



## DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Meeting Minutes

October 5, 2023

7:00 PM

Acton Town Hall

**Present:** Peter Darlow, (Chair), David Honn, Holly Ben-Joseph, Richard Keleher, Tom Doolittle  
Public Attending: None

Proponents in attendance:

123 Quarry Road-PCRC Project:

Nathanial Cataldo, Stamsky & McNary

Subaru Dealership 1 & 5 Nagog Park:

Jon Crandall from McGovern Automotive

Ben LaFrance from Hawk Design (landscape)

Garrett Horsfall from Kelly Engineering Group (civil)

Christopher Alphen from Blatman, Bobrowski, Haverty & Silverstein (attorney)

Documents Reviewed:

123 Quarry Road-PCRC Project:

- Planned Conservation Residential Community Special Permit Plan 123 Quarry Road dated June 26, 2023
  - S-2 Master Plan
  - S-3 Record Plan
  - S-4 Easement Plan
  - S-5 Existing Conditions Plan
  - S-6 Site Development Plan
- Single Family Residence, 2 Genevieve Lane
  - A1.1 First Floor Plan
  - A1.2 Second Floor Plan
  - A2.0 Elevations 1
  - A2.1 Elevations 2
- Lot 3 Chestnut Street
  - A1.0 Basement Floor Plan
  - A2.0 Elevations 1
  - A2.1 Elevations 2

Subaru Dealership 299 Great Road:

- Powerpoint presentation consisting of revision 2 of the Site Development Plans, dated 09.26.23, and of revision 3 of the Landscape Permit Submission, dated 09.29.23.



- Concept Building Plans and Elevations, prepared by BKA Architects, dated 04.20.23.
- Lighting Illuminance Plan – revised 09.27.23

## 1. Opening

Chair, Peter Darlow opened the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

## 2. Regular Business

### A. Meeting Minutes:

No minutes were reviewed.

- ### B. Citizen's Concerns:
- A DRB member brought up a concern that Gardner Playground has been officially open without addressing the Historic District Commission violations or addressing the DRB suggestions. Another member mentioned that the neighbors are still unhappy that no vegetative screening has been installed between their housing and the playground.

## 3. Special Business

### A. Design review of proposed PCRC

The proponents of this project are proposing a modification of an existing Planned Conservation Residential Community (PCRC) for 123 Quarry Road. The current site has two dwellings surrounded by open space. Water is drawn from wells, and septic systems are used for waste disposal. The proponent has requested relief from some zoning regulations because this is a PCRC development. The proposal groups four new dwellings at the edge of the site close to the existing access road and leaves the rest of the site undeveloped except for the proposed septic field which is located at the far northern side of the property within forested land.

Refer to the attached DRB memo...at the end of these minutes for the full DRB review.

### A. Design review of proposed Subaru Dealership at 1 & 5 Nagog Park

The proponents presented an updated plan for the mall, with the eastern portion of the mall redeveloped into a Subaru dealership, with sales, service and parts. The west portion of the mall will remain as retail businesses and will receive minor improvements so that it blends with the new building. The project will have a new large building (holding the dealership) with a new parking lot, perimeter planting at the street and in the new lot, and a planting buffer between the mall and adjacent Nagog Wood housing development. The link between the adjacent Nagog Woods neighborhood and the retail mall has been strengthened. The proponents plan to go before the Board of Selectpersons on October 16, 2023.



Refer to the attached DRB memo titled Review Memorandum: McGovern Automotive at 1&5 Nagog Park Proposal – Revision 2 dated 10-5-2023 at the end of these minutes for the full DRB review.

**4. Other Business** none

**4. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
The DRB



**TOWN OF ACTON  
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

Review Memorandum: McGovern Automotive at 1&5 Nagog Park  
Proposal – Revision 2  
October 05, 2023

DRB Members in attendance: Peter Darlow, (Chair), David Honn, Holly Ben-Joseph, Tom Doolittle, Richard Keleher

Proponents in attendance:

Jon Crandall from McGovern Automotive  
Ben LaFrance from Hawk Design (landscape)  
Garrett Horsfall from Kelly Engineering Group (civil)  
Christopher Alphen from Blatman, Bobrowski, Haverty & Silverstein (attorney)

Documents reviewed:

