



DRB Memorandum

3 June 2016

Project Location: Alpha Cars 178, Great Road, Acton, MA

Drawings Reviewed:

Site plan and computer graphic renderings presented by applicant and applicant's representative

Proponent Representatives in Attendance:

Owner: Alpha Cars (Dmitry Bykhovsky, General Manager)
Civil Engineer: GPR (Bruce Ringwall, Civil Engineer)

DRB Members in Attendance 05/18/16

Holly Ben-Joseph (HBJ)(Landscape Architect); Kim Montella (KM)(Civil Engineer); David Honn (DH)(Architect); Michael Dube (Attorney)

DRB Members in Attendance 06/01/16

Peter Darlow (PD)(Architect); Kim Montella (KM)(Civil Engineer); David Honn (DH)(Architect);

Date of DRB Reviews: 05/18/16 and 06/01/16:

The DRB met on the above dates to review the site plan and computer renderings. The meetings were very positive and the DRB felt the resulting solution will improve the site and be an asset to the Great Road commercial environment. The proponent is seeking a Special Permit from the ZBA on June 6, 2016. Alpha Cars has an existing, similar facility on Route 111 in Boxborough. The DRB supports the approval of a Special Permit for this facility.

Project description:

- A single story, "L"-shaped, gabled roof structure with both enclosed parking spaces and carport parking spaces for the display of vehicles for sale. The facility is minimally staffed. Vehicles are not serviced at this facility.

General Comments:

There are two existing buildings on the site. The DRB supports the demolition of the rear structure. The DRB notes that the structure closest to Great Road, although acceptable as a building, is not an historic building nor one of high architectural distinction and should NOT drive the design on this site ("don't let the tail wag the dog"). The DRB is confident that this proponent's architect is capable of designing an attractive facility based on the owner's existing building on Route 111.

Site Comments:

- The building is well-positioned on the site and of an appropriate scale
- The DRB supports a minimum number of parking spaces (7) placed away from the building façade as shown
- Less impervious paving will result than currently exists on the site

- The rear of the site abuts the future rail trail; the DRB recommends a rest stop for the bike trail at this location
- Pavers should be provided as a buffer between the pedestrian access to the building and the parking area
- The DRB supports an enhanced and well landscaped parcel particularly along the border adjacent to the parking spaces and in the area behind the building

Building comments:

- The building should be simple in massing as shown-an “L”-shape gable structure without cupolas or other distracting roof elements
- The front, Great Road façade should be similar to the image the proponent presented of the Boxborough facility with large expanses of timber-framed glass and curved glass in the pediment.
- The height of the front façade to gable peak, approximately 24 feet is an acceptable scale for a commercial structure with this setback from Great Road
- The spans as currently shown on the building exterior were to great to be convincing as timber spans. The DRB recommends more columns and bolder, more rigorous framing members
- The DRB would like to review the materials and exterior details of the building when they are further developed

Recommendations:

The DRB recommends that the Special Permit include a condition that Alpha Cars meet with the DRB to review exterior material and details, signage designs and developed landscaping/civil engineering plans.

The DRB thanks the representatives for their attendance and hearing the changes we suggested. We look forward to meeting with Alpha Cars again.

Respectfully Submitted,

Design Review Board