Site Plan Review

CPTC

CITIZEN PLANNER

TRAINING COLLABORATIVE

dhcd Massachusetts

UMass Extension

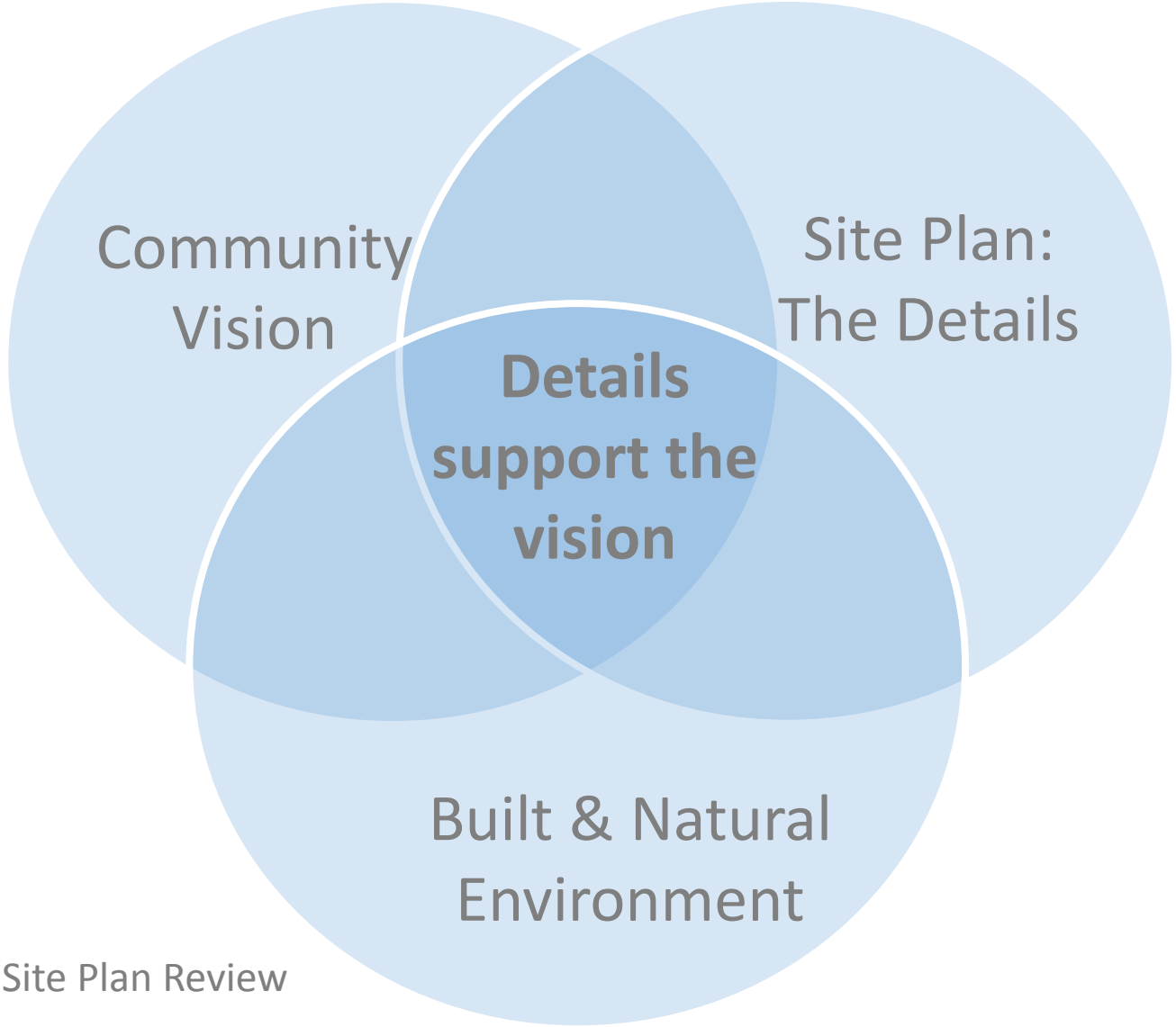
APA MA

MARPA

MAPD

Revised September 2015

Site Plan Review: for the physical design aspects of community vision



Site Plan Review is about the **DETAILS**

- "Regulation of use rather than its prohibition"
- Denial only in **exceptional** circumstances
  - Incomplete application
  - Infrastructure critical to project not possible
  - Denial provides blueprint for applicant to come back
- Site Plan is **NOT** a Special Permit
  - In Special Permit: is use appropriate?

Site Plan Review is about the **DETAILS**

- Layout
- Scale
- Appearance
- Environmental
- Safety
- Mitigation
- Bicycle & pedestrians
- Parking
- Traffic
- Drainage
- Signage
- Utilities
- Lighting
- And MORE

Site Plan Enabling Authority= Home Rule

- Special Permit Authority= Zoning Act MGL c.40A, §9 and local zoning
- Site Plan Authority= Home Rule Amendment, Mass. Constitution Article 89 and local zoning

  "Any city or town may…exercise any power…which the general court has power to confer upon it…not inconsistent with the constitution or laws enacted by the general court…and which is not denied, either expressly or by clear implication."

