



Design Review Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, April 10, 2023
7:30 p.m.

Board Members:

Mark Gluesing, Board Chair (P)
Susan Opton, Board Member (P)
Steve Dornbusch, Board Member (P)
Bob Dermody, Board Member (P)
Kristan Patenaude, DRB Recording Secretary (P)
Elisa Litchman, Administrative Specialist, Planning & Community Development (P)

Applicants & Attendees:

1. Diana Sepulveda and Edison Gutierrez representing Cook Needham located at 109 Chapel Street and applying for outdoor dining.
2. Tom Taricano & Steve Schwede, FastSigns representing Manny's Barbershop located at 890 Highland Avenue and applying for signage and barbershop pole light.
3. Tom Taricano & Steve Schwede, FastSigns representing Needham Furniture Makers located at 590 Hillside Avenue and applying for signage.
4. Tom Taricano & Steve Schwede, FastSigns representing Harvey Family Dental located at 1183 Highland Avenue and applying for signage and exterior lighting.
5. Tony Marciellio, Sunshine Sign Company Inc. representing Charles River Orthodontics located at 329-331 Chestnut Street and applying for signage.
6. Kristin Tarr, ENGIE Distributed Renewables Development, LLC representing Olin College located at 1000 Olin Way and applying for a site plan review of an application for a solar canopy.

Chair Gluesing called the meeting to order on April 10, 2023, at 7:30 p.m. He reviewed the remote meeting procedures.

Agenda Item 1:

Diana Sepulveda representing Cook Needham located at 109 Chapel Street and applying for outdoor dining.

Diana Sepulveda stated that currently there are six tables and some decorations at this location. The proposal is to upgrade this with new iron tables for a total of 52 outdoor seats. The lighting fixtures will remain the same and propane heaters will continue to be used. The proposal includes some planters and a trellis overhead to make the space more aesthetically pleasing.

Ms. Opton stated that the proposal looks inviting and professional.

In response to a question from Mr. Dornbusch, Ms. Sepulveda stated that there is a total of 148 seats indoor and outdoor proposed. There will be a special permit hearing for this modification on April 25th with the Planning Board.

Mr. Dermody asked about the accessibility of the area. Ms. Sepulveda stated that they are leaning toward a fake grass area, instead of a platform, to make the area accessible for all.

Upon motion duly made by Ms. Opton and seconded by Mr. Dornbusch, it was voted to approve the Cook Needham outdoor seating area, as submitted. Susan Opton – aye; Steve Dornbusch – aye; Bob Dermody – aye; and Chair Gluesing -aye. Motion passed 4-0.

Agenda Item 2:

Tom Taricano & Steve Schwede, FastSigns representing Manny's Barbershop located at 890 Highland Avenue and applying for signage and barbershop pole light.

Steve Schwede stated that the proposal is to use an existing light box and install a new logo for the barbershop. The background of the sign is gray, and the largest letter is approximately 12" tall. The barber pole is proposed to be 20" tall and located 8' off the ground from the bottom of the fixture. This is mounted on a brick wall.

Mr. Dornbusch stated that he would like to make sure the background is noticeably gray and not white.

Mr. Dermody asked if there will be something physically rotating in the barber pole. Mr. Schwede stated that he believes this is the case. Chair Gluesing noted that, unless this is on a timer, it must turn off at 11pm.

Chair Gluesing asked about the light source and condition of the existing light box. Mr. Schwede stated that the condition is good, but he is unclear on the light source. If the source is fluorescent this would be the time to change the power source to LED since that's more energy efficient.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Mr. Dornbusch, it was voted to approve the signage, as submitted. Susan Opton – aye; Steve Dornbusch – aye; Bob Dermody – aye; and Chair Gluesing -aye. Motion passed 4-0.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Mr. Dornbusch, it was voted to approve the barber pole, with the condition that it has a timer and is shut off either when the business closes or by 11pm. Susan Opton – aye; Steve Dornbusch – aye; Bob Dermody – aye; and Chair Gluesing -aye. Motion passed 4-0.

Agenda Item 3:

Tom Taricano & Steve Schwede, FastSigns representing Needham Furniture Makers located at 590 Hillside Avenue and applying for signage.

Tom Taricano explained that the proposal is for a Maxmetal sign with vinyl graphics. The tallest letter height is approximately 10". He reviewed the proposed location for the sign on the building. The sign will be installed with galvanized bolts into the building.

Mr. Dornbusch suggested making the letters for "Furniture Maker" a bit larger.

Mr. Taricano noted that there is a small directional sign that exists on the building, pointing toward the parking area for the business.

Mr. Dermody echoed Mr. Dornbusch's comment regarding the letter sizes for the business. He suggested centering the sign over the window and in the space. Mr. Taricano agreed.

Chair Gluesing stated that visibility of the lettering may be difficult but should work due to the speed of vehicles on the street. He suggested that the sign height could be closer to 32" or 34", rather than 38" in order to eliminate some of the negative space.

Ms. Opton agreed that the sign could be narrowed a bit and that the lettering of the business could be more prominent. Mr. Taricano stated that this is what the business proposed.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Mr. Dornbusch, it was voted to approve the sign, with the condition that the sign height be 34", and that the sign be centered over the window and that it's centered top and bottom between the window and the roof. Susan Opton – aye; Steve Dornbusch – aye; Bob Dermody – aye; and Chair Gluesing -aye. Motion passed 4-0.

Agenda Item 4:

Tom Taricano & Steve Schwede, FastSigns representing Harvey Family Dental located at 1183 Highland Avenue and applying for signage and exterior lighting.

