



Town of Sudbury

Design Review Board

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Meeting Minutes January 25, 2023 Design Review Board

Meeting Format: Zoom Conference Call
Present: Katie McCue, Jim Parker, and Susan Vollaro
Absent: Chris Alfonso and Zachary Blake

Review of Proposed Signage

Applicant: Sudbury Point Grill
120 Boston Post Road

Sudbury Point Grill was represented by Danielle Lurette of Best Price Signs and Printing. It was noted that the signs at this location were already installed without a sign permit. These signs are now under review. The applicant presented two awning signs and one freestanding sign. The awning signs are on the same awnings as those of the previous business. The freestanding sign also was not modified except for the face of the sign changing to the new business name. The existing freestanding sign does not conform to the bylaws and never received a special permit, so this sign would need to go before the Zoning Board of Appeals for a special permit.

The two awning signs are each 4' x' 4' in size, totaling 32 square feet. Per the building application, the building frontage is 150 linear feet. The combined areas of these signs fall within the allowable square footage and would not require a special permit. Mr. Parker noted that one sign had the words "FUNCTION ROOM" under the business name and felt that this extra verbiage was not in the spirit of section 3291A of the town bylaws, which states that "signs should not contain selling slogans or other advertising which is not an integral part of the name or other identification of the enterprise". Ms. Vollaro felt that this is a common sign seen at restaurants and conveyed an additional service that they provided, so she was okay with the verbiage. Regarding the overall look of the sign, Ms. McCue stated that the design did not seem current or modern compared to the new look and food offerings inside the establishment. Ms. Vollaro noted that the lettering for "restaurant" seemed squeezed in, and it was not clear if the word "Sudbury" was part of the restaurant name.

The freestanding sign is sitting on a 30" high stone base for plantings, and tops at 12 feet high above that. The actual sign is 6'x4' with additional plates below with the establishment phone number and other extraneous information. The sign is set back 77" from the sidewalk. The board addressed all of the ways that this sign does not conform to the bylaws. Even if the panels under the main sign were removed, with a sign size of 24 s.f., the sign would still need to be set back by a minimum of 16 feet from the lot line. The building setback on the back of the lot also does not conform to the required 20 feet from the lot edge, because the back of the lot also faces a street. The board felt that it was not feasible to place the sign further in from the lot edge,

because it would impede traffic circulation in the parking lot. The board agreed that they would recommend to the ZBA to approve these two nonconforming issues due to the constraints of the site. However, the board would not support approval of the other nonconforming aspects of the sign. The top of the sign is 14'-6" from the ground. There is no reason that this sign should not conform to the maximum 10-foot-high requirement. The sign is also lacking the property address which is required per the bylaws. The distance from the ground to the bottom of the sign must not exceed 40% of the overall height of the sign. Based on the lot length, the maximum sign area is 30 square feet. While the main panel conforms, the overall sign area does not, given the additional panels underneath. The board all agreed that these panels did not follow the spirit of section 3291A of the bylaws. This additional information is distracting to drivers and is easily accessible online.

The board also discussed the design of the sign. It was agreed that aside from the bylaw nonconformities, it would be better for the business to replace the entire sign anyway. While it is understood that there are cost savings by keeping the bulk of the freestanding sign components, this does not send a message to the public that much has changed from the previous closed business. As Ms. McCue noted earlier, this does not reflect the changes to the menu and overall style inside the building. Mr. Parker noted that while this is out of the purview of the Design Review board, the site overall is an eyesore as it is completely covered in asphalt. A new sign and added vegetation on the lot would help improve the curb appeal of the establishment. Ms. Vollaro noted that even if the 4x6 panel does not change, it could at least be reset in a new freestanding structure (without the additional panels) that looks more modern and better conforms to the bylaws.

A motion was made to recommend ZBA approval of the non-conforming setbacks, but the board would not recommend approval of the other non-conforming aspects of the sign. The board also recommends updating and modernizing the overall look of the freestanding sign.

Other Business:

The Board unanimously approved the minutes for the meeting dated January 11, 2023.

Ms. Vollaro informed the board that she has scheduled a meeting with Adam Duchesneau to review possible overhauls to the signage bylaws and sign application method, as discussed at the January 11th meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.