



# Town of Ashland

## MASSACHUSETTS

### Design Review Committee Meeting Minutes

Zoom Video Conference

Town Hall, 101 Main Street, Ashland Massachusetts 01721

March 4, 2021 – Approved at April 15, 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.

5

6 **Review and Approval of Minutes**

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

9

10 **Parking Lot Guidelines**

11 Frank Nakashian, Sustainability Coordinator presented information on sustainable parking lots.  
12 The presentation included information on the benefits of sustainable parking lots, natural  
13 drainage, low impact design and its effects on community character, electric vehicle charging  
14 stations, solar PV canopies, and examples of other municipalities which are changing their  
15 parking lot requirements. A discussion of how these recommendations could be integrated into  
16 the Design Review Guidelines or bylaws followed. Mr. Nakashian will follow up with the  
17 committee with a list of best practices.

18

19 **Discussion of possible changes to the Design Review Bylaw and Design Review Guidelines,**

20

21 ***Application Requirements***

22 Ms. Snellings presented draft application requirements, based on the design review guidelines  
23 requirements, Sturbridge design review, and past Committee discussion. Mr. Savage requested  
24 that height of the building be added to #12, and that the Design Review Guidelines requirements  
25 be changed to match these requirements. A discussion about the different application  
26 requirements from Site Plan Review, to Design Plan Review, to the Design Review Guidelines,  
27 followed. Ms. Snellings confirmed that the draft requirements reflect the Design Review  
28 Guideline requirements. Ms. Rooney asked about including a dark-sky requirement in #8. Mr.  
29 Savage suggested that the dark-sky requirements might be included in building code, and he will  
30 verify that.

31

32 Mr. Novakowski requested that a reference to the planting details should be added to #6. Ms.  
33 Rooney suggested that the planting details should be included in the bylaws and not just the  
34 Guidelines. Ms. Snellings stated that if the planting guidelines are inserted into the bylaws, then  
35 that bylaw could be referenced in the requirements. Ms. Rooney stated that in #14, it should  
36 include “in situ” so that neighboring buildings and site elements are shown in renderings. Ms.  
37 Pawnarkar agreed that showing how a proposed building relates to its surroundings is important.  
38 Ms. Rooney stated that trees over 4" diameter at breast height should be included in plans. Mr.  
39 Savage stated that all application requirement lists should match. Ms. Snellings agreed that the

40 Guidelines and the Design Review bylaw can be changed once it is accepted. Ms. Snellings will  
41 redistribute the draft with the edits from this meeting.

42

43 *Downtown Facade Requirements*

44 The committee briefly discussed historic districts and design guidelines. Mr. Savage stated that  
45 there are already facade requirements in the Design Review Guidelines, and Ms. Snellings  
46 confirmed that the Planning Board is currently reviewing the form based code in the Downtown  
47 District bylaw.

48

49 *Square Footage Triggers*

50 Ms. Snellings will draft language reflecting a 5,000 square foot project or 10% increase in gross  
51 floor area trigger for Design Review.

52

53 **Staff Updates and Administrative Matters**

54 The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.