



TOWN HALL  
4 Boltwood Avenue  
Amherst, MA 01002-2351

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD  
(413) 259-3040  
(413) 259-2402 [Fax]  
[planning@amherstma.gov](mailto:planning@amherstma.gov)

February 6, 2014

DRB Memorandum

**Memo to:** Rob Morra, Building Commissioner  
Jonathan Tucker, Planning Director  
**From:** Christine Brestrup, Senior Planner  
**Subject:** DRB Meeting – February 4, 2014

The Tuesday, February 4, 2014, meeting of the Design Review Board began at approximately 6:30 p.m. in the Second Floor Meeting Room/Library, Town Hall.

Design Review Board members Kathleen Ford, Derek Noble and Ted Harvey were present. Mr. Noble chaired the meeting.

Also present were applicants Tom Hartman of Coldham & Hartman for Garman House (Amherst College) and George Ejja of Pita Pocket.

**DRB 2013-00016 – Tom Hartman for Trustees of Amherst College** – 62 Boltwood Avenue (Garman House) – Review of revised site plan (original plan was reviewed in May 2013)

***Recommended approval without conditions***

Mr. Hartman presented the revised plan. He explained that the first phase of the work on Garman House, the mechanical work, has been accomplished. Regarding the exterior work, the College requested and received a variance from the AAB (Architectural Access Board) to allow a lift on the outside of the building to access the first floor.

The lift will be installed within the outline of the existing porch. Much of the porch will be rebuilt to accommodate the lift. The lift will have a brick enclosure with a door so that it will appear to be part of the building. The brick enclosure will match the existing building. The enclosure will have an open top.

In addition to installing the lift, the College will also be installing a chiller at the northeast corner of the building, as previously proposed. However, the chiller enclosure will be larger than originally envisioned. This enclosure will also be brick.

A tree on the north side of the building will be removed, as originally discussed.

The original plan had shown reconfigured parking spaces near the northeast corner of the building. These spaces are still being proposed – one handicapped space with an 8 foot wide access aisle and three standard spaces. The existing informal spaces along the east side of the driveway have been eliminated.

The original plan had shown a walk from the parking spaces to the lift. The new plan shows this walk being extended around to the front of the building. The walk on the north side of the building will be concrete. The walk at the front of the building will be brick. One set of steps at the front of the building will be eliminated to provide an accessible walk from the sidewalk along Boltwood Avenue around to the lift. New handrails will be added at the front steps.

Board members commented that this is a very sound solution to the problem of access to this building.

**DRB2014-00010 – George Ejja for Pita Pocket – 103 North Pleasant Street – Review of signs**

***Recommended approval with conditions***

Mr. Ejja presented the application. He proposed three signs: a wall-mounted sign, a sign hung from the ceiling of the walkway in front of the restaurant and a sandwich board sign to be placed along the town sidewalk.

The wall-mounted sign and the hanging sign are approximately 2' x 4' and are wood frame signs with vinyl material applied to them. The façade of the restaurant measures 9' tall by 24' long for a total of 216 square feet. Ten percent of 216 square feet is 21.6 square feet. The proposed signs are well within the 10% maximum wall coverage.

Board members commented that the signs are bright and will attract attention. However, they questioned the use of the hanging sign. The Board members recommended against hanging the sign from the ceiling of the walkway. No other businesses in the building have hanging signs and this one would seem out of place. They stated that the sandwich board sign would be more effective than the hanging sign in attracting attention.

The Board members also recommended that Mr. Ejja have a sign designed to be mounted on the sign panel above the walkway, similar in size and placement to the Panda East sign. They recommended that this new sign be simpler than the existing signs, with just the name "Pita Pocket" and the words "Mediterranean Food". They noted that the sandwich board sign would have pictures of the food that was being offered and that the sign on the panel would be more readable if it were simpler. The wall-mounted sign is satisfactory for now. However, after the restaurant has been open for a while, a more simple design for the wall-mounted sign should be considered.

Board members also noted that there is a sign directory at the entrance to Boltwood Walk. They encouraged Mr. Ejja to have a sign panel designed for installation on the directory.

**Conditions**

- 1) The hanging sign should be eliminated.
- 2) The sandwich board sign is satisfactory.
- 3) The applicant should have a new sign designed to go on the sign band above the walkway, near the entrance to the restaurant, similar to the Panda East sign. The applicant should bring this new sign back to the Design Review Board for review before fabricating and installing it.
- 4) The applicant should consider, at some point in the future, redesigning the wall-mounted sign to be less complicated and to be compatible with the sign to be mounted on the sign band. The wall-mounted sign does not need to have so many pictures since the sandwich board sign has pictures of the food offered at the restaurant.
- 5) The applicant should consider installing a sign panel on the directory at the entrance to Boltwood Walk.

**Design Review Board Fees**

Board members discussed a proposal to raise the application fee for Design Review Board applications from \$50.00 to \$75.00. They acknowledged having received an email from Jonathan Tucker, Planning Director, explaining the proposal to raise the fee. After discussion the Board voted 3-0 to approve the increase in the fee to \$75.00.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:55 p.m.

Cc: Dave Waskiewicz, Building Inspector  
Jeff Bagg, Senior Planner  
Jonathan Salvon, DRB  
Derek Noble, DRB  
Michael Hanke, DRB  
Kathleen Ford, DRB  
Ted Harvey, DRB  
Tom Hartman, Coldham & Hartman, Applicant  
George Ejja, Pita Pocket, Applicant

Lindsey Britt, Permit Administrator  
Jim Wald, Select Board Liaison