



Design Review Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 24, 2024
7:30 p.m.

Board Members:

Mark Gluesing, Board Chair (P)

Susan Opton, Board Member (P)

Steve Dornbusch, Board Member (P)

Elisa Litchman, Administrative Specialist, Planning & Community Development (P)

Mark Gluesing, Chair, called the meeting to order on June 24, 2024, at 7:34 p.m. He reviewed the remote meeting procedures.

Applicants & Attendees:

1. Carolyn Parker, representing Homewood Suites
2. Somi Kim, owner of 117 Chestnut Street
3. Tom Miller, Esq., McDermott, Quilty, Miller, & Hanley, LLP, on behalf of Blue on Highland
4. Hilary Bruel, Needham Art Association

HEARINGS:

Public notice is hereby given that Homewood Suites located at 200 First Ave., has made application to the Design Review Board for a Special Permit pursuant to the Article 5 of the General Bylaws, Sign By-law, Section 5.3.4, Special Permits. The applicant is proposing 2 wall signs at the top of the building of 106.1 square feet each, 2 wall signs on each canopy fascia of 16.9 square feet each, one wall sign at the public entry of 28 square feet and one double sided ground sign of 54 square feet, each face. Section 5.5.3 limits the total number of signs to one, whether attached or free standing. Section 5.5.4 limits wall signs visible from Route 128 to 100 square feet, other wall signs to 32 square feet and free-standing/ ground signs to 32 square feet, each face. The Design Review Board may grant exception to these provisions and any other applicable sections of the Sign By-law.

Chair Gluesing read and opened the hearing.

Carolyn Parker, representing the applicant, explained that Homewood Suites has a new image and is proposing to remove and replace five wall signs, and to reface the monument sign and one directional sign. In some instances, the signs are proposed to get smaller and in some instances, they are proposed to get slightly larger.

Chair Gluesing stated that the proposal is for seven signs; two on each end building, which the applicant previously received approval for, low canopy signs, and a couple of ground mounted signs. Special permits do not carry over and must be reapplied for if the signs are being changed.

Ms. Parker explained that the text on the signs is proposed to change, making the signs a bit larger. The signs will be illuminated.

Mr. Dornbusch stated that this appears to be a lot of signage. He asked about potentially removing the wall sign at the entrance, as it looks large on the proposed panel background, and there is a sign posted on the canopy above this.

Ms. Opton agreed that there may be too many signs proposed, but the signs do look nice.

Chair Gluesing stated that the Board previously discussed the number of signs on this building. The issue is that people approach the building from the ground in multiple ways, and it could be difficult to orient around the site. The Board, at the time, believed this was enough of a reason to approve them. Chair Gluesing agreed that the wall sign does seem redundant with the canopy sign.

Ms. Parker suggested that the lettering could be taken off the panel background for the wall sign. Mr. Dornbusch agreed.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dornbusch and seconded by Ms. Opton, it was voted to approve the Special Permit application, with the condition that sign E-5 be changed to pin mounted letters on the wall, without a rear panel. Steve Dornbusch – aye; Chair Gluesing – aye; Susan Opton – aye; Motion passed 3-0-0.

Agenda Item 1:

Somi Kim, owner of property located at 117 Chestnut Street and re-applying for façade changes.

Somi Kim, owner of 117 Chestnut Street, explained that this property was before the Board in September 2023 to add an ADA accessible ramp and enclose the covered porches. The current proposal is to change the exterior colors and window types and colors, as the original colors could not be matched. The proposal is for Anderson black vinyl double hung windows, and 7” vertical vinyl board and batten charcoal gray and colonial white siding.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dornbusch and seconded by Ms. Opton, it was voted to approve the application for 117 Chestnut Street as submitted. Steve Dornbusch – aye; Chair Gluesing – aye; Susan Opton – aye; Motion passed 3-0-0.

Agenda Item 2:

Scott Drago, Chief Operating Officer of Blue on Highland located at 882 Highland Avenue and applying for site plan review.

