

**John Haven, RLA, ASLA, Chair**

**Bryce Gibson, Vice Chair**

**Paul J. Corey**

**Steven Davey**

**Christine Perec**

**Richard J. McCarthy, Jr.**

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**TOWN OF DEDHAM**

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**

**DESIGN REVIEW ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES**

**Wednesday, August 2, 2017, 7 p.m., Lower Conference Room**

**Present:** John Haven, RLA, ASLA, Chair

 Bryce Gibson, Vice Chair

 Paul Corey

 Christine Perec

 Richard J. McCarthy, Jr., Planning Director

Call to order 7 p.m. The plans, documents, studies, etc. referred to are incorporated as part of the public record and are on file in the Planning and Zoning office. Mr. Haven was late due to traffic issues. Mr. Gibson assumed the chair until Mr. Haven arrived. Mr. Davey was not present for this meeting. People frequently pointed to renderings and did not specify the locations, so these could not be identified for the minutes.

**PROPOSED PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING: Review of Schematic Design- *SCOPING SESSION***

**Representatives:**

* Brad Dore, AIA, LEED™ AP, MCPPO, Principal, Dore and Whittier Architects, Inc.,[260 Merrimac St, Newburyport, MA 01950](http://www.bing.com/local?lid=YN388x402012532&id=YN388x402012532&q=Dore+%26+Whittier+Architects%2c+Inc.&name=Dore+%26+Whittier+Architects%2c+Inc.&cp=42.8175735473633%7e-70.8807373046875&ppois=42.8175735473633_-70.8807373046875_Dore+%26+Whittier+Architects%2c+Inc.&FORM=SNAPST)
* Chip Heitcamp, MCPPO, Project Manager
* Cassie Fortini Plunkett, Project Architect
* William Brown, Principal, Brown Sardina, Landscape Architect

Under an infrequently used provision of the Design Review Advisory Board bylaw, the Board hears select public projects that have importance to the image and visual character of the Town. This meeting is under that proviso of the bylaw. As things progress, the project will return to DRAB to go through the formal permitting process.

Mr. Dore said they were retained several months ago as the architect for the Public Safety (PSB) project. He enumerated his work in Dedham. The firm specializes public work, doing a lot of educational work, civic work, and public safety facilities. Various issues were reviewed in conversations with Fire Chief William Spillane and Police Chief Michael D’Entremont, and they have reached out to the Building Department, Department of Public Works, and Facilities, and they will meet with the Planning Board at some point in the future.

The new PSB will be a little under 50,000 square feet. The Fire Station will continue to be operational during construction. Mr. Dore is aware that there are a lot of old buildings, and there is a sentiment toward more traditional architecture than more progressive/contemporary styles. This will be a civic building and will have a more utilitarian use and institutional elements with multiple levels of security within the facility. He specifically cited East Dedham’s cotton mills (now Stone Mill condominiums), which have mill building type windows mulled out, integration of materials with masonry and stone elements, and punched openings. The Schortmann building, designed by H. H. Richardson, is ornamental with a lot of brownstone; replicating this would be cost-prohibitive. Next door to the proposed PSB is the Ames, which is undergoing renovation. It is on the National Register of Historic Places, and is part of the municipal complex. They do not necessarily want to mimic or replicate this building, although it must be integrated with the PSB.

There have been lengthy discussions with the Fire and Police chiefs on what occur in the building and what types and sizes of spaces are needed. Apparatus bays will be on Bryant Street. A questionnaire went out to members of those departments to get everyone’s perspective. Overlap or shared spaces were also discussed; this will help determine the square footage and footprint of the building. A fairly significant parking analysis was done. Both facilities will require a significant amount of parking. They propose underground structured parking with roughly 88-90 spaces. The building seems to be in keeping with the neighborhood from an overall mass perspective.

Access and egress were discussed, particularly with fire apparatus. A civil engineer did autoturns and they seemed to work. A traffic engineer analyzed the site, including the potential impacts associated with the intersections adjacent to and a bit outside the site. They will continue to look at this to determine whether upgrades will be required because of traffic flow shift. Interior spaces were evaluated, including egress to the site, parking, and mechanicals. It was suggested that the access be restricted so people will not cut corners and obtain a higher rate of speed. They are working through different configurations to try to slow traffic down. The site can be entered off Bryant Street into a parking area, allowing circulation to the entire campus. There are Sally ports on Union Place that take vehicles down into the garage via a ramp. There will be a security consultant on their team. Stairs and a handicapped accessible walkway will access the Ames. Underground parking will be accessed via a ramp into the Public Safety building. Landscaping was discussed, including an area on the Ames site along the back and side. Some landscaping has limited flexibility due to the parking garage, and there is more flexibility on the top left side because there is no underground parking.

