

WELLESLEY DESIGN REVIEW BOARD  
SPECIAL MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 5, 2018; 7:00PM  
GREAT HALL, WELLESLEY TOWN HALL

Members Present: Jose Soliva, Chair; Rob Skolnick, Vice-Chair;  
Ingrid Carls; Sheila Dinsmoor; Juann Khoory; Iris Lin

Staff: Jeanette Rebecchi, Planner; Michael Zehner, Planning Director

Also Present: David Gamble  
Philipp Maué  
Catherine Johnson  
Steve Gagosian  
Katie Griffith  
Richard Howell  
Marybeth Martello  
Emily Maitin  
Phyllis Theermann

*Mr. Soliva called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00pm.*

**Design Guideline Update: Phase 1 Presentation by Gamble Associates, Discussion, and Public Comment**

*Documents:*

- Memo to DRB Re: Plans for Sustainable Development Guidelines, prepared by Sustainable Energy Committee, dated 8/31/2018

*Discussion:*

Jeanette Rebecchi introduced David Gamble and Philipp Maué of Gamble Associates.

Mr. Gamble gave a presentation describing the purpose of Design Guidelines, the background research and surveys accomplished to familiarize themselves with the Town of Wellesley, the goals developed for the Guidelines, and the proposed structure and organization of the document. The structure proposed consolidated design attributes into three categories (Context, Building, and Open Space) and into two geographic areas (Main Roads and Route 9).

Mr. Soliva enquired if Linden Street is considered part of the Main Road category. Mr. Maué replied affirmatively.

The Board had a lengthy discussion regarding the condensation of categories from the original document. In particular, Board members expressed concerns placing signage under the Building category since signage also relates to Context and Open Space. Several members expressed support for creating a fourth category just for signage. Mr. Zehner floated an idea of having signage come under an administrative approval function, rather than being reviewed by the Board. Generally, the Board thought that remaining involved with signage was important to the aesthetics of the Town's commercial areas.

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Ms. Khoory and Ms. Carls expressed concerns about lumping all of the Town's village centers under the Main Roads category, stating that it was too simplistic and did not recognize the unique characteristics of each area. Ms. Rebecchi suggested added a background chapter to the Guidelines describing the attributes of each commercial center.

Mr. Skolnick commented that encouraging design decisions that bring buildings to Route 9's street edge would be diminish the quality of the site since Route 9 is so vehicle oriented.

Ms. Dinsmoor enquired how Fells Market would be captured in the different categories. Mr. Zehner replied that the portions on Route 9 versus the portions on Weston Road would be captured in the street typology.

Ms. Rebecchi enquired how institutional properties are captured in the Design Guidelines framework. Mr. Gamble replied that they have not addressed this at the moment. Mr. Zehner suggested added an Institution catchall category that captured higher education campuses, public and private schools, and churches since they are likely located in residential areas.

**Public Comment**

Marybeth Martello, staff to the Sustainable Energy Committee, spoke about added sustainability and green building element to the document. SEC is also working on developing Sustainable Development Guidelines.

Catherine Johnson agreed that sustainability should be integral to the document. Wellesley is known as a "Tree City" and landscaping is important. Ms. Johnson discussed how she was confused by splitting the Town into two corridors. The consultant should be mindful that Route 9 is a state road and the Town has a limited ability to change the streetscape. Additionally, Washington Street is a string of villages not a corridor. As the Unified Plan states numerous times, residents want to retain the village character of the commercial centers.

Phylis Theermann spoke about how the term sustainable "overlay" was not strong enough, and agreed with Ms. Johnson's statement that sustainability should permeate the document.

Ms. Johnson spoke of two ways to review the project using the Guidelines. The first order of design is to address mass and scale. The second order is how to use architectural features to reduce mass and scale.

Mr. Gamble discussed next steps. He will come back to the DRB with a draft document addressing what was discussed before holding a public forum to obtain broader input.

*Mr. Skolnick made a motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:45PM. Ms. Dinsmoor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).*

Respectfully submitted by:  
Jeanette Rebecchi  
Wellesley Planning Department