

Town of Franklin



Design Review Commission

**Tuesday, September 13, 2022
Meeting Minutes**

Chair James Bartro called the above-captioned meeting to order this date at 7:00 PM, as a remote access virtual Zoom meeting. Members in attendance: Chair James Bartro, Vice Chair Sam Williams, Paul Lopez, Cassandra Bethoney. Members absent: Gerald Wood, Associate Chris Baryluk. Also present: Maxine Kinhart, Administrative Staff.

As stated on the agenda, due to the continued concerns regarding the COVID-19 virus, this meeting will be conducted as a remote/virtual Design Review Commission meeting. In an effort to ensure citizen engagement and comply with open meeting law regulations, citizens will be able to dial into the meeting using the provided phone number, or citizens can participate by using the Zoom link provided on the agenda. This meeting was recorded.

1. Dunkin Donuts – 490 King Street – Continued - Install new signs.

Chair Bartro provided a review of the last meeting regarding concerns of the size of the signs and the allotted square footage submitted in the sign package. He stated that the applicant submitted a redesigned sign package. Mr. Sean Donovan, account manager of ViewPoint Sign & Awning on behalf of Dunkin Donuts, addressed the Commission. He reviewed the new sign sizes and locations. He stated that they met the reductions and they are less than the overall square footage. Chair Bartro stated that the Franklin Dunkin piece is still in question. Mr. Donovan reviewed the Franklin Runs on Dunkin sign; the Dunkin portion was reduced to 24 in. which brought the square footage down. He stated that they removed the DD. He stated that they are under the 64 sq. ft. total and they reduced the size of the signage on each elevation to meet the reduction requirement. Chair Bartro stated that there was concern over the square footage and the placement; it sounds like they are there on the square footage. He confirmed that on the placement, the applicant removed the placement over the drive-thru. Mr. Lopez stated that he does not think the grandfather rule applies. Chair Bartro stated that from where they started to where they are, he is pleased with the direction they have gone and they have reduced the package square footage wise; it is less than where they started. Mr. Donovan stated that they did the reduction and made the effort. Mr. Lopez reviewed that the rules indicate that when the sign faces a residential district, the square footage is cut in half.

Motion: To **Approve** the sign package as submitted. Motioned by C. Bethoney. Seconded by S. Williams. Discussion: Mr. Donovan confirmed that the brand and the franchisee, the owner of the Dunkin Donuts, would like the Franklin Runs On. Chair Bartro confirmed that is the submittal they are voting on. Roll Call Vote: Williams-YES; Lopez-NO; Bethoney-YES; Bartro-YES. Voted 3-1-0.

2. V&H Beauty Corporation d/b/a Milky Way Nails & Spa - 452 W. Central Street - New sign face, same as existing.

Ms. Kinhart stated that the applicant is not currently present at the meeting. Chair Bartro stated that they would go back to this item if the applicant joins the meeting.

3. Enl'air Dance – 1256 West Central Street - Install sign panels and 3D logo.

Mr. Cam Afonso of Signs by Cam addressed the Commission. He stated that there was an existing pylon; this would be two new sign faces with white letters and 3D logo on the building. He stated that there is an existing light on the building; they are not adding any lighting. Chair Bartro confirmed that the attachment method was provided. He noted that there are two other signs there that were not permitted; he has asked the building commissioner to follow up with the landlord. Ms. Bethoney asked about the colors for the wall sign. Mr. Afonso confirmed it was matte black and the existing pylon is internally illuminated. Chair Bartro stated that the Commission tends to push back on the light backgrounds as they reflect a lot of light. Ms. Bethoney asked that the color and illumination are noted in the vote if approved. Chair Bartro asked Mr. Afonso if when he submits for the permit that he makes a note on the application to that effect.

Motion: To **Approve** the sign package as submitted with the addition of a note indicating matte black on the wall mounted sign for the color and that the existing pylon sign is internally illuminated. Motioned by S. Williams. Seconded by P. Lopez. Roll Call Vote: Williams-YES; Lopez-YES; Bethoney-YES; Bartro-YES. Voted 4-0-0.

4. Canna Klean – 852 Upper Union Street - Install sign cabinets.

Mr. Cam Afonso of Signs by Cam addressed the Commission. He stated that this is an existing pylon; it is under the square footage. He stated that they are adding a cabinet that mimics the top cabinet; on the building the applicant wants to put a similar sign that is single-faced internally lit LED. Chair Bartro confirmed that this is for an additional tenant.

Motion: To **Approve** the sign package as submitted. Motioned by S. Williams. Seconded by P. Lopez. Roll Call Vote: Williams-YES; Lopez-YES; Bethoney-YES; Bartro-YES. Voted 4-0-0.

