

SECTION 5.5. DESIGN REVIEW

A. Purpose

It is the intent of this Section to provide detailed review of uses and structures having substantial impact on the Town; to prevent blight, to enhance the natural and aesthetic qualities of the Town; to conserve the value of land and buildings; and to protect and preserve the historic and cultural heritage of the Town.

B. Design Review Board

1. Composition

For the purposes of this Section 5.5, the Design Review Board shall be appointed by the Planning Board to consist of five persons as follows:

- a. A member of the Planning Board or designee by the Board who shall be a resident;
- b. A person qualified by training and experience in architecture who shall be a resident;
- c. A person qualified by training and experience in landscape design and landscape architecture who shall be a resident;
- d. A person qualified by training and experience in the art or design professions who shall be a resident; and
- e. A person recommended by one or more of the Town associations representing Wellesley retail business owners.

The Planning Board may appoint up to three Alternate Members each of whom shall meet one or more of the qualifications set forth above. In the absence of a Member, the Chairman of the Design Review Board may designate an Alternate Member to serve in the place of the absent Member. An Alternate Member so designated may discuss, vote, and otherwise participate as a Design Review Board member in matters that come before the Board.

2. Authority and Specific Powers

The Design Review Board shall review requests for sign permits submitted under the provisions of Section 5.18, requests for Project Approval submitted in accordance with Section 5.6 and other projects as specified in this Zoning Bylaw. It shall evaluate such requests based on the criteria in Section 5.5.C. Its findings, along with any restrictions and conditions, shall be incorporated in the recommendations of the Planning Board to the Special Permit Granting Authority.

C. Design Criteria

The Design Review Board shall review requests for special permits under this Section 5.5 based on the following standards:

1. Preservation and enhancement of landscaping. The landscape shall be preserved in its natural state, insofar as practicable, by minimizing tree and soil removal, and any grade changes shall be in keeping with the general appearance of neighboring developed areas.
2. Relation of buildings to environment. Proposed development shall be related harmoniously to the terrain and to the use, scale, and architecture of existing buildings in the vicinity that have functional or visual relationship to the proposed buildings. Proposed buildings shall be related to their surroundings with respect to:
 - a. height
 - b. street facade
 - c. rhythm of solids and voids
 - d. spacing of buildings or signs
 - e. materials, textures, and color
 - f. roof slopes
 - g. scale.
3. Open space - All open space (landscaped and usable) shall be designed to add to the visual amenities of the area by maximizing its visibility for persons passing the site or overlooking it from nearby properties.
4. Signs and advertising devices - The size, location, design, color, texture, lighting and materials of signs and advertising devices shall be in harmony with significant architectural features of existing and proposed buildings and structures and with surrounding properties.
5. Heritage - Removal or disruption of historic, traditional or significant uses, structures, or architectural elements shall be minimized insofar as practicable, whether these exist on the site or on adjacent properties.
6. Sustainable Design- Proposed development shall promote meeting the Town's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

D. Design Guidelines Handbook

The Design Review Board shall publish and make available to the public on request a booklet of guidelines based on the specific Design Criteria cited in Section 5.5.C. to effectuate the purposes of this Section 5.5.

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