They plan to do brick pavers. Planters will need to be built to accommodate trees. Water from the parking area will be drained into a rain garden. They have spoken with the DPW about landscaping, and they want to make sure they are able to dump snow in this area. They are approaching the project as a LEED Version 4 project, which is high for a fire and police station. Stormwater management will be a big part of this. A potential gazebo with seating may be in the green space at the corner. Landscaping along Union Street will have trees along the side and screening material. The existing arborvitae will be removed and something similar will be planted along the edge. Mechanics will be screened. They paid extra attention to locating the roof top units so that they will not be prominent, and they will provide screening. Final sizing will be decided further in the project. They have tried to minimize the impact on the surrounding buildings.

The Board reviewed elevations, the parking garage/basement, and the ramp into the parking garage. There are high security components to the building, but they have worked through that with the Police Chief to make sure they are able to get natural light into the building and accommodate all security issues. There will be security glass in high security area 8, and in some instances they will use film. They want to make sure that the fire station area is livable because shifts are for 24 hours. The views for each side of the building were explained. The outside of the building has a mill theme with roof edge details and fenestration. It is more utilitarian because it is a civic building, not a residence. There will be two separate identities between the Ames and the PSB. The Fire Station is the brick component, and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and the Police Station on the right will have large stone to tie into the brick masonry. An example of a brick with iron spotting was shown that would give the building texture. Illumination at night is proposed to be back lit signage on the building.

The Fire Department bays are 21 feet high to accommodate the fire truck plus the men manning the engine. There is structure and duct work as well. The 90 underground spaces will be restricted to Fire and Police. Shift change alone can have 45+ vehicles, plus dispatch, administrative personnel, radar trailers, motorcycles, and off-shift personnel who are leaving. There are accommodations for the trucks that the Fire and Police personnel use. The parking spaces are 9 feet. The Sally port doors are 10 feet high. Once the traffic engineer completes his review, they will decide if Union Place will be a two-way street. Signage will be discussed at a later date.

Board Comments:

Mr. Gibson: They tried to get as many spaces as possible outside and still have a green space component, although there are issues with elevation. This will be one campus with the town hall, so this is an area that can be green space. If there is more than sufficient or sufficient parking underneath, they would have a lot of surface area covered by asphalt. Mr. Dore said that an issue that pre-dated them was being able to get as many parking spaces in there for the Ames since the number of spaces there are deficient. They were charged with picking up more spaces that can be used, not just for the PSB, but for the Senior Center and Town Hall. They are able to accommodate most, if not all, of the parking for the PSB underground. There are 35 spaces above ground, and they expect that maybe 10, maximum, would be available for visitors and for any overflow from Town Hall. The extra spaces would be earmarked for Town Hall/Senior Center, but even then they are going to be deficient. The zoning requirement for parking could not be met even if there was no town hall. They will work on this with the Planning Board. This plan is an attempt to estimate the number of spaces that can go there, and still have some green space. Mr. Gibson understood the desire for more parking, but from a campus perspective, there is space between the two buildings, and an opportunity for more green space or something that the community can use outside the Town Hall. He said there is a lack of green space in Dedham Square in general. Being campus buildings, one would think that the site would be a place where it would be worthwhile to have some. Mr. Dore said he would be happy with that, but from what they have heard, there may be a need for more parking. They are trying to balance the two. Mr. McCarthy said he understood them trying to balance the two sites and get some additional green space there. During the day with this design, the Fire Department will exit onto Bryant Street. Currently people park on the sidewalks on both sides to go to Vincenzo’s, the bank, or the hair salon across the street. This could end up being two-way travel. It is good to get a sense of green space, but there is business parking on the site now. There cannot be parking on Bryant Street.

Mr. Gibson: He commented on the mill appearance of the building. He appreciated the modern kind of design and the loft or mill approach. He said that the pictures in the setting almost look a little *(unintelligible)*. He said the windows are wonderful, but wondered if there is additional element that they could *(mumbled words, unintelligible).* Mr. Dore discussed deeper insets to get some shadow where the windows are. This was discussed in detail.

Mr. Haven: He agreed with comments on the brick, as this portion of the building needs to have the next level of detailing and finish on it. He wondered if something could break up the roof line or make the two ends of the building more prominent. It already breaks up the front façade with the projecting board. He was concerned that the windows might be cheapened; this is not the look they want and it will look artificial if not done right. Mr. Dore looked period-type windows. The quality of the materials is important because this will be a 50-70 year building. This has been built into their budget. The building will be used and abused a lot over time, and they have not yet gotten into the level of detail required. With regard to the mill theme, Mr. Haven said that adding the next level, something like H. H. Richardson’s building, will weave the two together. He liked the material, but is concerned that it will come across as looking like concrete or too cold to the public. The blank wall is reading a little harsh right now. It works well for signage, but the way the building presents to the street makes it feel more fortress-like. There is no open glass feel until you turn the corner; most people will not see this. He suggested clerestory windows to the meeting room to give a level of privacy. Mr. Dore agreed, saying that on the back side of that wall, there will be full monitors. Mr. Haven thought that end of the building did look like a Police Station.

