

# Kelley's Corner Steering Committee

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## *Meeting Minutes – 22 April 2015*

These are the meeting minutes from the Kelley's Corner Steering Committee of the Town of Acton, Massachusetts. The meeting took place on 22 April 2015 in Room 204 at the Acton Town Hall.

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm by Andy Brockway.

Present: Andrew Brockway, Eric Solomon, Larry Kenah, Peter Darlow

Not Present: Bonny Nothern, J D Head, Margaret Busse, Rob Bukowski

Board of  
Selectmen: Peter Berry

Planning  
Department: Kristen Guichard, Roland Bartl

### **Other Attendees**

The Cecil Group team was represented by:

- Ken Buckland – The Cecil Group – Project Manager

### **Meeting Summary**

We spent most of the meeting discussing Draft Design Guidelines and the relations between design guidelines and zoning regulations.

We spent a few minutes toward the end of the meeting on the public workshop (7 May 2015).

Documents that support these topics can be found at

<http://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/View/Collection-6802>

for the 22 April meeting and also at

<http://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/View/Collection-6760>

for the 9 April meeting.

### **Design Guidelines (1)**

We started with a brief discussion about the differences between design guidelines and zoning regulations. At the simplest level, zoning regulations are hard and fast rules while design guidelines provide flexibility. The flexibility exists for both prospective developers and for the town itself. Guidelines are relatively easy to change. Zoning changes must be brought to town meeting.

As the conversation illustrated, there will be additional discussions about whether this or that concept becomes a guideline or a regulation.

## Wayland Center

Andy Brockway presented a series of photographs taken at the newly developed Wayland Center to show examples of how specific buildings (restaurants, retail establishments, etc) can follow a set of well-developed guidelines. We recognized at the time that this development exists in what was formerly empty land and so presented fewer challenges than any sort of development in Kelley's Corner.

## CVS

A set of pictures of the recently opened CVS store on Massachusetts across the street from its former location was presented as a counterexample.

- There is no pedestrian access to the store from the street side of the building.
- This building is an island rather than a part of a coherent whole.

Peter Darlow (Design Review Board) gave a little history about the history of the CVS project. Parking is a big deal for CVS and for other retailers that might consider a development project in Kelley's Corner.

Whatever its merits, CVS is a real world example of what future development might look like.

## Other Details

Here are some other points that were discussed.

- Some pieces of the design guidelines are not simply abstract concepts but involve numbers or dimensions. These include parking, building frontage relative to lot size, and so on.
- Roland Bartl recommended that some of the content of the draft guidelines be moved to zoning rules.

No matter how we decide the final content of the design guidelines, we agreed that the document gave potential developers a good idea of what we as a town are looking for in Kelley's Corner.

## Zoning Updates (2)

In a sense, the zoning conversation was a continuation of our attempts to answer what issues belonged in zoning regulations and what issues were better dealt with in design guidelines. Two issues that were raised (based on recent history) were roofs and parking to allow us to "do better" with future development in Kelley's Corner.

Ken Buckland questioned the value of FAR thresholds and square footage thresholds for the master plan.

The master plan concepts discussed in the previous meeting encourage the assembly of several existing parcels.

A final conclusion to the zoning conversation is that changes to existing regulations are needed

## Public Workshop (3)

We spent little time talking about the public workshop.

## **Meeting Minutes (4)**

We were running late and so postponed approval of minutes from the 9 April 2015 KCSC meeting until the 13 May 2015 KCSC meeting.

## **Administrative Updates (5)**

### **Open House**

On 14 April 2015, Roland Bartl met with many of the Kelley's Corner property owners. The results of this meeting are included in the public documents area listed at the beginning of these minutes. Here is a short list of some concerns.

- Pedestrian safety
- Lost parking spaces
- Walking paths between Kelley's Corner and the school properties

Most property owners expressed a willingness to work cooperatively with the town.

### **Public Workshop**

The Kelley's Corner Improvement Initiative Public Workshop will be held on Thursday, 7 May 2015, at the Acton Town Hall.

## **In Closing**

The meeting adjourned at 10:16 pm.

These minutes were recorded by Lawrence J Kenah.