Site Plan Granting Authority (SPGA)

- Planning Board (most experienced)
- Planning staff (technical issues, new models)
- Hybrid Board (e.g., Cape Cod)
- Board of Selectmen or City Council (rare)
- Zoning Board of Appeals (rare)
- Building Inspector (older models)

Site Plan Requirement thresholds up to each community in their zoning

- When other permits needed
  - E.g., Special Permit or Variance
- Other thresholds for **by-right** uses
  - square feet of new construction
  - parking spaces required
  - area of land cleared
  - number of daily trips generated

Aspects of Site Plan (examples- zoning details the focus)

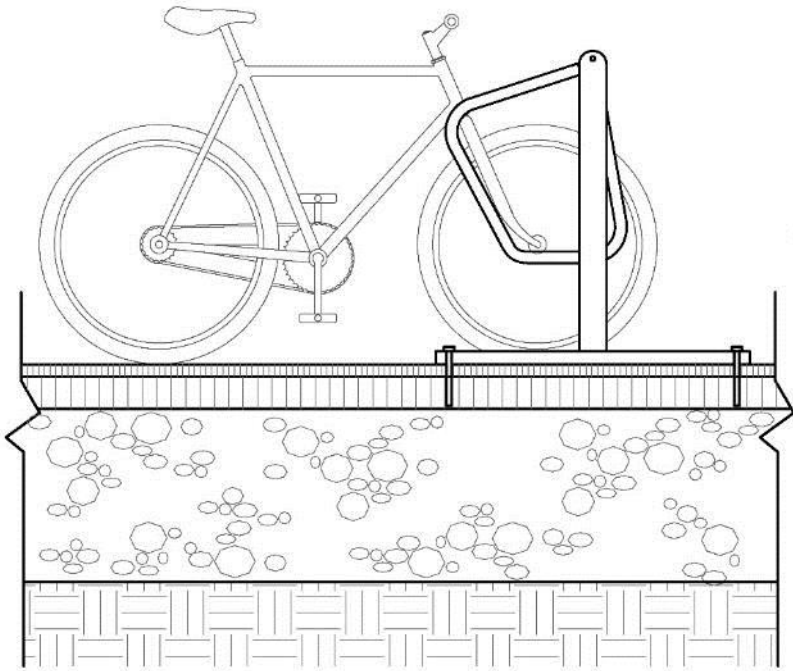
- Pedestrian and vehicular access and circulation
- Parking and loading
- Landscaping, screening and buffers
- Lighting
- Signage
- Stormwater management
- Water and wastewater systems
- Architectural style and scale

Site Plan Review Actions

1. Deny site plan (procedural)
   - fails to provide information required by zoning
2. Approve with **reasonable conditions**
   - May add to expense but **not** indirect denial
3. Deny site plan (substantive) **almost never**
   - Site plan is “may be so intrusive on the needs of the public in one regulated aspect or another that rejection by the board would be tenable.”
   - Denial **must** include details of what changes would result in approval

Reasonable Conditions (examples)

- Dumpster screening
- Construction mitigation (e.g., dust, traffic, noise)
- Sign limits
- Noise limits
- Performance and maintenance guarantees
- Landscaping
- Parking spaces
- Sewer connection
- Hours of operation
- Police details
- Bicycle separation & bicycle racks
- Sidewalk connections/extensions



Minimum Procedural Safeguards

1. Provide applicant with opportunity for be heard, present evidence, and have a hearing. (Local zoning determines public meeting or a public hearing.)
2. Post site plan meeting and/or hearing agenda and provide copy to applicant. (Provide additional notice to abutters and newspaper as required by local zoning.)
3. Minutes and all evidence public.

Avoid Illegal Conditions
(Hampden Registry Book 11450, Page 34)

THE CITY OF

CITY CLERK'S DEPARTMENT

December 26, 1997

Petitioner: Decker & Company
By: Clyde Bailey
33 Park Plaza, Box 258
Lee, Massachusetts 01238

Dear Mr. Bailey:

This is to certify that at a meeting of the City Council held on Monday evening, November 24, 1997 it was voted by the Council in accordance with law to grant a Special Permit on the petition of Owner: L.E. Belcher, By: Bob Johnson and Petitioner: Decker & Company, By: Clyde Bailey for a drive-up window at **123-125 Boston Road and East Side Ambrose Street** as provided by Massachusetts General Laws and the Zoning Ordinance for the City of , with the following restrictions:

1.) This special permit is granted to this petitioner only.

2.) The petitioner shall not allow a Taco Bell at this site.

3.) The use shall be developed in accordance with the attached site plan, except as noted in these conditions.

4.) The parking spaces located on ES Ambrose Street shall be marked "employee parking only".

Vote

- Majority vote of those present
  - Local zoning may set other requirements (e.g., majority of entire board)
  - Each voting board member must attend all sessions of site plan public meetings (Mullin rule)
    - IF municipality accepts MGL c. 39 §23D, a member may miss one session and still vote IF that member certifies in writing that they have reviewed all evidence from the missed session.

Time Lines and Grandfathering

- Be specific in zoning
  - Allow for mutually agreed upon extensions
  - Often zoning specifies special permit time line
- Probably constructive approval if time lines not met
- Freeze provision of M.G.L. c40A, §6 probably do not apply to site plan approval

Appeal of Site Plan Decisions

- Detail appeal procedure in local zoning
  - E.g. appeal process same as for Special Permits
- If local zoning does not specify procedure:
  - Appeals of site plans connected to Special Permits or Variances connected to that permit
  - Appeals of other site plans appealable with building permit

