



DRB Memorandum

Project Location: Mass Ave (Across from Roche Bros Plaza), Acton, MA

Architectural Plans: Exterior Elevation A-4.1 revised date:07/19/13; Outline plan SK-C, date: 07/19/13; Site Development Plan Sheets, revised date: 07/08/13

Architect: BKA Architects, Inc

Civil Engineering Firm: Bohler Engineering

Developer: TRB Development Group

Property Owner: Vinnie Cuttone

First Review of Revised Project

Date of DRB Review: 08-21-2013

The DRB met on the above date to review submitted updates of project drawings for the proposed CVS pharmacy to be located in a new building located at 400 Mass Ave. The site is currently developed as the Goodyear tire store and is within the Kelley's Corner Zone. This parcel is part of a larger parcel owned by the proponent. The updated Outline Plan shows the building primarily set at an angle to Mass Ave, though with a portion of the northern edge of the plan adjusted to parallel the street, with parking on the west side and the southern (rear) sides of the site and with driveways along the eastern and northern (front) sides of the building. The customer entry is positioned on the south west corner (rear) of the building away from the Mass Ave face of the building.

The DRB greatly appreciates the high quality of drawings for the building and the 3-D rendering in sketch up which greatly enhances our understanding of the massing and exterior intent for the building and how it will fit within the surrounding context. The DRB makes the following comments:

Building Exterior:

- The DRB commends the development team for their positive response to many of the recommendations made during the December 06, 2012 review of the project. Notably the building facades and visual massing depicted in the present rendering and building elevations are much improved at each of the corners closer to Mass Ave and on the South side of the building where it is apparent the CVS design team was comfortable with much of the DRB commentary during our previous review meeting. In general the DRB believes the exterior elevations of the proposal are well thought through and appropriate to the scale and orientation of the development.
- The DRB continues to have one modest comment concerning the small window within the faux brick gable facing towards Mass Ave. We believe this small window is unnecessary and that the brick gable would be better served by a simple clean section of brick without the detail.

Site Layout:

- The DRB continues to question the need for the North side drive located within the “front yard” of the project given the revised site development plans show that the two exit points to Mass Ave on the East and West corners of the site each provide the opportunity to turn left or right onto Mass Ave and the drive makes the building look like it is on an island surrounded by asphalt. During our previous review meeting, the DRB made a recommendation to modify the drive at the front of the building to diminish its front yard visibility by grading it flush with the curb and utilizing a paving stone. The current site plans reviewed

indicate the drive material is now proposed to be a stamped concrete but the curbing was maintained. Given the drive remains, and is not intended to be built flush with the front yard, the DRB believes it is best to let the pavement remain consistent with the balance of the paved parking areas.

- The updated site plan shows the sidewalk aligned with the walk along the west face of the new building, however the sidewalk is shown to be stamped concrete for only the section from Mass Ave to the NW corner of the new building, than it shifts to conventional concrete. The board suggests that all of the walkways should be of a consistent material, either stamped concrete or conventional
- The pylon sign was not presented within the revised documents reviewed. The DRB would like an opportunity to review any updated image of the sign proposed.
- The HC parking spaces remain clustered around the customer entry. The upright HC parking signs are set in concrete bollards to protect the building. Given the main entry to the store will require all customers to pass between these signs and bollard structures, the DRB suggests that the cluster of 4 HC parking spaces be relocated to either be all on the South or West side of the entrance, in order for the entrance to be less encumbered. To improve the look of the signs, the board recommends either removing the yellow bollards and replacing them with tire stops and upright signs supported upon standard galvanized or black painted poles.
- The board is disappointed to see that the double parking field at the back of the building remains. The DRB continues to question the need for 73 parking spaces, given the zoning requirement is listed as 35 spaces for the CVS development. At the previous review meeting in December, the proponent offered that the additional parking capacity would be shared with future development of adjacent property. The board continues to suggest that only the parking necessary for the present development be constructed at this time. Otherwise, the board continues to recommend reducing the travel lane by 1 or 2 feet within the rear parking field and increasing the width of planting island by this same amount. A wider island would allow for the planting of trees which the DRB highly recommends between the sections of parking on the South, (rear), side of the site.
- The DRB would like to reiterate that there has been a trend within the past few years of proposed commercial developments to 'overpark' their sites, (where many of the proposed sites come close to having double the amount of required parking), with high percentages of impervious surfaces on the site. The DRB is concerned about the cumulative effect of all the additional impervious surfaces to Acton's watershed and storm water management in commercial districts.
- The DRB reviewed the planting plan and believes the layout and material selections are fine.
- The DRB would like to recommend that the CVS parking lot pole lighting be specified to match the parking lot pole utilized at the adjacent TD Bank site.
- The DRB notes that the site development drawings depict tree removal work beyond the CVS proposed property lines. The site demolition drawing sheet indicates the land area to the SouthWest behind the TD site to be cleared, and another sheet shows it to be graded and planted as a part of this project scope. It would be useful to know the eventual plans for this area while reviewing the CVS project since its future development will have an impact on the CVS site.
- The DRB notes that the site development drawings depict drive thru markings on the pavement and depict the potential future position of a drive thru pharmacy window on the East side of the building.

The DRB thanks the proponent's team for sharing the updated project development drawings. We again recommend that it would be useful to have a meeting to review the master plan for the land owned by Vinnie Cuttone to better understand the development of the surrounding area and the context of CVS within this site.

Respectfully Submitted,

Design Review Board

Members in attendance: David Honn, RA; Holly Ben-Joseph, ASLA; Peter Darlow, AIA