



Design Review Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 5, 2023
7:30 p.m.

Board Members:

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

Applicants & Attendees:

1. Heather Hopkins, Sousa Signs representing Trader Joe's located at 920 Highland Avenue and applying for a Special Permit.
2. Rich Batten, Batten Brothers Signs representing Needham Bank, located at 1063 Great Plain Avenue, and applying for a Special Permit.
 - Scott Drugotch, Needham Bank
 - Karen Marryat, Needham Bank
3. Bill Gavigan, Poyant Signs representing Dunkin' Donuts located at 1203 Highland Avenue and applying for signage.

Chair Gluesing called the meeting to order on June 5, 2023, at 7:30 p.m. He reviewed the remote meeting procedures.

HEARINGS:

Public notice is hereby given that Trader Joe's located at 920 Highland Ave., has made application to the Design Review Board for a Special Permit pursuant to the Sign By-Law Section 5.5.3.1 Number: (Requesting one additional wall sign) and any other applicable sections of the By-law.

Heather Hopkins, Sousa Signs, explained that there is already a Special Permit in place for the three signs on this building. Due to the proposal to replace these in larger sizes, a new Special Permit is needed. Trader Joe's is completing a store-wide sign upgrade. The font is being updated at all local sites. The main entrance is on the parking lot side, which is not on the street. There is an existing sign in this location, 24 s.f. with channel letters. The proposal is to replace this at 31 s.f. The second sign faces Highland Avenue. There is an existing 11 s.f. sign in this location that is proposed to be increased to 31 s.f., with red channel letters on a white backer panel. The third sign is on a corner side elevation, with an entrance. The proposal is to increase this from 8 s.f. to 23 s.f., also on a backer panel. The awning in that location will remain as-is. The Chair noted the current signs are on a 5" raceway. The applicant stated they wanted to add the backer panels to allow the red letters to be more visible on the red brick wall.

Chair Gluesing noted that the sign on the parking lot side should generally be smaller and relate to the entrance. However, this is noted to be more of an entrance area for all the stores in the

complex. The Board has recognized this in past applications. The by-right signs for the property are the Highland Avenue and parking lot signs, with the Special Permit being requested for the sign on the angled entrance wall.

In response to a question from Chair Gluesing, Ms. Hopkins stated that the proposed font is 2" taller and more modern looking.

Mr. Dornbusch asked if the proposed signage is out of scale with other existing signage along the street. Chair Gluesing noted that this sign location is fairly far from any other signs along the street. He explained that the Board has tried to keep the signs along this street to a scale of around 12" to 14".

Mr. Dermody stated that the parking lot sign seems to be clearer to read. The sign located on Highland Avenue is significantly larger as proposed. The backer and letter heights appear to be the same. This could be altered to add negative space around the lettering. He questioned whether there is an entrance where the angled sign is proposed. If kept, he would recommend reducing the size. Chair Gluesing noted that it appears this location is being used to access the building. It was noted that the sign seems too large for the wall space and a reduced size would work better.

Chair Gluesing agreed with reducing the letter size a bit, to approximately 16", on the Highland Avenue sign to allow for more negative space. He also agreed with reducing the size of the sign on the corner where it is an angled sign.

Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Ms. Opton, it was voted to approve the sign proposed on the parking lot side of the building, as submitted. Bob Dermody – aye; Susan Opton -aye; Steve Dornbusch – aye; and Chair Gluesing - aye. Motion passed 4-0.

Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Ms. Opton, it was voted to approve the Highland Avenue sign, with the conditions that the letters be reduced to 16" high, that the 21" high panel remain, and the length of the lettering be reduced proportionately. Bob Dermody – aye; Susan Opton -aye; Steve Dornbusch – aye; and Chair Gluesing - aye. Motion passed 4-0.

Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Ms. Opton, it was voted to approve the Special Permit sign on the corner angle of the building with the conditions that the letters be reduced to 12" high, the panel be reduced to 16" high, and that there be 2" of panel exposure on each end of the sign. Bob Dermody – aye; Susan Opton -aye; Steve Dornbusch – aye; and Chair Gluesing - aye. Motion passed 4-0.

