



Town of Sudbury

Design Review Board

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Meeting Minutes February 28, 2024 Design Review Board

Meeting Format: Zoom Conference Call
Present: Susan Vollaro (Chair), Jim Flavin, and James Parker
Absent: Katie McCue

Review of Proposed Signage Applicant: Dunkin' 378 Boston Post Road

The applicant was represented by Anne Ramsey of View Point Sign and Awning. Signage for this application was previously reviewed at the Design Review Board meeting held on January 10, 2024.

The proposed Free-Standing Business Sign which was modified since the prior meeting was discussed. The proposed free-standing sign is to be made from composite material since sand blasting of the existing sign was found not to be a realistic option. The sign would be painted and have approximately 1/2 inch raised lettering and border. The appearance of the proposed sign was felt by the board to be in keeping with the intent of the bylaw regarding free-standing signs to be made from materials that match the aesthetics of a wood sign. The colors of the lettering and the backing were previously approved by the board. The final color of the sign border as suggested by the board at the prior meeting was incorporated into the proposed sign. Otherwise the sign size and location are unchanged from the existing sign and were approved previously.

The posts of the sign are to be straightened and if necessary, because of wear and deterioration would be replaced with posts and hardware with an appearance similar to the existing sign.

The proposed free-standing sign was found to conform to the bylaws and was unanimously approved as presented.

Proposed updated directional signs were again discussed. It was suggested by the board that all the directional signs be updated to achieve a pleasing uniform aesthetic.

The proposed directional signs were previously found to conform and were approved.

Review of Site Plan, Landscaping and New Building Elevations Applicant: Chase Bank 505-525 Boston Post Road

The applicant was represented by Mark Hebert, Senior Vice President of the Wilder Company, David Kelley, civil engineer from Meridian Associates, Giuseppina Morello, architect from TPG Architecture, and Bill Barnard from Classic Signs.

A new one-story building housing Chase Bank is proposed for the northwest corner of the property 19 feet from Boston Post Road and in very close proximity to the plaza access road (with traffic lights at the intersection with Rt.20) located along the far western side of the plaza.

Mark Hebert provided an overview of the proposed project.

David Kelley presented and explained the proposed site plan and landscaping.

The architect from TPG Architecture Giuseppina Morello presented the elevations for Chase Bank explaining that the colors, tones, textures, and materials chosen for the facades are in keeping with those associated with Chase Bank and were also chosen to fit in with the neighboring buildings at Meadow Walk immediately across Boston Post Road.

When asked about the extensive use of glass on the north facade facing Boston Post Road the architect explained that this was for the purpose of providing light for a lobby and interior spaces to be used by bank customers. The board generally felt that the proposed building facades were in keeping with the look of a bank as well as fitting in with the neighboring businesses at Meadow walk across the street.

Susan Vollaro felt that the siting of the proposed building felt cramped into and too close to the sidewalk of the access road to the plaza and to a slightly lesser extent Rt. 20. She suggested moving the structure further away from the access road side walk and Rt. 20 which could improve pedestrian safety and vehicle driver visibility in addition to the massing aesthetics. This would also create more space for the proposed new free-standing curved monument sign to be set back at least a few feet further from Rt. 20, and the access road to the plaza allowing for better aesthetics with low plantings in front of the free-standing sign, and importantly improving vehicle driver visibility at the trafficked intersection.

There was discussion about the design of the vehicle access to ATM located on the south facade of the proposed building. Susan Vollaro expressed reservations about the proposed one-way traffic flow. Customer inconvenience and frustration with compliance with, and safety of the "Do Not Enter" sign proposed for the eastern end of ATM access road were raised as concerns by the board. It was suggested that vehicle access to the ATM be reconfigured to allow two-way traffic flow into the ATM access way. The widening of the access way could be accomplished by extending it further south eliminating an additional three existing parking spaces. It was suggested that the curved ATM vehicle entry way be separated from the plaza access road sidewalk by a least a few feet to improve aesthetics and more importantly pedestrian safety and separation from vehicle traffic.

Review of Proposed New Sudbury Plaza Monument Sign

Applicant: Sudbury Plaza

505-525 Boston Post Road

The application was presented by Mark Hebert, Senior Vice President of the Wilder Company, David Kelley, civil engineer from Meridian Associates, and Bill Barnard from Classic Signs.

The size, location, and appearance of the proposed free-standing monument sign were discussed. The size (including height), shape and location were presented as mirroring the two free standing monument signs at Meadow Walk on the opposite side of the trafficked intersection on Rt. 20.

The materials were chosen to reflect or mirror the anticipated cosmetic changes to the facades of the Sudbury Plaza Buildings. As noted above it was suggested by the board that if sent for approval by the ZBA, the proposed new free-standing curved monument sign be set back a few feet further from both Rt.

20 and the access road to the plaza allowing for better aesthetics with low plantings in front of the free-standing sign and importantly improving vehicle driver visibility at the trafficked intersection with Rt.20.

Reservations by the members of the board were expressed about the visibility of the floating sign lettering “Sudbury Plaza” proposed to be mounted on the top of the monument sign given the back drop of the proposed plantings and the bank facade color scheme.

Board members expressed reservations about the necessity of a second free standing monument sign for the plaza which is not in accordance with town bylaws and which would require a special permit. It was noted however, that there are precedents for two free standing business signs including right across the street at Meadow Walk. Board members felt that the proposed new free-standing monument sign did not fit very well aesthetically with the existing free-standing business plaza directory sign.

Susan Vollaro noted that the proposed new free-standing business sign was different lacking cohesiveness with the existing free-standing directory sign on the property so much so that it could give the false impression of identifying another separate plaza. James Flavin voiced similar concerns.