- Powerpoint presentation consisting of revision 2 of the Site Development Plans, dated 09.26.23, and of revision 3 of the Landscape Permit Submission, dated 09.29.23.
- Concept Building Plans and Elevations, prepared by BKA Architects, dated 04.20.23.
- Lighting Illuminance Plan – revised 09.27.23

The project proposal has been further updated following a second meeting with the Select Board on September 18, 2023 and in response to the September 13, 2023 site and landscape document review by the Design Review Board. As previously presented, McGovern has elected to develop one new auto showroom building along with its associated service and customer access, new car parking display aisles, staff and customer parking all located on the easterly “half” of the 1 and 5 Nagog property. (for convenience, “North” is assumed to be towards the top of the plans.) A substantial portion of the existing retail building on the westerly half of the property will remain, along with its existing parking and landscape, as well as several commercial properties along the perimeter of the developed portion of the site.

The proponents highlighted the following proposed site development and landscape adjustments made in response to their more recent meetings with Acton Planning Staff, the Selectboard, the adjacent neighborhood community, and the more recent comments made by the DRB:

- The main drive in, which bisects the site between the existing property and the newly developed car dealership, will be landscaped each side with an allée of trees.

- A mix of native species, at 3” caliper, are the proposed tree plantings to be used along the allée as well as throughout the new parking field islands.
- The existing informal walking path from the adjacent Nagog residential neighborhood will be formalized with a clearly delineated bituminous walkway through the enlarged landscape buffer on the eastern edge of the property. Where this walk meets the parking lot the walk will be striped to meet up with the sidewalk crossing in front of the new dealership building.
- A buffer of coniferous trees will be planted along the easterly landscaped edge to reduce the visibility of the parking lot from the neighboring residential properties.
- The access sidewalk in from Great Road to connect with the retail buildings on the southerly perimeter and leading directly to the new dealership building has been enhanced with a walk wrapping the parking field of the westerly retail parking area.
- The color temperature of the parking area lighting has been confirmed to be 3000K, consistent with Acton regulations. In general, the lighting illuminance of the parking lot has been significantly reduced with this present proposal. The lighting illuminance will be reduced further overnight to maintain a security level of brightness only.

DRB members are pleased with each of the above noted proposed project site design adjustments.

One aspect of the site design that DRB members question is the location and quantity of bicycle racks. Per town regulations the bicycle rack count required is a ratio related to the quantity of parking spaces developed. DRB members do not believe the likelihood of the retail shops nor the car dealership to be heavily visited via bicycle transport. Given the newly configured parking field proposed in relation to the dealership is comprised of approximately 50% active parking spaces and 50% auto dealer car display parking, DRB members believe there is a strong argument to be made that the proponents should be offered relief on the bicycle parking ratio requirement. The DRB suggests that 50% of the bicycle parking spaces presently shown will be more than sufficient for this development.

The proponents presented the architectural concept drawings for the new dealership building as well as for the modifications to the existing retail building.

The primary building façade for the new dealership, which faces south to the parking field, is comprised primarily of metal panels and large glazed openings offering a formal and contemporary presentation for the dealership. This metal panel and glass façade treatment wraps around to the west onto roughly 50% of the westerly facing side of the building before shifting to a cast concrete tilt up panel finish. The eastern and northern sides of the building are proposed to be completely constructed with tilt up concrete panels, punctured programmatically with windows, door, and car door openings.

Following are recommendations made by DRB members:

- The wrap of the metal and glass treatment onto the western side of the building will be quite visible upon arrival to the site and thus the more formal finish where shown on the western façade is a good solution. On the eastern side of the building, as presently conceived, the façade jarringly shifts to concrete panels at the southerly corner. Given this southeast corner of the building will also be visible from the parking field, and likely from Great Road, as seen from the Frolic and Detour restaurant portion of the site, the DRB highly recommends that the formality of the front facing façade wrap around onto the eastern side to cover the first three proposed concrete tilt up panels. This will result in the car dealership building having a more three dimensional public facing presence.
- The landscape treatment on the eastern edge of the building should be adjusted to align with the recommended extent of metal panel finish onto the eastern side.
- At the westerly front corner where patrons will drive cars into the service bay for drop off a 6” diameter column stands alone to support the overhead roof canopy. Though this may be structurally sufficient, the visual of this narrow profile column is in stark contrast to the solid proportions of metal panel and glass of the public facing façade. DRB members recommend this corner be wrapped with the same metal panel finish to present a more substantial scaled pier. The base of this larger scaled corner pier could be on a cast concrete plinth for protection from possible damage given how close this will be to the drives.