Site Plans: Needs are site dependent

safety

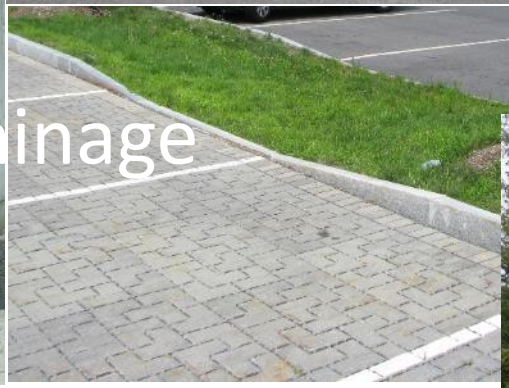
bicycles & pedestrians

signage

crosswalks

parklets

drainage

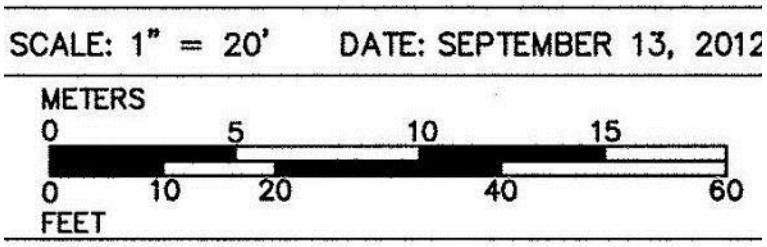


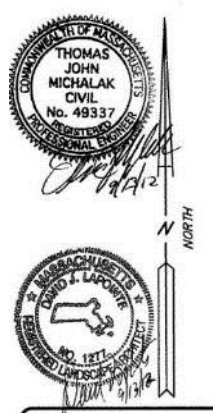
Land-scaping

Legacy Infrastructure

Plan Sheets: Rules for Reviewers

- There are no dumb questions- demand clarity
  - Plan shows: ◯--flag pole. Is it a 10’ or 100’ tall flag pole?
- Get stamped plans, but don’t assume plans are right
- Reflect on community vision and zoning standards
- <u>Common problems:</u>
  - Automobile focus: Wide curb cuts, lack of sidewalks and bicycle and pedestrian accommodation
  - Excessive lighting levels
  - Fuzzy drawings and details that make review hard



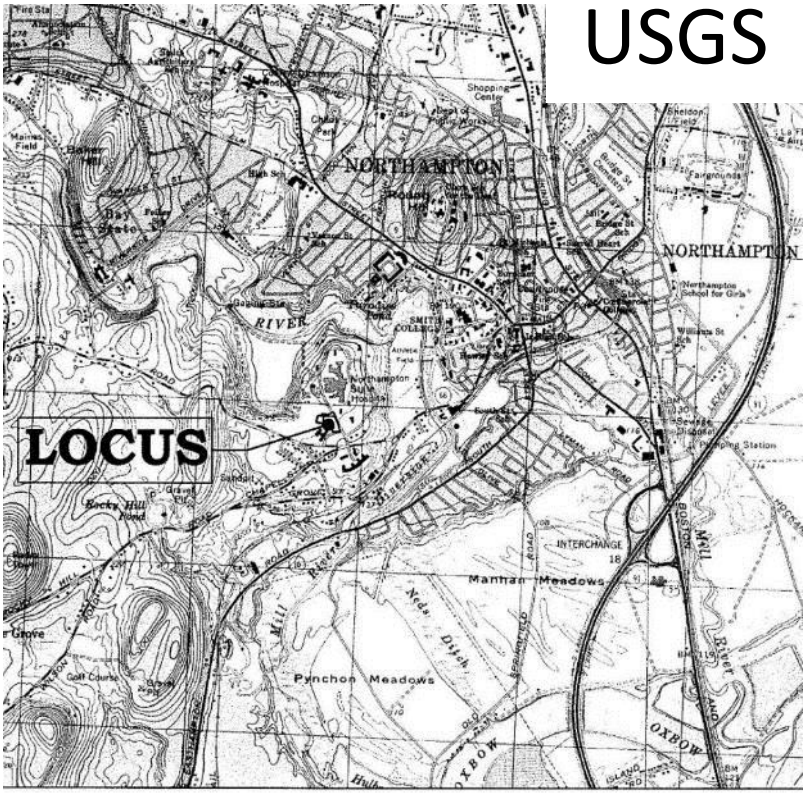


Site Plan Sheets

- Locus plan: context
- Plan view: from the top (existing and proposed)
- Profile view: cut-away view (e.g. underground)
- Cross section: perpendicular to a run
- Details: details matter
- Photometric plan: Lighting isobars
- Elevations: 2-dimensional view from front or side
- Perspectives: 3-dimensial view in context

Locus Plans: Show Context

USGS

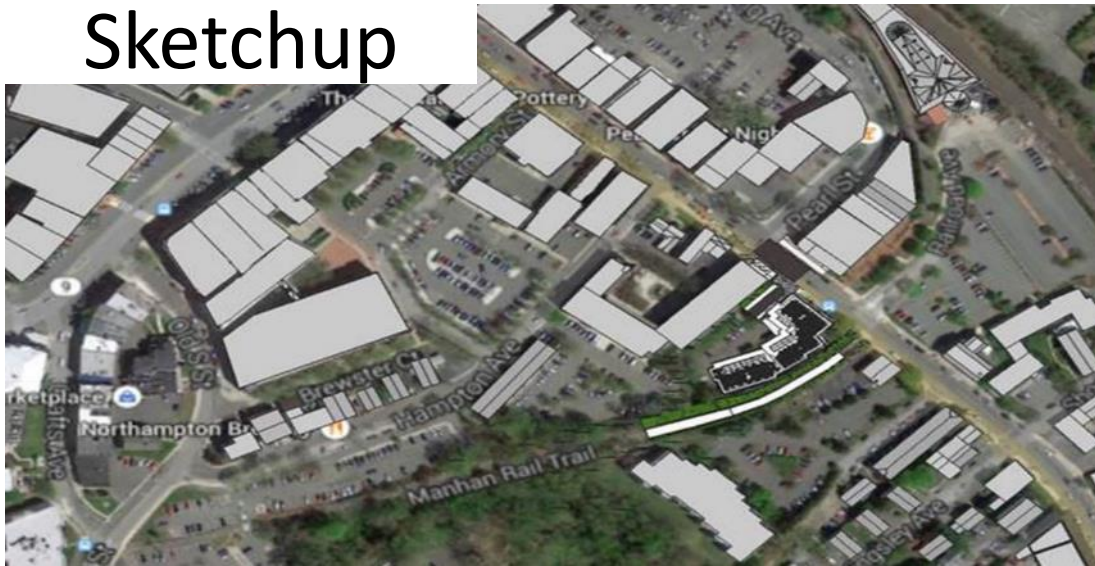


Locus Map
Scale: 1" = 2000'