Continued:

Public notice is hereby given that Needham Bank located at 1063 Great Plain Ave., has made application to the Design Review Board for a Special Permit pursuant to the Sign By-Law Section 5.5.3.1 a) (number of signs) 5.5.3.4 (Temporary signs) and any other applicable sections of the By-law. This application is for a branding sign.

Rich Batten, Batten Brothers Signs, explained that the proposal is for a sign cabinet that can hold changing media and flyers for the Bank. The cabinet is only 4” deep, with a low profile, with similar proportions to other signs in the area. The media area opening is 32.5” x 58”. The cabinet will be illuminated. The Bank will likely turn off the illumination at the same time as other signs on the property.

Chair Gluesing asked if there will be a recess in the masonry wall for this to fit into. Mr. Batten explained that this was originally proposed but has since been eliminated.

In response to a question from Mr. Dermody regarding how the media will be accessed, Mr. Batten stated that there are two barrel locks on the bottom, hinged with a pneumatic lift to access the media items to be changed.

Mr. Dermody asked if this type of cabinet is allowed per the bylaw. Chair Gluesing stated that a permanent illuminated advertising box is not mentioned in the bylaws. Thus, it is being requested via a Special Permit.

Ms. Opton questioned this as an advertising item. She noted that advertising is not usually approved through the bylaw.

Mr. Dornbusch stated that he would be more concerned with this item if it was on the street or more visible. The location seems to be tucked away for customers only.

Scott Drugotch, Needham Bank, noted that this is a high-profile project for the Bank. This Bank location has been key for advertising to customers. The intention is to satisfy the bylaw. Mr. Drugotch and Ms. Karen Marryat from Needham Bank described and shared photos of other examples, which were similar, but not the same, of this type of advertising located in Needham.

Mr. Dermody stated that the advertising part of the proposal gives him pause. He does not want to set a precedent for others to use something similar that is more outward facing.

Ms. Opton noted that some of the examples were framed well, while the proposal is a glass window. Any advertisement could be placed inside, which she is not comfortable with.

Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Mr. Dornbusch, it was voted not to approve the advertising panel sign on the ATM structure. Bob Dermody – aye; Susan Opton – aye; Steve Dornbusch – aye; and Chair Gluesing – aye. Motion passed 4-0.

Agenda Item 1:

Bill Gavigan, Poyant Signs representing Dunkin’ Donuts located at 1203 Highland Avenue and applying for signage.

Bill Gavigan, Poyant Signs, explained that the location signage is proposed for rebranding. Dunkin’ Donuts is changing to Dunkin’. The signage and storefront are thus proposed to be renovated. Some elements for the new image will be included. The new image has individual

channel letters, on a white backer panel. Some orange banding is proposed over the top of the storefront as well.

Mr. Dermody asked the length of the orange angle running under the sign. Mr. Gavigan stated that the entire opening is 16' wide. This will be cut in the field to fit the window size, with a seam in the middle.

In response to a question from Chair Gluesing, Mr. Gavigan stated that the accent band reaches the width of the windows.

Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Mr. Dornbusch, it was voted to approve the façade change, from removing the awning to installing the orange metal channel, decorative band, as submitted. Bob Dermody – aye; Susan Opton -aye; Steve Dornbusch – aye; and Chair Gluesing - aye. Motion passed 4-0.

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

Minutes:

Minutes from the 05/22/2023 meeting.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Mr. Dornbusch, it was voted to approve the meeting minutes of May 22, 2023, as presented. Bob Dermody – aye; Steve Dornbusch – aye; and Chair Gluesing - aye. Motion passed 3-0.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Mr. Dornbusch, it was voted to adjourn at 8:27 p.m. Bob Dermody – aye; Susan Opton -aye; Steve Dornbusch – aye; and Chair Gluesing - aye. Motion passed 4-0.

Next Public Meeting – June 26, 2023 at 7:30pm via Zoom Webinar