

Minutes

Design Review Board

March 22, 2017

Present: Dan Martin, Deborah Kruskal, Paula Hyde

***Meadow Walk  
Working Session***

The Board met with Katie Snyder of National Development to discuss plans for a signage plan for Meadow Walk retail businesses. The original plan was discussed at a joint meeting with the Planning Board at which it was evident that the applicants had misinterpreted the town sign bylaw when calculating the extent of requested extra signage. At that meeting the Board expressed concern with the amount of signage proposed for the retail stores at Meadow Walk and requested a working session to modify the March 8 proposal.

The Board unanimously agreed that the total area requested, ranging from 30-50s.f. per sign and up to three signs on corner units, with no limits for self-illuminated signs was too much. The Board was also concerned with the possibility of signs with three-foot-tall self-illuminated lettering.

The Board suggested using size exemptions granted to CVS, BMW, and Wholefoods as a starting point for the size and area to be permitted. The Board noted that the 33s.f. CVS sign has maximum 24" letters and BMW has 22" letters. The Board and the applicant agreed that no individual letters on any sign would exceed 24".

The Board and the applicants also sought to establish sizes that were consistent with the scale of the buildings to which they would be attached. Ultimately the decision was to permit primary signs of 40s.f. or the linear frontage of the store, whichever is smaller. Secondary and tertiary signage would be allowed at the primary sign size less 20%.

There was also a discussion of sign illumination. Mr. Martin noted that board member Jen Koffel preferred to see no internally illuminated or halo lights on the property. Mr. Martin, noted that this would be inconsistent with what is allowed under the current bylaws. The applicants also suggested that the use of the same light fixtures, as is done in Wayland Center, has aesthetic drawbacks as well. The Board expressed a desire to see a variety of signs and suggested that requiring a size reduction for internally lit signs, as is in the current bylaw, might encourage a greater mix of signs. The Board also noted that by reducing the allowed size for illuminated signs by 20%, the signs would be similar in size to that of the CVS across the street.

The Board also expressed a concern with internally lit channel letters where the typeface is extra bold. Ms. Snyder suggested that there may be wording that they can use to prohibit this and would look into it.

There was further discussion about limiting the color range of the white light. Ms. Snyder was going to check with her lighting consultant with recommendations for white light color temperatures.

Ms. Snyder also noted the sign plan allows for two additional 4s.f. blade signs (projecting signs in the Sudbury bylaws). The Board unanimously liked the blade signs and was comfortable with the size or even a little larger.

There was also a discussion of awnings. The Board noted that the bylaw permits primary signs on awnings or a secondary sign that is on a series of awning valances. The applicants indicated that they were going to consider how to handle awnings in a manner consistent with the bylaws. The applicants also noted that they were going to discourage slogans and other advertising in a manner consistent with the bylaws.

The applicants agreed to write up a new sign requirement proposal per the discussion and provide renderings with signs that are scaled to these new restrictions at an upcoming meeting.