NORTH

Orthophoto

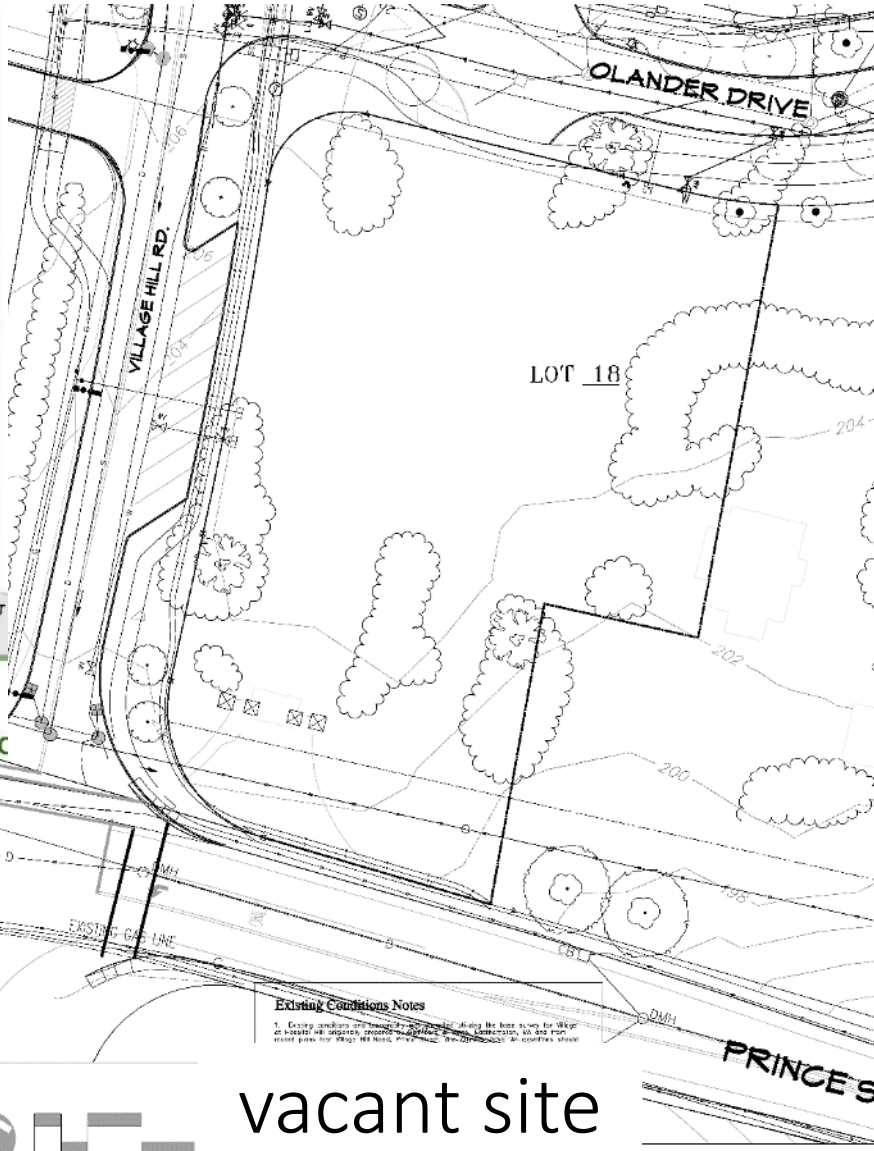
Sketchup



Plan View: Existing Conditions
What is the site context?