Members of the board expressed reservations with internal illumination of the proposed sign and discussed with the applicant the town bylaws regarding free-standing business signs. Specifically, according to town bylaws internally illuminated free-standing monument signs do not conform to town bylaws and would require a special permit.

Review of Proposed Sudbury Plaza Business Tenant Signage
Applicant: Sudbury Plaza
505-525 Boston Post Road

Applications for tenant signage were presented by Mark Hebert, Senior Vice President of the Wilder Company, and Bill Barnard from Classic Signs.

An overview of proposed business tenant signage for the plaza was presented. The application for business tenant signage was noted to be revised after the application had been submitted to the following businesses only: Aubuchon Hardware, Shaw’s, Wild Birds Unlimited, Starbucks, Sage, and Lavender.

Size, location, appearance and illumination of proposed business tenant signage were discussed. Mark Hebert explained that the Wilder Companies, the plaza owner, would be encouraging their tenants to have signage consisting of internally illuminated channel lettering affixed to the front facade for each business. The signage would be centered in the gray colored corrugated metal frieze-like region for each business except for two businesses; Shaw’s where the primary sign would remain in the same location as the current roof mounted sign and CVS Pharmacy where the primary sign would be mounted and centered in the white triangular shaped region of the gable of the front facade.

Aubuchon Hardware – 505 Boston Post Road, proposed primary internally illuminated signage measures 32.5 sf. Prior primary signage without internal illumination measured 35.7sf (not internally illuminated and previously approved). Total allowed signage is 48sf. Maximum primary signage with internal illumination allowed is 24 sf. **Proposed is over allowed by 8.5sf or 135%.**

Shaw’s – 509 Boston Post Road, proposed primary internally illuminated signage measures 153.55 sf. The proposed internally illuminated roof mounted primary signage is larger than the existing non-internally illuminated sign, which had received a special permit from the ZBA.

Wild Birds Unlimited – 513 Boston Post Road, proposed internally illuminated primary signage measures 26sf. Existing without internal illumination measured 24.5sf. Maximum allowed with internal illumination is 16.75sf. **Proposed is over allowed by 155%.**

Starbucks – 513 Boston Post Road, proposed internally illuminated primary signage measures 25sf. Existing without internal illumination measured 29.4sf. Maximum allowed with internal illumination is 16.75sf. **Proposed is over allowed by 149%.**

Sage Boutique – 519 Boston Post Road, proposed internally illuminated primary signage measures 14.84sf. No prior signage for this business. Maximum primary internal illumination signage for this business is 14.9sf. **This proposed sign conforms to the town bylaws.**

Lavender Asian Cuisine – 519 Boston Post Road, proposed internally illuminated primary signage measures 50.76sf. Existing without internal illumination measured 25.42sf. The business frontage is 59.6sf allowing total signage of 36sf, maximum primary signage of 27.75sf, and maximum internally illuminated primary signage of 18sf. **Proposed is over allowed by about 300%.**

The board felt that efforts should be made by the applicant to have signage for the businesses located in Sudbury Plaza to conform with spirit of the town bylaws with regard to allowed primary sign square footage except as noted above for Shaw’s. If a compelling case can be made for or if there are valid reasons for business signage to be substantially larger than permitted by town bylaws, the board is open to reconsideration. Otherwise, the applicant may seek approval of signage with the Zoning Board of Appeals without the support of the Design Review Board.

Review of Proposed Alteration of Existing Sudbury Plaza Freestanding Directory Sign

Applicant: Sudbury Plaza

505-525 Boston Post Road

The proposed modifications of the Freestanding Business Directory Sign were presented by Mark Hebert, Senior Vice President of the Wilder Company, and Bill Barnard from Classic Signs.

The changes include painting the masonry and header white and adding a wood accent under the header. These cosmetic changes are in keeping with painting the brickwork of the plaza buildings white and with the addition of wood accents to the plaza buildings.

The business panels are to be replaced with identical sized new dark grayish brown panels with white lettering. The board suggested that the lettering of "Wild Birds Unlimited" and "Lavender" be increased in size similar to the other business panels to make those business signs more visible. To accomplish increasing the lettering of Wild Birds Unlimited it may be necessary to eliminate the logo. To accomplish increasing the lettering of Lavender it may be necessary to eliminate or change to one line "Asian Cuisine & Bar".

As per Adam Burney, the Sudbury Director of Planning & Community Development, these modifications will not require a special permit as the sign will remain in compliance with Special Permit issued in 2008.

The board unanimously approved the proposed Freestanding Directory Sign modifications with two suggestions for increasing the visibility of the sign panels for Lavender and Wild Birds Unlimited.

Review of Proposed Sudbury Plaza Blade Signs

**Applicant: Sudbury Plaza
505-525 Boston Post Road**

Proposed blade signage for Wild Birds Unlimited, Starbucks, Learning Express, United States Post Office, Super Cuts, Lavender, Sage and UK Nails & Spa was presented by Mark Hebert, Senior Vice President of the Wilder Company, and Bill Barnard from Classic Signs.

The proposed projecting blade signs each measure 2.5 x 2.5 ft and are to be mounted on the front facade of each respective business in the location of a prior larger sized blade sign. The proposed blade signs are felt by the board to be well designed and are more appropriate in size than those that are being replaced. The board requests that for safety reasons that the blade signs have a clearance of at least 7 feet from the ground.

The applicant was informed that the square footage of a business blade sign is counted toward the total allowed square footage for that business. If the total allowed square footage for a business is greater than allowed by the town bylaws, then a special permit obtained from the Zoning Board of Appeals would be required.

The board unanimously approve of the blade signs for the businesses presented with the recommendation that the blade signs have a clearance of at least 7 feet from the ground.

Other Business

The minutes from the meeting February 14, 2024 were not reviewed and will be reviewed at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:31PM.