The existing retail building will be refreshed with repairs to the existing façade and a fresh coat of paint. On the eastern side where the building has been reduced in scale, the new exterior wall will be finished in a matching stucco panel. DRB members are comfortable with this proposed update and repair.

It was noted that the proponent will in time return with a proposal for additional signage at Great Road. Though the DRB does not typically review signage, this is likely to be a significant scaled sign and therefore, a review of this by the DRB is suggested.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Darlow, for the DRB



**TOWN OF ACTON  
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

Review Memorandum: 123 Quarry Road PCRC Amendment Proposal  
October 5, 2023

DRB Members in attendance: Peter Darlow, (Chair), David Honn, Holly Ben-Joseph, Tom Doolittle, Richard Keleher

Proponents in attendance:  
Nathanial Cataldo, Stamski & McNary Inc.

Documents reviewed:

- Planned Conservation Residential Community Special Permit Plan for 123 Quarry Road in Acton, Massachusetts, June 26, 2023
  - Cover Sheet
  - Master Plan
  - Record Plan
  - Easement Plan
  - Existing Conditions Plan
  - Site Development Plan
  - Plan and Profile
  - Construction Details
  - Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan
- Single Family Residence, 2 Genevieve Lane
  - A1.1 First Floor Plan
  - A1.2 Second Floor Plan
  - A2.0 Elevations 1
  - A2.1 Elevations 2
- Lot 3 Chestnut Street
  - A1.0 Basement Floor Plan
  - A2.0 Elevations 1
  - A2.1 Elevations 2

The site for this project was previously presented as a three-lot PCRC; the current project proposes to add four additional home sites on the third vacant, creating a total of six lots. The resulting project would provide 342,000 SF of common land, which is an increase over the existing configuration. The proposal does not affect the two existing lots, which have already been built out. The four new homes would use a combined septic system located at the northern edge of the property away from the house lots; a force main would be required to reach the septic field. The existing Quarry Road would be improved and re-aligned to service the new lots. The plan indicates house footprints based on a prior project design; full layout and grading plans to verify that the units could be accommodated were provided. Stormwater drainage from the house lots and the road are

proposed to be directed to underground chambers for retention; each house has a separate drywell for runoff, and the road drains to a large chamber system located on lots 3 and 4.

The DRB board members asked the following question regarding the proposal:

- Septic system: The Board wanted to understand why the septic system was located so far away from the lots, as this will require increased amounts of clearing for the piping to reach the system, as well as increase the cost. The proponent indicated that the selected site was tested and provided sufficient capacity for the proposed project, and that it was one of the few areas of the site that was flat enough for the septic field to be built with minimum disruption. The drawings provided to the Board did not indicate the topography of the entire site, so the Board could not verify this determination, nor did it indicate the grading needed to complete the septic system so the Board could not assess what the actual impact would be. The proponent also indicated that the piping for the system would be located within the existing cart path on the site, which would minimize disruption, but the Board noted that there was still a considerable distance between the cart path and the chosen septic location that would require clearing. The Board strongly encouraged the proponent to perform additional analysis and testing to identify an acceptable site closer to the houses that would require less piping, and therefore less clearing, to construct.
- Common land access: The Board asked how the common land would be accessed. The proponent indicated that the land could be accessed from Quarry Road and the existing cart path as well as from existing trails on adjacent town-owned properties.
- House design: The Board noted that the house plans shown were not responsive to the significant topography on the site in that they did not indicate basements. The proponent stated that the floor plans were from a prior project and were used to indicate relative sizes of the anticipated units, and that the site development plan indicated that walk-out basements would be needed on lots 4 and 5 to more appropriately accommodate the slopes.

Following are recommendations made by DRB members:

- The limits of clearing required for the road development, houses and site improvements, and septic system including piping should be more clearly identified on the plans to allow a better assessment of the actual impact of the project.
- The location of the septic system should be reconsidered to reduce the length of the piping required and to reduce the amount of clearing necessary.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Doolittle, for the DRB