

DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON
ZOOM MEETING

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 2022
5:00 P.M.

PRESENT: **REES SHAD**
JONATHAN HANKIN
JENNIFER CLARK
JIM MERCER
ED MAY STAFF LIASON

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Shad called the Zoom meeting to order at 5:06 P.M. He stated that the meeting is being recorded. He read the Governor's revised order into the record. Mr. Rees said this will be his last meeting.

Mr. Shad called for a roll call of those present.

Roll call attendance: Mr. Shad, present; Ms. Clark, present; Mr. Hankin, present; Mr. Mercer, present

II. MINUTES: SEPTEMBER 15, 2021

MOTION: Mr. Mercer to approve the minutes of September 15, 2021 as amended

SECOND: Mr. Hankin

ROLL CALL VOTE: Mr. Mercer, aye; Mr. Hankin, aye; Ms. Clark, aye; Mr. Shad, aye

III. 362 MAIN STREET: CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Betsy Andrus, Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce, was present to discuss the plan to remove the existing building and replace it with a two story modular building. She said the booth was put in the current locations in the 1970's and enlarged in 1981.

Ms. Andrus said the back sill is rotted. There are serious structural things that need to be done. She said the building was not safe during COVID as there wasn't enough room for people to be safely in the building. She said the intent is to make the building more safe,

more visual and more inclusive. She said the front door will be moved to the north end of the building because it is difficult to get in and out of the door in the front of the building. She said a second story would be added to provide office space for the Chamber. She said having the offices at this location would make someone available 7 days a week. She said it will provide more service to people.

There was extensive discussion of the building with recommendations from the Committee for the building to be turned 180 degrees to make the appearance more welcoming to visitors and more historic in its character. The Committee recommended that the building be pushed back to provide more room in front of the building for access, shelter and landscaping. The Committee suggested that as drawn the project is a missed opportunity for everyone.

The Committee discussed public restrooms. Ms. Andrus said the topic was previously discussed with the Town with the option for the Town to lease from the Chamber and maintain them. The Town was not interested in the option. The Chamber does not have the funds to put public restrooms in the proposed building.

There was a brief discussion of the applicant going to the Historic District Commission for review. Ms. Andrus said she was not advised to go to the HDC.

The Board discussed a recommendation for the project.

MOTION: Mr. Hankin to support the project with recommendations:

The Committee recommends that the building be made more welcoming by making it less residential in appearance and more of a destination. A concrete pad will make it more accommodating for visitors.

Turn the building 180 degrees

Provide one unisex restroom open to the public

Center the building on the lot front to back so there is adequate room for landscaping

Provide landscaping

SECOND: Mr. Mercer

ROLL CALL VOTE: Mr. Mercer, aye; Mr. Hankin, aye; Ms. Clark, aye; Mr. Shad

IV. DAC BUSINESS:

Mr. Shad he is stepping down from the Committee.

V. CITIZEN'S SPEAK TIME:

Eileen Mooney was present. She said she was unable to connect via the telephone. She said she said she was able to connect through Zoom but there is no way to know how many people may have tried to call in but were unable to. She said she will ask through her Newsletter if anyone else tried to get on but she said she may file a complaint for an Open Meeting Law violation. She said she sent emails to members of the Committee during the meeting to make someone aware and she had her hand raised.

Mr. Shad apologized. He said when he was sharing the plans on the screen he was unable to see if there was a hand raised in the audience. He said at this time the only audience member is Ms. Mooney.

The information will be provided to Town Officials for a determination of whether the meeting is legal.

Having concluded the Committee business, Mr. Shad adjourned without objection at 6:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly L. Shaw

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Secretary