



# Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

## Design Review Committee Meeting Minutes

Zoom Video Conference

Town Hall, 101 Main Street, Ashland Massachusetts 01721

February 4, 2021 – Approved at March 4, 2021 meeting

1 ***Call to Order***

2 Bill Savage, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00PM. Bill Novakowski, member, Ujwala  
3 Pawnarkar, member and Cathy Rooney, member were present. Emma Snellings, Assistant Town  
4 Planner, recorded the meeting.

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6 **Review and Approval of Minutes**

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8 The Committee reviewed and approved the minutes from January 7, 2021 with a vote of 4-0-0.

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10 The Committee reviewed and approved the minutes from January 21, 2021 as amended with a  
11 vote of 4-0-0.

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13 **Discussion of Sign Bylaw, including enforcement and possible amendments**

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15 Ms. Snellings stated that February 25, 2021 will be a concurrent meeting with the Planning  
16 Board to discuss the sign bylaw letter that the committee drafted.

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18 **Discussion of possible changes to the Design Review Bylaw and Design Review Guidelines,**  
19 **including recommended planting list and Design Review triggers**

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21 Ms. Snellings reviewed Site Plan Review and Design Plan Review triggers, how a project comes  
22 to the Design Review Committee, and how changes that have been discussed could fit into either  
23 the design review guidelines or the design review bylaw. A brief discussion of the past  
24 suggestions for the bylaws and guidelines followed. Mark Dassoni, resident, commented that  
25 parking lot guidelines could be good for the future.

26

27 Ms. Snellings stated that the Site Plan Review bylaw has more detailed information on  
28 requirements for an application, and the Design Review bylaw has shorter requirements, and  
29 reviewed the Site Plan application requirements. Ms. Snellings stated that an amendment to the  
30 Site Plan application requirements might be more straightforward than to amend the Design  
31 Review requirements. A brief discussion of what types of materials the Committee would like to  
32 see in applications followed, and Ms. Snellings suggested that members of the Committee edit  
33 the Site Review application requirements to reflect what they would like to see, and the edits  
34 would be discussed at the next meeting. Mr. Novakowski asked if the application requirements  
35 included architectural details, and Ms. Snellings noted that it is something that is considered  
36 elsewhere in the bylaw, but not in the application requirements.

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38 Regarding square footage requirements, Ms. Snellings stated that she will distribute past research  
39 on this matter, and suggested that Committee members send pictures of buildings that seem the  
40 right size for the Committee to review, so that there are concrete examples of building size.

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42 A brief discussion of whether parking lot renovations trigger site plan review and how storm  
43 water regulations play into parking lot requirements followed. Ms. Snellings suggested that  
44 Frank Nakashian, Sustainability Coordinator, be invited to the next meeting to discuss parking  
45 lot sustainability initiatives.

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47 Ms. Rooney stated that the suggested planting list which was previously discussed last year will  
48 require more review, however the planting guidelines are ready for integration into the design  
49 review guidelines. Ms. Snellings suggested the planting guidelines be presented to the Planning  
50 Board at the concurrent meeting on February 25. Ms. Pawnarkar asked if the planting list will  
51 also include plants that should not be planted. Ms. Rooney replied that there is not an up-to-date  
52 list of invasive plants, which would make that difficult. Ms. Rooney shared that the guidelines  
53 she is suggesting are accepted as standard practice.

54

55 A discussion of facades in downtown, and what the bylaws require, followed. Mr. Novakowski  
56 asked why Mr. Savage was suggesting brick, and Mr. Savage replied that he became interested in  
57 the subject after reviewing materials for the public safety building. Mr. Dassoni, resident, stated  
58 that he thought the bylaws should be considered in the context of Ashland and not just to what  
59 other towns are doing.

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#### 61 **Staff Updates and Administrative Matters**

62 The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.