



Design Review Working Group

Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2020
Time: 8:30am
Location: Conducted via remote participation

To register for the zoom meeting, visit:

[https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMkde6oqT0uGdE5ANIJEOICkINwTt4VupEQ](https://zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tJMkde6oqT0uGdE5ANIJEOICkINwTt4VupEQ)

Meeting ID: 979-2707-6435

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Members of the public are asked to send written comment to:
klynema@town.arlington.ma.us.

Additional documents regarding the below agenda items will be posted to the calendar notice on the Town's website at:

Notice to the Public on meeting privacy

In the interests of preventing abuse of videoconferencing technology (i.e. Zoom Bombing) all participants, including members of the public, wishing to engage via the Zoom App must register for each meeting and will notice multi-step authentication protocols. Please allow additional time to join the meeting. Further, members of the public who wish to participate without providing their name may still do so by telephone at (312) 626-6799 using the meeting ID provided above.

Agenda

1. Preamble to remote meetings and ground rules for online meetings.
2. Review minutes from 2/27/2020
3. Discussion on draft of Existing Conditions Memo.
4. Discussion on draft of Visual Preference Survey.
5. Next steps.
6. New business.

Attachment

1. Governor Charles Baker's 3/12/2020 Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law
2. Draft minutes from 2/27/2020



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CHARLES D. BAKER
GOVERNOR

KARYN E. POLITO
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

**ORDER SUSPENDING CERTAIN PROVISIONS
OF THE OPEN MEETING LAW, G. L. c. 30A, § 20**

WHEREAS, on March 10, 2020, I, Charles D. Baker, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, acting pursuant to the powers provided by Chapter 639 of the Acts of 1950 and Section 2A of Chapter 17 of the General Laws, declared that there now exists in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts a state of emergency due to the outbreak of the 2019 novel Coronavirus (“COVID-19”); and

WHEREAS, many important functions of State and Local Government are executed by “public bodies,” as that term is defined in G. L. c. 30A, § 18, in meetings that are open to the public, consistent with the requirements of law and sound public policy and in order to ensure active public engagement with, contribution to, and oversight of the functions of government; and

WHEREAS, both the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (“DPH”) have advised residents to take extra measures to put distance between themselves and other people to further reduce the risk of being exposed to COVID-19. Additionally, the CDC and DPH have advised high-risk individuals, including people over the age of 60, anyone with underlying health conditions or a weakened immune system, and pregnant women, to avoid large gatherings.

WHEREAS, sections 7, 8, and 8A of Chapter 639 of the Acts of 1950 authorize the Governor, during the effective period of a declared emergency, to exercise authority over public assemblages as necessary to protect the health and safety of persons; and

WHEREAS, low-cost telephone, social media, and other internet-based technologies are currently available that will permit the convening of a public body through virtual means and allow real-time public access to the activities of the public body; and

WHEREAS section 20 of chapter 30A and implementing regulations issued by the Attorney General currently authorize remote participation by members of a public body, subject to certain limitations;

NOW THEREFORE, I hereby order the following:

(1) A public body, as defined in section 18 of chapter 30A of the General Laws, is hereby relieved from the requirement of section 20 of chapter 30A that it conduct its meetings in a public place that is open and physically accessible to the public, provided that the public body makes provision to ensure public access to the deliberations of the public body for interested members of the public through adequate, alternative means.

Adequate, alternative means of public access shall mean measures that provide transparency and permit timely and effective public access to the deliberations of the public body. Such means may include, without limitation, providing public access through telephone, internet, or satellite enabled audio or video conferencing or any other technology that enables the public to clearly follow the proceedings of the public body while those activities are occurring. Where allowance for active, real-time participation by members of the public is a specific requirement of a general or special law or regulation, or a local ordinance or by-law, pursuant to which the proceeding is conducted, any alternative means of public access must provide for such participation.

A municipal public body that for reasons of economic hardship and despite best efforts is unable to provide alternative means of public access that will enable the public to follow the proceedings of the municipal public body as those activities are occurring in real time may instead post on its municipal website a full and complete transcript, recording, or other comprehensive record of the proceedings as soon as practicable upon conclusion of the proceedings. This paragraph shall not apply to proceedings that are conducted pursuant to a general or special law or regulation, or a local ordinance or by-law, that requires allowance for active participation by members of the public.

A public body must offer its selected alternative means of access to its proceedings without subscription, toll, or similar charge to the public.