Tom Taricano explained that the proposal is for an aluminum bar frame sign, with a 1" bar around the side of the sign and 3D acrylic painted letters on the front, mounted to the aluminum. The customer has purchased two lights to be installed above the sign, with approximately 7.5" plates. The sign is proposed 5" above the bottom of the existing façade section of the building. The blue and gray elements of the sign are all raised, and the background is a lighter gray color.

Mr. Dornbusch stated that all other signs along this block do not have a background. Mr. Taricano explained that the logo was too thin to propose channel letters. Chair Gluesing suggested mounting the letters and imagery on the wall without a backing. Mr. Taricano stated that the existing façade is not in great condition. Mr. Dornbusch stated that the background of the sign could also blend in more with the façade of the building.

Mr. Dermody stated that there seems to be a lot of negative space at the top right of this sign. He asked whether this is the business logo, Mr. Taricano and Mr. Schwede confirmed that.

Chair Gluesing stated that the Board would recommend channel letters, if possible. It would be helpful to change the sign background color to be closer to the wall color and to then darken the other items on the sign as needed. The negative space could be made smaller with a redesign of the sign, but the proposal is not objectionable enough to require this. He suggested that this hearing be continued so that the feedback can be brought to the client.

Mr. Taricano then suggested shrinking the negative space on the two ends and painting the background to match the façade. The Board agreed.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Mr. Dornbusch, it was voted to approve the sign, with the condition that the sign be 72” wide, reduced in length, with the frame painted the same color as the background of the sign, and that the background color be painted to match as closely as possible the panel of the building. Susan Opton – aye; Steve Dornbusch – aye; Bob Dermody – aye; and Chair Gluesing -aye. Motion passed 4-0.

Agenda Item 5:

Tony Marciellio, Sunshine Sign Company Inc. representing Charles River Orthodontics located at 329-331 Chestnut Street and applying for signage.

Tony Marciellio explained that the proposal includes a white aluminum frame sign with a panel and dimensional letters. The existing business sign is a bit thinner than the proposed sign. There is also a gray version proposed if the Board so chooses. There is an existing flag mount sign, 24”x 22”. that could also be a gray or white color. The client would prefer the white color, as it is more aesthetically pleasing for teeth to be white, instead of gray.

Chair Gluesing stated that he has spoken with the Building Inspector regarding the fact that the signage on this building is mostly unpermitted and out of control. This new tenant is not responsible for that, but as a condition of approval, the Board would like to see this cleaned up. Mr. Marciellio agreed and noted that there are other locations on the building that would be more appropriate for the proposed sign. Chair Gluesing noted that the existing “Tutoring” sign will need to be removed and a permit applied for.

Mr. Dermody stated that he is concerned with the sign becoming too tall, as there is a narrow viewing window in the proposed area.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Mr. Dornbusch, it was voted to approve the sign, with a white background in the location of the current dentist sign and placing the Orthodontics letters (kerning) slightly closer together, and the pole mounted sign at the street as submitted, and that the Tutoring sign, Invisalign signs, and banner in the CodeWiz windows are removed. Susan Opton – aye; Steve Dornbusch – aye; Bob Dermody – aye; and Chair Gluesing -aye. Motion passed 4-0.

Agenda Item 6:

Kristin Tarr, ENGIE Distributed Renewables Development, LLC representing Olin College located at 1000 Olin Way and applying for a site plan review of an application for a solar canopy.

Kristin Tarr explained that an application has been submitted to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a special permit amendment to Olin’s existing permit. This hearing will occur on April 27th. The proposal is for a carport solar canopy project.

Jeremy Goodman, Head of Campus Operations at Olin College, explained that the solar carport is the College’s first major initiative under its climate action plan. The only opportunity to install this type of project is during the summer.

Ms. Tarr explained that the proposal is for a solar carport canopy over existing Parking Lot A. Mr. Goodman noted that the College has four parking lots, and lot A is perfectly situated for solar. This project is not particularly visible from any location outside of the Olin campus. Ms. Tarr explained that the carport will consist of five different tiers structured over existing vegetated islands. The existing conditions in those islands will remain. Clearance of the structure is a 12' minimum. There will be a 5-10' height difference between each tier. The solar canopy consists of a single pole cantilevered in two directions to support the array. The array will have six modules in its width. The proposed width is shorter than the existing vegetated islands so there should not be any impacts to access from this design.

Chair Gluesing asked if there are transformers being added and where would they be. Ms. Tarr responded that it will all be tied into the existing electrical and transformers. In response to a couple of questions from Mr. Dermody, Mr. Goodman explained that the steel posts are painted Olin Blue, the solar panels are translucent and will allow some light transmission. This should sustain the existing juniper plants. If not, these plants will be traded for additional native plants.

In response to a question from Mr. Dermody, Mr. Maidment, the Civil Engineer from ENGIE explained that there is a gutter system in the canopies which will then flow to existing catch basins in the parking lot.

Ms. Tarr explained that there is a preliminary lighting plan for this project, including timers to turn on/off at sunrise and sunset which she shared via Zoom. Existing lighting will need to be removed and replaced with adequate lighting.

Chair Gluesing stated that a memo will be drafted and sent to the Zoning Board of Appeals with comments on this project.

Minutes:

Minutes from the 03/27/2023 meeting.

Upon motion duly made by Ms. Opton and seconded by Mr. Dornbusch, it was voted to approve the meeting minutes of March 27, 2023, as presented. Susan Opton – aye; Steve Dornbusch – aye; Bob Dermody – abstain; and Chair Gluesing -aye. Motion passed 3-0-1.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Mr. Dornbusch, it was voted to adjourn at 8:51 p.m. Susan Opton – aye; Steve Dornbusch – aye; Bob Dermody – aye; and Chair Gluesing -aye. Motion passed 4-0.

Next Public Meeting – April 24, 2023 at 7:30pm via Zoom Webinar