

CHAPTER 15

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

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S15-1. Purpose.

The Design Review Board is established to review the quality of design relative to construction, site development, landscaping and signs for all new or significantly altered buildings other than single-family and two-family dwellings. The Design Review Board shall assist town boards, departments and commissions in the review of plans, applications or other matters relating to these structures. Review may include, but is not limited to, landscaping, external appearance, location, massing and scale of structures relative to site and the preservation of scenic views and historically significant structures.

S15-2. Membership; terms; quorum.

A. The Design Review Board shall consist of five (5) members and two (2) alternate members. Of the five (5) regular members appointed, one (1) shall serve for one (1) year, two (2) shall serve for two (2) years and two (2) shall serve for three (3) years. Thereafter, each member shall serve for a term of three (3) years. Alternate members shall serve for three (3) years. All members shall be residents of Hull.

B. Appointments shall be made by a committee consisting of each Chairman or his designee of the following:

- (1) The Beautification Committee
- (2) The Board of Selectmen
- (3) The Conservation Commission
- (4) The Historical Commission
- (5) The Planning Board

C. The Building Inspector shall be an ex officio member of the Design Review Board. Of the regular members, three (3) shall include two (2) architects, of whom at least one (1) is registered in Massachusetts, and a landscape architect. The remaining two (2) regular members and two (2) alternates shall include one (1) from any of the following: a professional visual artist, a planning consultant, a licensed real estate broker, a building contractor, a lawyer, a businessman, a craftsman or a citizen.

D. A quorum of the Board shall be three (3) regular members, and it shall be necessary that at least a quorum be present for any meeting to be convened and for the transaction of any business; provided, however, that should there be less than three (3) regular members present at any meeting where an application or proposal is being reviewed under this chapter, the Chairman shall designate one (1) or more of the alternate members to serve in place of the missing member or members for the purpose of acting on such application or proposal.

S15-3.. Review of certain properties and sites

A. All commercial, industrial, multifamily residential, public and institutional sites and buildings which are to be constructed or substantially altered shall be subject to review by the Design Review Board, regardless of their location in the town.

In no case shall any site or building intended exclusively for the use as a single-family or two-family residence be subject to review by the Board.

B. All sites and buildings, except those for single-family and two-family residences located in the following districts are subject to review by the Board:

(1) Any and all present and future Commercial, Business, Commercial Recreation, Multifamily and Public Open Space Districts.

(2) Any other districts that may be in the future created from any existing districts.

S15-4. Design objectives

A. The Design Review Board's central purpose is to avoid design that would have adverse consequences for the residents of the town in general, for nearby residents or for the remainder of the district involved. The Board is specifically precluded from mandating any official aesthetic for Hull or for imposing the style of any particular historical period.

B. The following design objectives will be used by the Board in reaching its recommendations:

(1) The design of the proposed project shall not have a deleterious affect upon nearby properties or the balance of the district involved.

(2) The design of structures, including their siting, mass, scale and external materials, shall be appropriate for the location and neighborhood involved.

(3) The historical character of structures and sites of historical significance shall be preserved whenever

possible.

(4) The proposed design shall minimize tree and soil removal and any grading changes shall not have any adverse effects upon neighboring properties.

(5) Scenic views shall be preserved and any open space shall be designed so as to add to the visual amenities of the vicinity.

(6) Vehicular access, egress or parking and/or pedestrian circulation shall not adversely affect the use and enjoyment of nearby properties.

(7) Exposed storage area, machinery, service areas, loading areas or utility structures shall be adequately screened and shall not be incongruous with the remainder of the proposed environment and its surroundings.

(8) Signs or other outdoor advertising, through their size, location and other characteristics, shall not detract from the proposed buildings, nearby properties and the remainder of the district.

C. The Board may develop specific criteria and materials for the purpose of illustrating the design objectives set forth in Sub section B of this section.

S15-5. Powers and duties

A. On the basis of the design objectives set forth in S15-4B, the Board shall review, advise and recommend upon:

- (1) Site designs and plans
- (2) Building designs

B. The Board shall work cooperatively with landowners and developers and with the regulatory officers and boards of the town.

C. Upon the request of the landowners, developers or other parties, the Board shall review and comment upon preliminary designs prior to the official submission of proposals to the appropriate town board, committee or official.

D. The Building Inspector, the Planning Board, the Board of Appeals and any other boards or commissions which receive applications or proposals as stated in S15-3A shall, within five (5) days after receipt of any application or proposal, give notice to the Design Review Board and shall provide the Board with copies of the proposed plans. The initiating board, official or committee shall set a time (not less than one-half (1/2) of its own established review period) for the Board to review the proposal.

E. The Board shall complete its review within the review Period specified in Subsection C above and upon completion of the review, the Board shall issue a nonbinding recommendatory opinion for the approval or disapproval of said plans to the appropriate town boards, committees or departments. In the event of a recommendation to disapprove, the Board shall specify its reasons for disapproval. All recommendations and reports of the Design Review Board shall have the concurrence of at least three (3) members.

F. Only after receipt and consideration as well as public reading and publication of the Design Review Board's recommendatory opinion (or the expiration of the allowed review period), shall a town official or agency grant a corresponding permit for site development or building construction for the properties specified in S15-3.14

G. The Design Review Board's recommendatory opinion, however, shall not be binding upon any board or town official. In the event that the appropriate board or town official does not incorporate any portion or portions of the Design Review Board's recommendation in its decision process, that ruling board or town official shall specify its reasons in writing and such reasons shall be made part of the public records.