



Environmental and Planning Consultants

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Memorandum

To: Town of Dover Planning Board
From: Ashley Ley, AICP
Date: July 26, 2011
Re: Dover Village Plaza

AKRF, Inc. has reviewed the following documents and plans for the above referenced project:

1. Site Plan Drawing Set (14 sheets), prepared by Renna Engineering, dated 7/13/11
2. Letter from Richard Renna, Jr., PE, to the Planning Board, dated 7/13/11

The Applicant has submitted a revised “Preliminary” Site Plan drawing set that furthers the development of Concept C. Since this drawing set was submitted prior to the 7/18/11 Planning Board meeting, items raised at that meeting and in AKRF’s 7/15/11 are not fully addressed in these plans. New and amended comments are identified in **bold typeface**.

SITE PLAN LAYOUT AND ARCHITECTURE

1. The proposed elevations have been minimally revised since the last Planning Board meeting. As currently proposed, the elevations insufficiently address the Planning Board and its consultant’s comments. The current building is a typical big box store. It does not eliminate blank walls, nor does it use architectural features to break up the massing of the building. It was the Planning Board’s understanding that since the Option C layout was being pursued, additional attention would be given to the architecture of the building. This is not reflected in the currently proposed elevations.

The above comment has not been addressed.

2. As discussed in AKRF’s 3/4/11 memorandum, as well as the past several Planning Board meetings, in reviewing a Special Permit application, the Code requires the Planning Board to make Findings, one of which is, “Will be consistent with the goal of concentrating retail uses in hamlets, avoiding strip commercial development, and buffering nonresidential uses that are incompatible with residential use.” (§145-63.B(9)). As currently proposed, the building elevations do little to minimize the strip commercial look of the building or the potential impact to the Town’s character. As discussed at several Planning Board meetings and on the site walk, this is a gateway area that marks the entrance to the Dover Plains hamlet and the architecture should reflect that.

The above comment has not been addressed.

3. As previously recommended and discussed, additional effort should be made to break up the massing and volume of the building. The Applicant should consider the use of false windows, material changes, and color to give the appearance of a hamlet-scale building.

The above comment has not been addressed.

4. Expansive blank walls should be avoided. Since the proposed building will be visible on all four sides, including views from the MTA Railroad Tracks, each façade should be treated in a similar architectural fashion. Of particular importance are the main entrance, and the views from Route 22.

The above comment has not been addressed.

5. As stated in AKRF's 4/29/11 memo, the balloon test photos should be used to create a few photo-simulations showing the actual building from Route 22. This will aid the Planning Board and ARB in determining the necessary height of a parapet, or other architectural features.

The above comment has not been addressed.

6. Rear elevations should be provided. As stated in AKRF's 4/29/11 memo, since the existing slope will not fully shield views of the rear loading dock or the roof top, the rear façade should have a similar architectural treatment to the front of the building and a parapet should be used to shield views of roof-top mechanical equipment.

The above comment has not been addressed.

7. Cart corrals are identified within the parking area. However, oftentimes stores stack carts on the sidewalk leading up to the store which can cause pedestrian conflicts. If cart storage is proposed for these areas, it should be noted on the plan.

The above comment has not been addressed.

8. On the Site Plan, the two boxes located near the compactor should be identified. Any dumpsters, compactors, recycling bins, or other storage trailers should be fully shielded from view from Route 22 by architecturally attractive fencing and landscaping.

The above comment has not been addressed.

9. Any outdoor display areas or bottle recycling areas should be noted on the site plan. Outdoor display areas should be restricted to specific areas, and noted by a difference in paving or similar visual distinction to aid in enforcement of merchandise creep.

The above comment has not been addressed.

LANDSCAPING

1. The landscaping plan contains insufficient detail for Site Plan review. The landscaping plan should include details on the proposed plantings, including botanical name, size, quantity, and spacing. Information on proposed groundcovers (e.g. seed mixes) should also be provided.

The above comment has been partially addressed. Detail on the proposed plantings, including botanical name, size, quantity, and spacing has been provided. However, more information on proposed groundcovers (e.g. seed mixes) should be provided.

2. Without knowing the sizes, or specific species of plants proposed, it is difficult to evaluate the sufficiency of the proposed landscaping plan. However, it does appear sparse, and more plantings may be required.

The revised landscaping plan includes the sizes and species of plants proposed. The spacing of the trees around the loading dock range from 15 feet to 30 feet on-center. Additional trees or shrubs could be added to this area to further shield the loading dock from view from Route 22.

Similar to the proposed trees along Route 22, the trees and shrubs around the loading dock could be arranged in a more natural alignment.

3. Entrance landscaping, such as an alley of trees, or matching planting beds, should be considered for the main driveway.

The above comment has not been addressed.

LIGHTING

1. The lighting plan should include photo-metrics for the rear of the building. Information should also be provided on the hours of operation for the lighting. In particular, whether the lighting would be operated by a motion sensor or a timer. So as not to cause glare, or community character impacts, lighting should be the minimum required for security.

The above comment has not been addressed.

2. More decorative full cut-off fixtures should be considered for the pedestrian areas of the parking lot.

The above comment has not been addressed.