



Town of Sudbury

Design Review Board

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Meeting Minutes December 8, 2021 Design Review Board

Meeting Format: Zoom Conference Call
Present: Susan Vollaro, Jim Parker, and Chris Alfonso

Review of Proposed Signage Applicant: Sudbury Plaza 505 Boston Post Road

Sudbury Plaza was represented by Andrew Lafuente of Lafuente Sign & Awning. The applicant presented several blade-type signs at Sudbury Plaza measuring 44" high by 28" wide, totaling 8.5 square feet each. The signs are already installed and replaced existing fabric blade signs that were of a larger size. An application for permit was never submitted for the previous or new signs. The sign fabricator indicated that he did not know that a permit was required since the signs would be replacing existing ones.

The signs are mounted in the same locations as were previously installed and are 1" thick with a brushed aluminum finish. Mr. Lafuente also indicated that that bottom of the signs are mounted at approximately 7 feet above the ground. Mr. Parker noted that based on his observations, some of the signs are mounted lower – more like 6'-5" high at their lowest point. The Shaw's blade signs in particular seemed to be too low. Board members noticed that there seems to always be either a traffic cone or sales display case directly under the sign so that people don't try to walk under it.

The board noted that at CVS and Aubuchon Hardware, the blade signs are blocked by awnings. Being that there are only two businesses in this area, blade signs aren't necessary anyway. It was noted by Mr. Alfonso that in one of the photos presented of the main run of businesses, Lavender's also has an awning that blocks visibility of the blade sign on one side.

Along the Shaw's line of businesses, several of the blade signs are one bay away from the entry to their businesses. The applicant stated that this was due to Lavender's having a long glass façade, thus pushing all the blade signs down a bay. The board felt that it would be better to have all of these blade signs mounted at the actual entrance and only the one Lavender's sign be offset from the entrance if necessary.

The board felt that overall, blade signs were helpful along the main run of businesses. However, the blade signs seem to be larger than necessary, and at times mounted too low. The board recommends approving these signs with modifications. The board suggests that the signs should be smaller height, taking away some of the blank space above and below the business names.

This would decrease the blade square footage (potentially giving more allowable s.f. to the main business signs). This would also allow the blade signs to be mounted higher as needed. The board also felt that blade signs were not needed at Shaw's. Apart from being the large anchor business, the entries to Shaw's are perpendicular to traffic and protrude significantly forward compared to the other business. Signage directly above the entrances would be more useful than blade signs. The board believes that the Shaw's blade signs should be removed for this reason, but more importantly because they seem to be mounted too low.

Review of Proposed Site Plan and Recommendations to Planning Board

Applicant: Sudbury Water District
199 Raymond Road

Sudbury Water District was represented by Vincent Roy, Executive Director Sudbury Water District as well as Kyle Hay and Sara Francis of Weston & Sampson. The applicant presented a 50'x50' insulated, heated structure to house four large steel vessels that will treat water for elevated levels of PFAS. The building will be set back from the road, behind the existing Sudbury water district building. This is a somewhat temporary structure, with an estimated life span of 35 years for the siding. The filter vessels will most likely last approximately 20 years. While this extra water treatment is necessary now, it is not known if it will be needed beyond this time span, so a permanent building may not be necessary. The building needs to go up quickly and low cost, so this added to the case for a prefab, non-permanent structure. This particular structure is often used in the northeast and can withstand the harsh New England climate.

The board felt that the building size and location as presented was appropriate for the need. The building will be set back 400 feet from the road and behind trees, so it will be hardly visible from the street. A neutral color finish that blends with the landscape was suggested.

Review of Proposed Site Plan and Recommendations to Planning Board

Applicant: Herb Chambers Mercedes
141 Boston Post Road

Herb Chambers Mercedes was represented by Josh Fox at Rollins, Rollins & Fox PC, Gabe Crocker, Dave Newhall, and Maggie Laracy, engineers at Crocker Design Group, James Milarky, Project Architect at The Curtis Architectural Group, and John Welch, Director of Construction and Facilities at Herb Chambers. The applicant proposed repurposing the bulk of the former Bosse building into a new Mercedes car dealership. The building footprint would remain essentially the same, with a small addition on the back and the removal of the existing tennis courts. The existing 92 parking spaces will be roughly tripled in the proposed scheme.

Overall, the board was pleased to see that the existing building was going to be reused rather than demolishing and starting over. However, there was some feedback on the proposal.

The board was very critical of the nine concrete pads proposed to spotlight cars along Boston Post Road. The board felt that this sort of display was antithetical to the image that town of Sudbury wants to convey. There was also concern that these pads would harm the health of the existing mature trees that are to remain along the road and directly adjacent to these non-permeable pads.

Mr. Parker noted that a large portion of the façade was to be replaced with windows. This, combined with lighting the large parking lots can potentially create a large amount of light pollution in the surrounding area. The applicant noted that all lighting (indoor and outdoor) is to be dimmable, and stated that only minimal accent and security lighting will be provided after business hours.

Ms. Vollaro suggested that the 22 overflow parking spots on the eastern side of the property at Boston Post Road should be removed. This area is raised higher than the other parking on site and it is right up against the road. It is also separated from the bulk of the parking on the property. There is already an abundance of parking presented for this business.

Ms. Vollaro noted the very long retaining wall along the parking lot and suggested that there should be vertical pedestrian circulation halfway along the wall so that visitors parking along the east side of this wall don't have to walk all the way around it to reach the entrance.

The applicant indicated that cars needing servicing would be dropped off right inside the garage entrance and then would be picked up via valet after servicing is complete. It was described that the valet would park the car in the lot and then hand off the keys to the owner. It was suggested that if this hand off took place curbside instead, then a suitable safe pull-over area should be incorporated into the design for this purpose.

Mr. Alfonso is very pleased with the overall design of the new dealership building.

Other Business:

The Board unanimously approved the minutes for the meeting dated November 17, 2021.

The board unanimously agreed that the Chair of the DRB will send a letter to the Select Board requesting a letter of recognition and gratitude on behalf of Dan Martin for his dedicated service and leadership of the DRB.