Materials, colors, and size of the brick were discussed. Mr. Dore they want to be sure that people are comfortable with the materials. They want to be sensitive to the end-users and their goals as well. They are balancing similar, yet very different functions within the same building. At the next visit, they will obtain some imagery and more detail to clarify things like window systems, etc. Tonight’s meeting is to listen and get feedback. Mr. McCarthy said that these plans ended up on social media. He read some of the comments to get an idea of how the mill theme was received; feedback was not positive. The theme is not going to harm the Square, although some of the comments were that it is not going to fit. The steering committee is working on design guidelines for the Square, and the whole topic of building design is an open discussion point. Going through this process simultaneously is not a bad thing, and there are a variety of opinions as to how a building in the Square should be done. He is not sure a consensus will be reached.

Mr. Haven said he thought people would want it to be more traditional, like the Ames building. The mill concept and other options were explored. He asked Mr. Dore what the ultimate decision was with the mill concept vs. something more traditional. Mr. Dore said he thought the mill theme was traditional. They do not want to be in competition with the Ames architecturally. From a budget perspective, they cannot recreate an H. H. Richardson building. They looked at the Petruzziello building with its tower, and questioned whether they want the PSB to be in direct competition with it. Mr. Haven said this is clear on their renderings.

Two different landscape architects will work side by side. Mr. Brown will not mimic the landscaping on the Ames side, but there should be a cohesive aspect to it. The sidewalk in front of the Ames has been pulled in from the street, whereas the PSB will be right on the street. Site lighting and furniture were discussed to try to tie the two buildings together. Mr. Dore had a discussion with Joe Flanagan, Director of the Department of Public Works, about trying to bring in, from a sidewalk perspective, concrete pads and bricks.

Mr. Corey: He asked the Police Chief what the Police Station should look like, saying that the current building looks like a house in Dedham Square. The Chief said the building can be made to look like what he wants. Chief D’Entremont said the important thing is that it is recognized as a police station; signage could take care of that. The only thing was that the front wall *(unintelligible – Chief was either too far away from microphone or spoke too softly)*. The font of the letters need to be changed *(unintelligible – Chief was either too far away from microphone or spoke too softly)*. Mr. Dore toured 12-13 police facilities, and the majority were brick. The front of the building could be dressed up, and it would change significantly. There is a seal on the current station that could be brought in. They are trying to strike a balance between a civic appearance and making it warm. There are also a couple of memorials on the fire station that must be brought to the new building.

Jim Sullivan, BPCC Chair, said that if the two-tone look with different colors was changed to one color, it would look like a massive building. He believes the two tones cut the size of the building. Mr. Haven agreed, and was not implying that it should be done in brick. He was just curious about other options.

Peter Smith, 18 Westfield Street, said the design has integrity, but he was frustrated that alternatives were not discussed. The choosing of a mill building as the context is in East Dedham, and the new building will be in the center of town. He was personally biased as to the pallet of the exterior of the Ames building, but said it does not have to be mimicked. There are a lot of police and fire stations made out of wood with wood exteriors, i.e., the new fire station in Islington. He asked if this was seriously considered and how a mill design was chosen. Mr. Dore said they were not trying to say it is a mill, but trying to get that type of feel from an institutional building perspective. They were never trying to mimic any other type of design. They done buildings with the wood design using Hardie planks or the like for their durability from a maintenance perspective. They did not want to make the PSB too ornate. Mr. Smith agreed. There is an issue with transitioning from the residential to Dedham Square, where there is a tremendous amount of brick. Mr. Smith said it is the look that he objects to, and how they chose a mill. The elements of the rendering are good, i.e., the windows and probably the skin, but it seems that they are just trying to do what they have rather than opening their minds.

Giorgio Petruzziello, Supreme Development, agreed with Mr. Smith, saying that the Natick fire station is similar to Islington, and it is all brick. The type of roof could also be used. It would fit with this type of campus; there are two buildings on the campus, but they are two different styles. Mr. Dore said they did look at breaking it up from a materials perspective, taking the top half of the Fire Station and using metal panels. This definitely changed the dynamic of the building. It was pretty well received and in fact the Chief liked it better. However, there were budget considerations. They did not look at the clapboard style because it was not suitable for a building of this size. He respected Mr. Smith’s opinions and disagreement with the plans.

Mr. McCarthy said that the Board should vote on whether or not it supports the proposal. This would be helpful in giving Mr. Dore solid direction. Accordingly, Mr. Corey, Ms. Perec, and Mr. Haven voted to support the schematic design direction as presented. Mr. Gibson voted no. The vote therefore was 3-1.