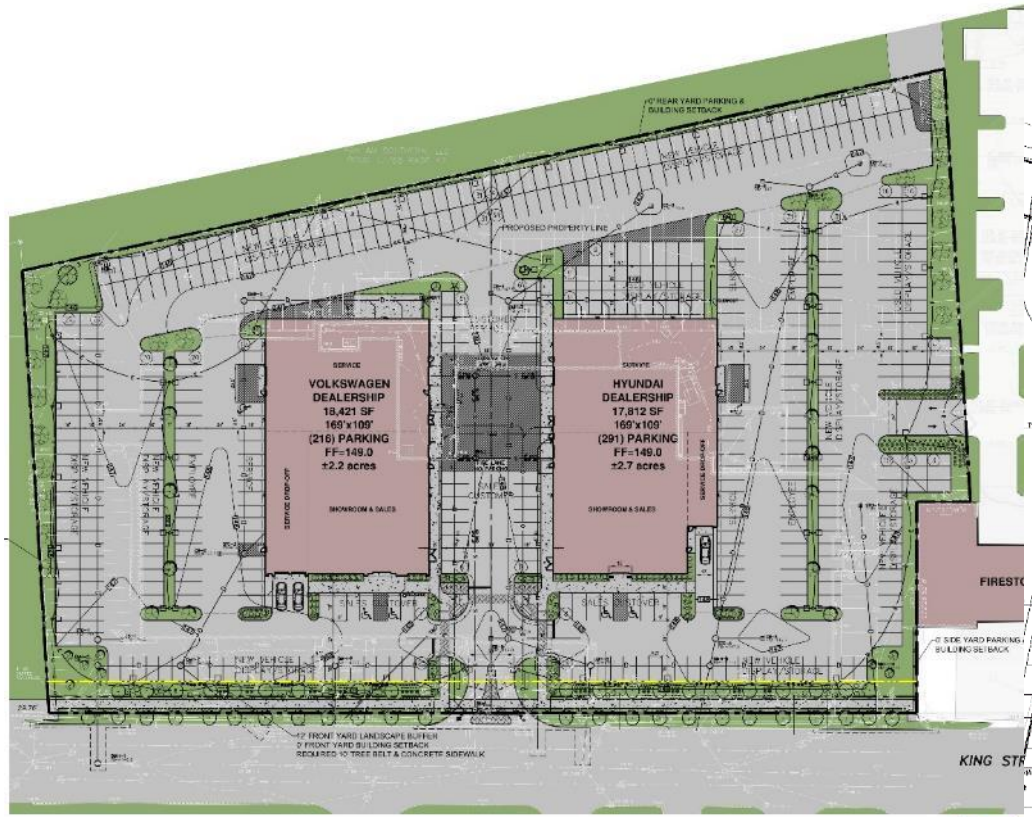
NORTHAMPTON VOLKSWAGEN & COUNTRY HYUNDAI - EXISTING CONDITIONS
DECEMBER 2012 1" = 30'

redevelopment



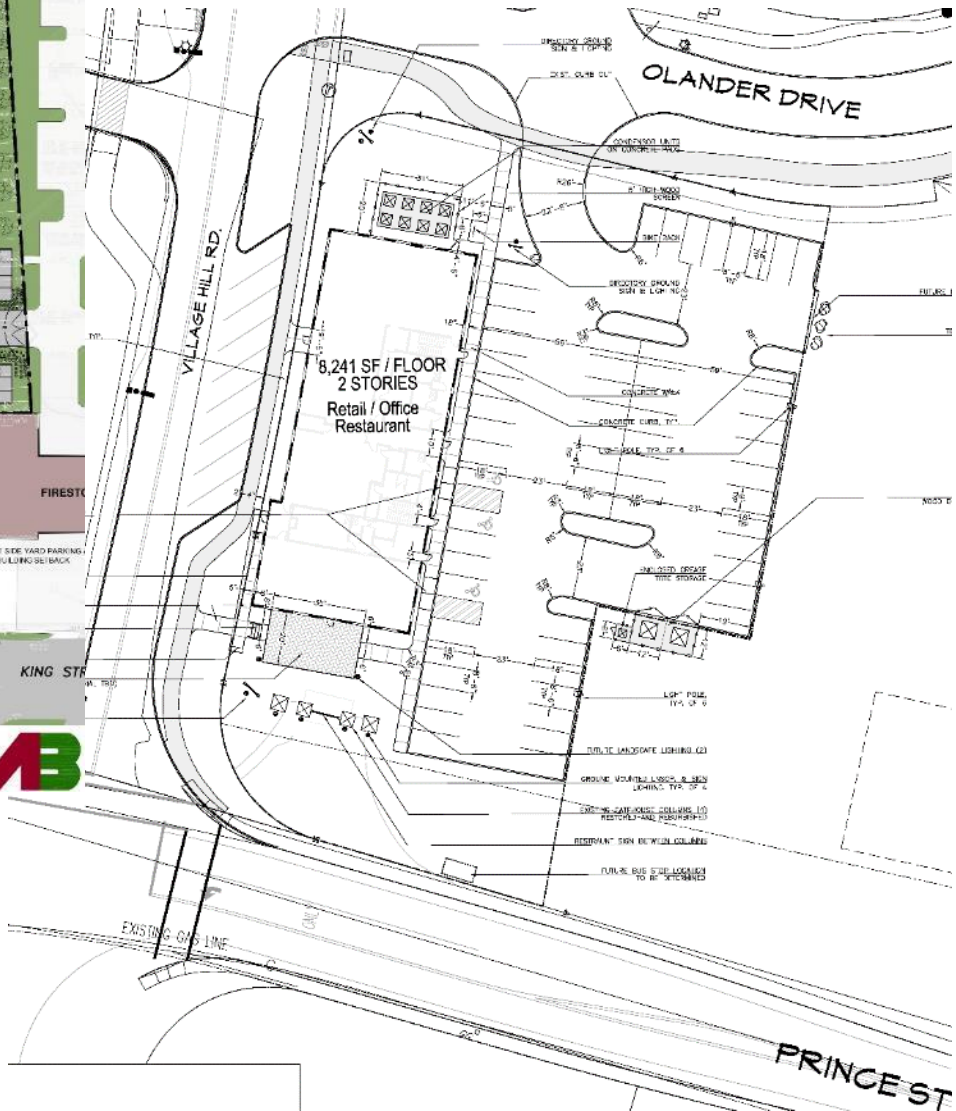
vacant site

Plan View: Overall Site Plan- building and parking plan



NORTHAMPTON VOLKSWAGEN & COUNTRY HYUNDAI - SITE PLAN

DECEMBER 2012 1" = 30'



Site Plan Review

Plan View: Access and Traffic

1. No parking front of building
2. Two curb cuts, one-way flow

Site Plan

OLANDER DRIVE

VILLAGE HILL RD.

