from his experiences at work. The following are major points:

- Companies spend the least amount of money on how the building looks because they don't typically own the land. The only way for towns to get a better looking project is by demanding a better sensibility through the permitting and review process.
- In addition, businesses now pay rent so they have less to spend on the physical look of a project, and they are driven by providing the customer convenience (ie drive through windows).
- The Stop and Shop in Glastonbury resemble a barn, this was demanded by their Design Review Board.
- Ikea puts their parking under the building which is give Leed points.

We have to evaluate whether a drive through a good idea, or is banning them in Acton pushing away potentially good businesses. Acton's bylaws, which do not allow food drive throughs, may be

outdated. Are we losing good businesses because we don't allow them?

Kellys Corner will never be walkable with the current amount of traffic and road configuration. Walking needs to be made safer.

One interesting note, when the DRB reviewed the development proposal for the Chinese Restaurant, the DRB recommended a few ways to improve the look, but Chris Star didn't act on the suggestions, he was not required by the BOS to make the changes. So should there be better communication between the DRB and BOS?

Does the town have a traffic mitigation fund?

David says the BOS can ask a proponent to pay for a new traffic signal or sidewalk or to pay into a fund if adding a sidewalk or signal isn't feasible.

Next Meeting in front of the BOS:

Dave said that he has requested Mike G. to put the DRB on the schedule to .

go over the revised charge and to review the revised guidelines with multiple-family housing projects included.

Action Item:

Ann will call Mike Gowing to request that we get on the schedule for January. We will do a dry run of the presentation at the next meeting.

Our presentation can consist of:

- Explain what we do,
- go over the charge bullet by bullet, and
- highlight the changes
- Show a graph of the design process showing where the DRB best fits in the design process

Meeting adjourned 9:00.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Holly Ben-Joseph