Tom Miller, Esq., McDermott, Quilty, Miller, & Hanley, LLP, representing the applicant, explained that the proposal is to expand the existing restaurant into a 650 s.f. space next door that was previously a nail salon. As such, the proposal is to modify the façade of the former nail salon to keep it in line with the existing space. The applicant plans to close off the door of the new space and remove the box signage above. The applicant plans to replace the long existing folding panel windows of the existing restaurant with something not as drafty. The proposed folding

panel windows will be aluminum and will match the windows in the new space. The intention is to make the two units appear to be as contiguous as possible.

Olivia Greene, for the applicant, stated that the intention is to match the existing aesthetic of the Blue on Highland façade with clapboard at the base in a brick red color. The existing awnings and graphics will also be matched.

Attorney Miller stated that the awning over the new space is proposed to have a blue striped border, with the same color and shape as the existing awning. The new windows are proposed to be aluminum in a dark bronze. These will be a modern folding design instead of the original wooden windows.

In response to a question from Ms. Opton, Attorney Miller explained that the existing façade fascia is a corrugated metal that extends over other tenant spaces. The existing recessed entry will be changed to a flat wall and make additional room.

Chair Gluesing suggested that the proposed awning, as not currently part of this application, could be conditioned to match the shape and color of the existing awnings. Attorney Miller noted that there will be no writing on the awning. There will be no signage above the awning. The Board would note on the approval that the “B” logo could be added to the awning, but not required, upon confirmation with and approval by the Building Department. No new lighting is proposed.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dornbusch and seconded by Ms. Opton, it was voted to approve the façade changes as submitted for 882 Highland Avenue, with the conditions that the new awning match the color and profile of the existing awning to the left and noting that the Board has no objection should the applicant choose to add the “B” logo graphic to that awning. Steve Dornbusch – aye; Chair Gluesing – aye; Susan Opton – aye; Motion passed 3-0-0.

Agenda Item 3:

Hilary Bruel, Needham Art Association applying for ‘Art Outside’ banners on fences at 8 various locations in town.

Hilary Bruel, Needham Art Association, explained that the proposal is to apply banners on eight fences around Town. This is a temporary public art project to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the Needham Art Association. The intent is to take art from the members and reproduce them on vinyl banners. The banners will be rotated every few months, over the course of ten months beginning in September. There are two components to each site: the branding banner, which gives the necessary credits to those associated with the project, and the art banners.

Ms. Opton asked why the fence located at the Rosemary Pool was not included. Ms. Bruel stated that this fence is located close to the fence at Sudbury Farms, and that may be too repetitive in one area.

Ms. Opton asked about what the art will actually look like. Chair Gluesing stated that the Board could ask for review of the choices or could put trust in the Association. Ms. Bruel explained that

the submissions are only from existing members. There is no interest in art that is controversial or inappropriate.

Mr. Dornbusch asked about the banner material. Ms. Bruel stated that the material is an 18oz matte vinyl, tear-resistant, and waterproof. These will be solid with pole pockets instead of grommets. The poles will be attached to the fences. This will keep the images flat.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dornbusch and seconded by Ms. Opton, it was voted to approve the fence artwork project, as submitted. Steve Dornbusch – aye; Chair Gluesing – aye; Susan Opton – aye; Motion passed 3-0-0.

Minutes:

Minutes from the 06/10/2024 meeting

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dornbusch and seconded by Ms. Opton, it was voted to approve the meeting minutes of June 10, 2024, as presented. Steve Dornbusch – aye; Chair Gluesing – abstain; Susan Opton – aye; Motion passed 2-0-1.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dornbusch and seconded by Ms. Opton, it was voted to adjourn at 8:20 p.m. Steve Dornbusch – aye; Chair Gluesing – aye; Susan Opton – aye; Motion passed 3-0-0.

Next Public Meeting – July 8, 2024 at 7:30pm via Zoom Webinar