8,241 SF / FLOOR
2 STORIES
Retail / Office
Restaurant

DIRECTORY GROUND SIGN & LIGHTING

EXIST. CURB CUT

CONDENSOR UNITS ON CONCRETE PADS

5' HIGH WOOD SCREEN

BIKE RACK

FUTURE PARKING CONNECTION END PAVEMENT

TEMPORARY BOULDERS

CONCRETE WALK

CONCRETE CURB, TYP.

LIGHT POLE, TYP. OF 6

CONCRETE PAD & WOOD DUMPSTER ENCLOSURE

ENCLOSED GREASE TOTE STORAGE

ACCESSIBLE RAMPS (2)

CONCRETE LANDING W/ HANDRAIL

CONCRETE WALK

FUTURE LANDSCAPE LIGHTING

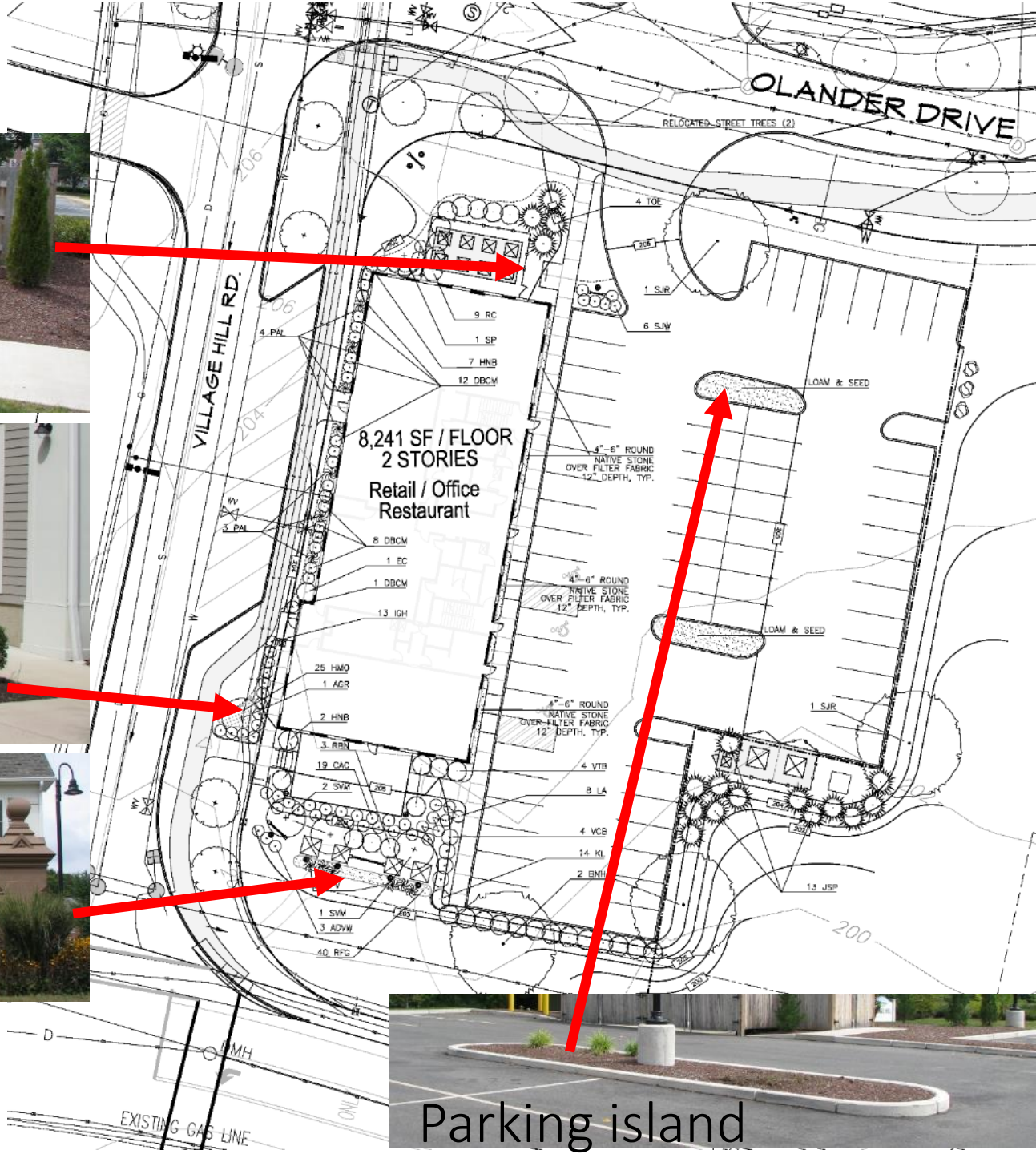
GROUND MOUNTED LNSCP. & SIGN LIGHTING, TYP. OF 4