(2) Public bodies are hereby authorized to allow remote participation by all members in any meeting of the public body. The requirement that a quorum of the body and the chair be physically present at a specified meeting location, as provided in G. L. c. 30A, § 20(d) and in 940 CMR 29.10(4)(b), is hereby suspended.

(3) A public body that elects to conduct its proceedings under the relief provided in sections (1) or (2) above shall ensure that any party entitled or required to appear before it shall be able to do so through remote means, as if the party were a member of the public body and participating remotely as provided in section (2).

(4) All other provisions of sections 18 to 25 of chapter 30A and the Attorney General's implementing regulations shall otherwise remain unchanged and fully applicable to the activities of public bodies.

This Order is effective immediately and shall remain in effect until rescinded or until the State of Emergency is terminated, whichever happens first.

Given in Boston at 6:40 PM this 12th day of
March, two thousand and twenty.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Charles D. Baker". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

CHARLES D. BAKER
GOVERNOR
Commonwealth of Massachusetts



DRAFT
Design Review Working Group

Date: February 27, 2020

Time: 8:30 AM to 9:30 AM

Location: First Floor Conference Room, Town Hall Annex, and Field Visit

Attendees: Wynelle Evans, Ann Forsyth, Wendy Richter, Pat Hanlon, Mike Ciampa, Emily Innes, Phillip Hu, Erin Zwirko.

Absent: Andrew Bunnell, Kelly Lynema.

Minutes

Phillip Hu and Emily Innes from Harriman presented on the existing conditions based on the conversation and field visit during the last meeting. Through the analysis, the key questions that the Working Group should consider are:

1. What are the key design issues and patterns that impact the identity of a neighborhood?
2. What are the different neighborhoods? What factors differentiate them from each other?
3. What is the current permitting process and where would design review be added to the existing process? How can we balance clear and understandable guidelines with flexibility?
4. How can design guidelines that balance the needs of homeowners to maintain and expand their homes in an economical way with the desire for updated and new houses to be consistent with their neighbors?

Phillip explained that his takeaway from the last meeting is that there are three design issues that should be explored:

1. Additions that do not fit the design context of the existing house and neighborhood
2. New Construction that is not in scale with the neighborhood
3. Parking that dominates the principal façade

In general, the Working Group thought that these three items were very important and likely the key design issues based on their opinions.

The Working Group then worked with Phillip and Emily to review and define “fuzzy” neighborhood boundaries. Harriman came up with 9 areas. Phillip provided an analysis of each of the 9 areas based on data in the Assessor’s database. The four areas explored was year built, the lot size, the residential floor area ratio, and the residential

“style” as defined by the database. Phillip noted that it can be challenging to develop guidelines with such diverse neighborhoods.

Moving on to an overview of the Zoning Bylaw, Phillip provided some details about the density and dimensional table and use table. He noted that since there is no floor area ratio maximum for single-family and two-family homes, the lot coverage creates a limit on density. Phillip also discussed how the Town could create a process that fits into the existing review and permitting process.

The conclusions the Harriman team wanted to share with the Working Group include:

1. Though much of the area of concern is zoned R0 and R1, the zoning does not fully capture the different identities between neighborhoods.
2. Many new constructions and additions do not fit with their context, particularly when a larger lot allows a much larger house than what was there originally.
3. The way new homes are designed reflect a change in lifestyle and tastes; for example, the attached garage reflects how important the automobile has become.
4. Small, older houses on large lots are generally most susceptible to change.

Moving onto the discussion, Ann noted that the zoning regulations may be preventing what we want to see in neighborhoods. She also noted that there should be some flexibility when addressing flooding.

The Working Group then spent some time discussing the boundaries that were proposed by Harriman. The Working Group discussed that there is some benefit to stay simple in terms of neighborhoods and requirements, so that the design guidelines are not overly complex and hard to use. The Working Group provided a lot of feedback to Harriman on the neighborhood boundaries. Members of the Working Group also thought that if the neighborhood boundaries are kept simple, it might be worth noting sub areas that should receive special consideration.

Members of the Working Group also suggested certain features that warrant extra consideration including corner lots, additions to older buildings, the first floor being a story above the street, and half stories.

In discussing the neighborhood workshops, the Working Group recommended that there is an educational component to the workshops. Creating a survey with design preferences that could be used between the two workshops would be a benefit as well.

On the minutes from January 29, 2020, the Working Group unanimously approved the minutes.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 AM.