



Design Review Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 12, 2024
7:30 p.m.

Board Members:

Mark Gluesing, Board Chair (P)
Bob Dermody, Board Member (P)
Susan Opton, Board Member (P)
Steve Dornbusch, Board Member (P)
Clay Hutchinson Conservation Specialist (P)

Applicants & Attendees:

1. Mehmet Sahin – Falcon Graphics, representing Union Pharmacy
2. Lee Newman - Housing Needham (HONE) Advisory Group
3. Mark Mitchell representing Middlesex Savings Bank
4. Kirsten Allen & Kathleen Krivak, of Blue Lotus Healing Arts

Chair Gluesing called the meeting to order on January 29, 2024, at 7:30 p.m. He reviewed the remote meeting procedures.

HEARINGS:

Continued - Public notice is hereby given that Union Pharmacy to be located at 1004 Great Plain Avenue, has made application to the Design Review Board for a Special Permit pursuant to the Sign By-Law Section 5.5.3.1 seeking approval for 3 wall signs each being 24 square feet in area when only one sign is normally allowed and any other applicable sections of the By-Law.

Mehmet Sahin, Falcon Graphics, explained that his client is not interested in the sign in the window over the door, as suggested by the Board at the last meeting. Chair Gluesing noted that the Board previously expressed concern regarding the layout of some of the signs over the windows. The applicant can have two signs per the bylaw at this location. The Special Permit would be to allow a third sign.

Chair Gluesing stated that a sign over the door should be smaller. This is currently proposed to be approximately 60% of the size of the other two signs. Mr. Zemel previously noted that there have been three signs allowed at this location historically.

Mr. Dornbusch stated that he also does not believe the third sign is necessary, as the other signs can be seen from all locations accessing this property.

Mr. Dermody asked if any signage is proposed for the door. Mr. Sahin stated that the hours of operations are proposed on the door.

Chair Gluesing suggested that the signs all be placed in the same location relative to the brickwork on the building. He suggested removing the proposal for the sign over the door. Mr.

Dermody stated that there have historically been three signs on this property. Chair Gluesing stated that these were never reviewed or approved by the Town. Mr. Dermody stated that, noting this, he also does not believe the sign over the door is necessary.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Ms. Opton, it was voted to approve Sign A proposed over the entrance. Bob Dermody – nay; Steve Dornbusch - nay; Susan Opton – nay; Chair Gluesing – nay. Motion failed 0-4.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Ms. Opton, it was voted to approve the Façade B and Façade C signs in the February 12th package, with the condition that each sign sit on the rowlock course of brick on each façade. Bob Dermody – aye; Steve Dornbusch - aye; Susan Opton – aye; Chair Gluesing – aye. Motion passed 4-0.

Agenda Item 2:

Mark Mitchell of Middlesex Savings Bank located at 50 Chestnut Street and applying for signage.

Mark Mitchell, Middlesex Savings Bank, explained that this location is currently being renovated. This includes a proposal to change two existing signs for halo-lit, raised letter signs. The existing gooseneck lighting is proposed to be removed. In addition, frosted window graphics are proposed.

Mr. Dermody asked about the repetition of the name of the bank on the window graphics below the larger sign on the building. Mr. Mitchell stated that these are more decorative elements.

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

Agenda Item 3:

Kirsten Allen & Kathleen Krivak, of Blue Lotus Healing Arts, located at 945 Great Plain Ave and applying for signage.

Kirsten Allen explained that the original sign for the building is under the windows and there have been many difficulties with clients finding the front door. The new sign is proposed right near the entrance to the second door.

Chair Gluesing stated that he believes this is a great idea in order to better identify the business.

Mr. Dornbusch asked about lighting. Ms. Allen stated that there is no existing lighting, and none proposed for this sign.

Mr. Dermody expressed concern regarding the proposed size of the sign. Ms. Allen stated that the proposed sign may be slightly smaller than the former Three Crown Jewelers' sign in the same location and will be done per the bylaw.

The Board discussed a proposed condition for the location of the sign on the façade.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Ms. Opton, it was voted to approve the Blue Lotus application with the condition that the sign be mounted on the center of the brick pier to the right of the door. Bob Dermody – aye; Steve Dornbusch - aye; Susan Opton – aye; Chair Gluesing – aye. Motion passed 4-0.

Agenda Item 1:

Lee Newman, presentation of Housing Needham (HONE) Advisory Group status.

Lee Newman presented to the Board regarding the MBTA Communities Act. She explained that, as part of this Act, the Town must create 50 acres of land zoned for multifamily housing, leading to 1,784 units at a density of 15 units per acre. 90% of these units must be located within 0.5 miles of a transit station. The Town created a committee (HONE) to oversee this item. The Town has been involved with the State regarding this item since March 2022. A grant was obtained to seek a consultant to help HONE with this process. There have been two community meetings thus far. She reviewed three proposed scenarios with the Board.

Ms. Newman explained that HONE now plans to present two different recommendations to the Town, including the base scenario and a second option. A third workshop will take place on March 28th to present the two plans. There will be buildout, school, tax revenue, infrastructure, operating and capital impact analyses discussed. All work on this must be completed by the end of this year.

The Board discussed the Downtown Design Guidelines for the Town in terms of this project. Ms. Newman stated that HONE would like the Board's input regarding which standards should be applied to the project. The Board agreed to hold discussions on this item and respond back to Ms. Newman.

Minutes:

Minutes from the 01/29/2024 meeting

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Mr. Dornbusch, it was voted to approve the meeting minutes of January 29, 2024, as presented. Bob Dermody – aye; Steve Dornbusch - aye; Susan Opton – abstain; Chair Gluesing – aye. Motion passed 3-0-1.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Ms. Opton, it was voted to adjourn at 9:01 p.m. Bob Dermody – aye; Steve Dornbusch - aye; Susan Opton – aye; Chair Gluesing – aye. Motion passed 4-0.

Next Public Meeting – March 4, 2024 at 7:30pm via Zoom Webinar