EXISTING GATEHOUSE COLUMNS (4) RESTORED AND REFURBISHED

RESTRAUNT SIGN BETWEEN COLUMNS

FUTURE BUS STOP LOCATION

Planting Plan



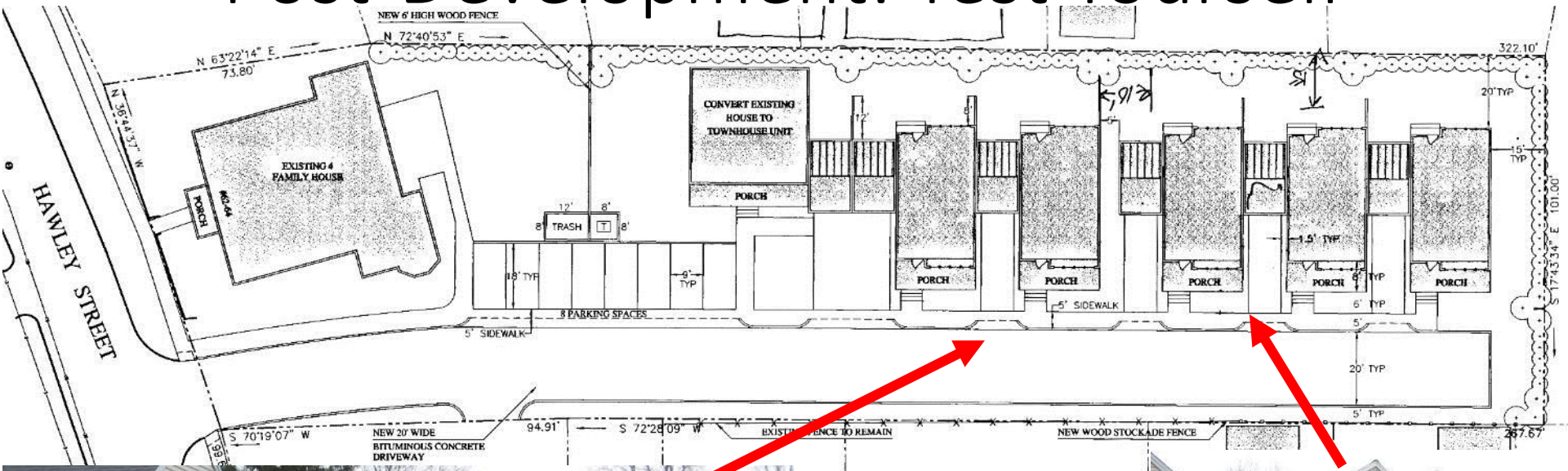
Parking island

Site Plan Review

Site Plan

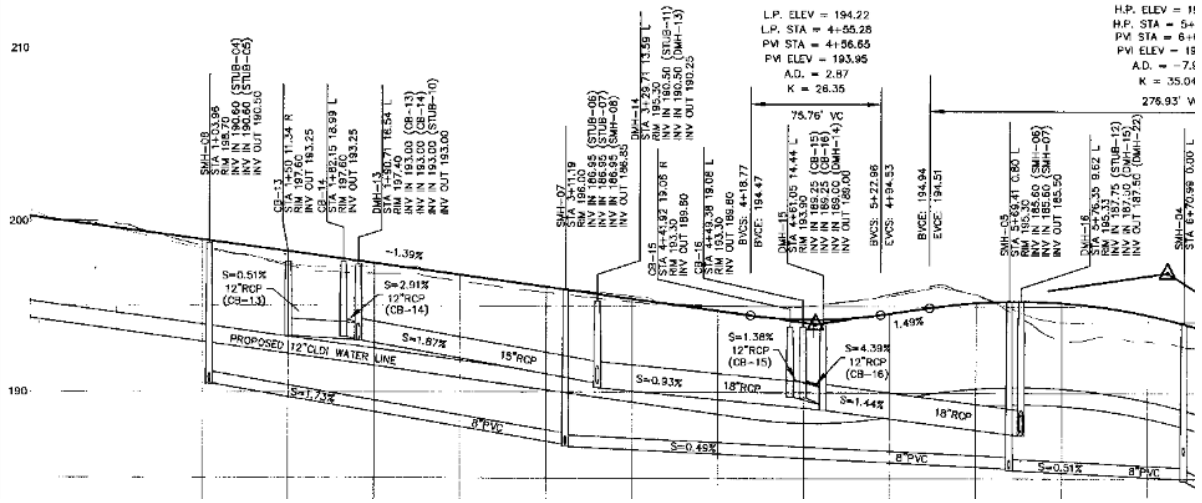
Site Plan Review

Post-Development: Test Yourself

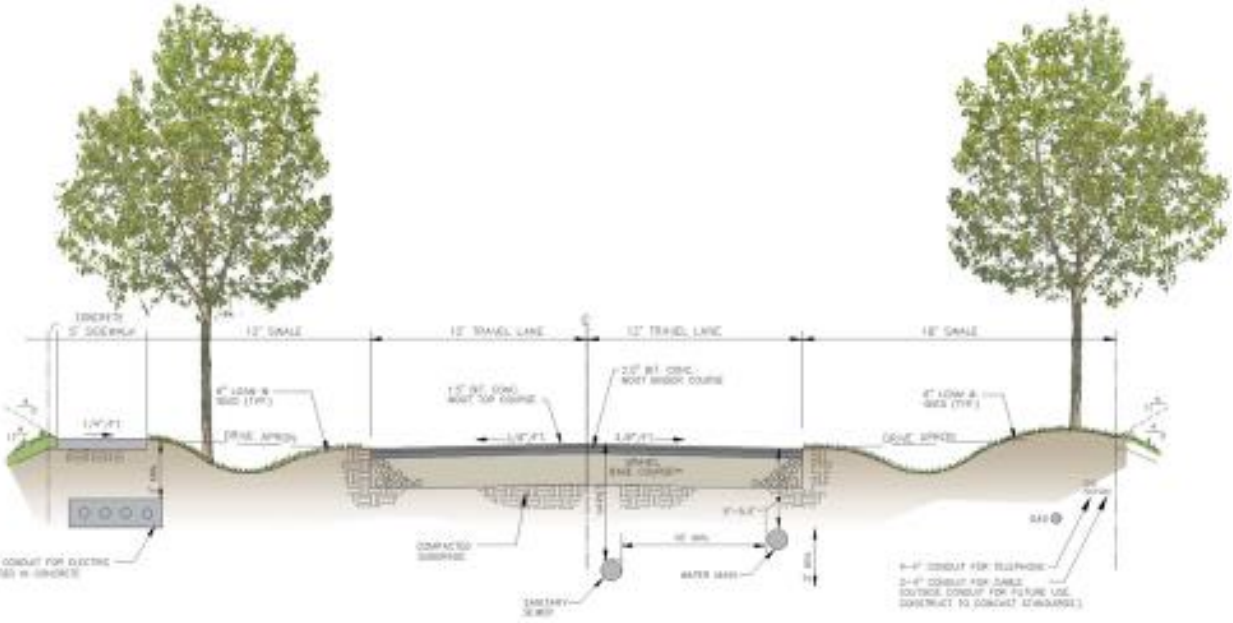


Board exercise: Visit site plan approved & built project with outside planning expert. What do you do the next time & how do you amend zoning?

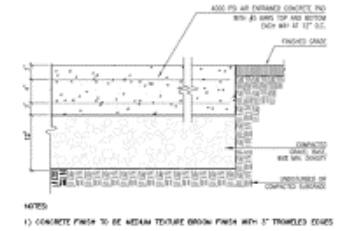
Profile (e.g. condominium internal roads)



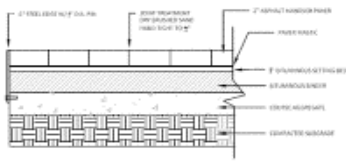
Cross Section (e.g. condominium roads)



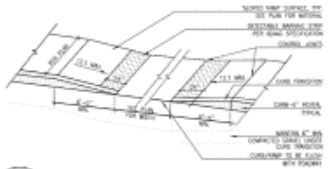
Site Details: details matter



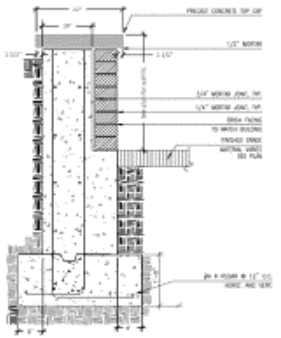
01 L-6 HEAVY DUTY CONCRETE PAVING
NTS



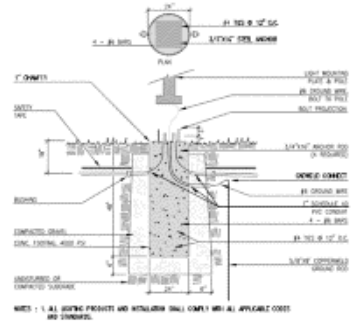
02 L-6 ASPHALT PAVERS
NTS



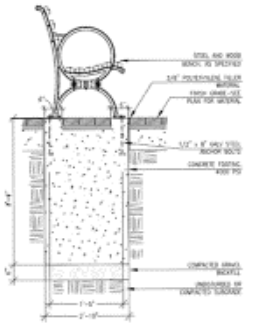
03 L-6 CURB RAMP
NTS



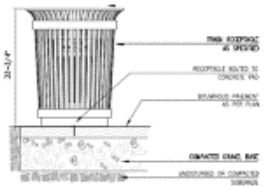
04 L-6 SEATING WALL/RAISED PLANTER
NTS



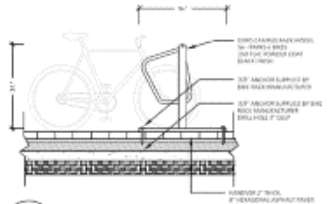
05 L-6 POLE-MOUNTED SITE LIGHT FOOTING
NTS



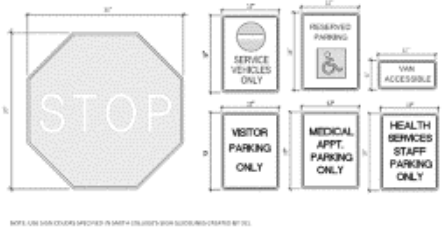
06 L-6 BENCH & FOOTING
NTS



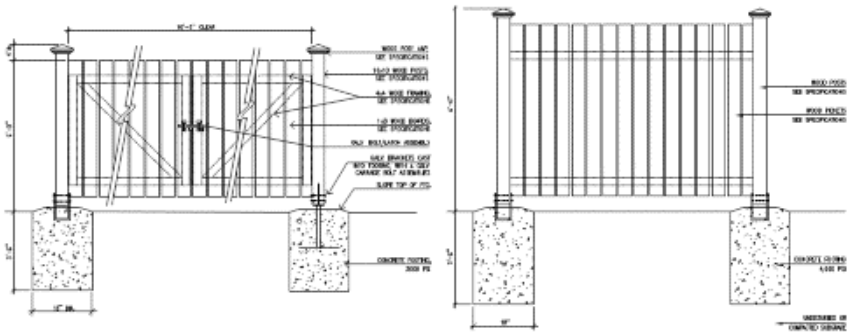
07 L-6 LITTER RECEPTACLE
NTS



08 L-6 BIKE RACK
NTS



09 L-6 TRAFFIC & PARKING SIGNAGE
NTS



10 L-6 DUMPSTER GATE & FENCE
NTS

Photometric Plan: Light level isobars

Elevations: building details (2-D)

Perspective: in context (3-D)

Hard to measure and enforce, shows vision

CITIZEN PLANNER

TRAINING COLLABORATIVE

http://masscptc.org/

"to empower land use officials to make effective and judicious decisions in the areas of development, transportation, natural resources and the environment by providing educational opportunities, access to information and resources, and by enhancing cooperation among and integration of land use boards within local government."