5. NETA – 162 Grove Street - Install upper cabinet.

Mr. Cam Afonso of Signs by Cam addressed the Commission. He stated that this is an existing cabinet-style monument on the road. He stated that it is zoned industrial and they are under the square footage allowed. He stated that they are mounting an upper cabinet to the existing structure that mimics the lower structure width and height; it has an opaque white background. He stated that they are tying into the existing power that is there. He reviewed how it is lit currently with a blue halo that shines down. He confirmed that the applicant is not going with a building sign. He reviewed the reasoning for the alternate color rather than all blue on the sign. He reviewed that the new sign will be bolted to the existing sign and not visible.

Motion: To **Approve** the sign package as submitted with a note added regarding interior bolting. Motioned by S. Williams. Seconded by P. Lopez. Discussion: Mr. Afonso commented that all their installs are hidden installs; they never have any visible hardware. Chair Bartro requested a simple drawing on a submission like this as it makes it easier. He asked Mr. Afonso to amend that when he goes for the permit as that will address Ms. Bethoney's comment. Roll Call Vote: Williams-YES; Lopez-YES; Bethoney-YES; Bartro-YES. Voted 4-0-0.

6. Residence Inn by Marriott – 4 Forge Parkway - Update existing signs with new logo design.

Mr. Joseph Buchholz of Buchholz Signs Since 1899 addressed the Commission. He stated that Residence Inn would like to update their logo look so they are proposing to replace all their existing signs; they are similar in style with just the new logo. He explained that there is one set of 12 in. reverse channels; they are not illuminated. He reviewed the attachment methods and colors. Chair Bartro reviewed that the new signage being proposed are the replacement signages on sheet 4. He stated that with channel sets, the Commission only counts the positive space in the calculations. Mr. Buchholz stated that sheet 5 shows the shop drawings of how they are going to be constructed. Chair Bartro confirmed that the letters are a

finer stroke. He noted it looks the same on sheet 6. Mr. Buchholz stated that he does not have the square footage of only the face area; he has only the square footage of the entire sign. Chair Bartro confirmed that the proposed pylon sign/monument on page 9 sign 4 is internally illuminated and the existing one is also internally illuminated. Ms. Bethoney stated that it seems very large to her and when she calculated it, it did not meet the square footage requirements. Mr. Buchholz stated that he could remove the skirt although the skirt gives it a nicer finished look. Chair Bartro stated that the Commission does not allow a single pole; they only allow the duals. Ms. Bethoney stated that it is much too large according to regulations. She stated that she would want to understand the visibility around it and it is difficult to tell from the rendering. Mr. Lopez stated that he is okay with it as it is; he does not see that it is necessary to replace it with the two posts. Chair Bartro stated that he does see what Ms. Bethoney is saying. However, it is being replaced with something similar and it is a well-established business in the area. Mr. Buchholz noted that the sign is 2' 6" shorter than the existing. Ms. Bethoney stated that she is looking at the orientation map for the ones facing the highway; it is technically not allowed to have second floor signage in this district. She stated that she is okay with approving as an existing condition; she just wanted to raise the point for discussion. Chair Bartro stated that customarily that is how they have treated these situations as a one-for-one; however, Mr. Lopez's comment still stands. He stated that part of the Commission's purpose is the interpretation of the bylaws. He stated that this is really a one-to-one replacement of what is there which is where he leans toward. Mr. Williams wanted to know if when this building was constructed if they were granted some kind of variance related to their signage. Ms. Bethoney stated that she believes it is larger than existing. She stated that she counted 170 sq. ft. versus 110 sq. ft. on existing; so, it is not a true one-to-one replacement. She stated that it should match one-to-one. Chair Bartro stated that the Commission requests the applicants size the positive space on channel letters. Discussion commenced on the size. Ms. Bethoney requested clarification on the size and color. Chair Bartro requested that the applicant do the calculation on the positive space of the channel sets, have some way to compare it to what is currently on the building, and return to the Commission with that so it can be reviewed. He suggested the applicant review the bylaw for this zone for what is allowed. He stated that the monument is not an issue for the Commission and the first one is not an issue; it is the two lit ones.

Motion: To **Continue** the application to September 27, 2022. Motioned by S. Williams. Seconded by P. Lopez. Roll Call Vote: Williams-YES; Lopez-YES; Bethoney-YES; Bartro-YES. Voted 4-0-0.

7. **Plansee USA Headquarters – 115 Constitution Boulevard** - Addition to add 1 floor office component of existing facility, new building work and signage to be compliant with zoning requirements. Mr. Doug Hartnett of Highpoint Engineering, Mr. Daniel Riggs, architect of Embarc, and Mr. Michael LePage, facilities director, addressed the Commission. Mr. Hartnett stated that Plansee has been at the property since 1997 and they are undergoing a building renovation/addition; they are located in the Franklin Industrial Park. He stated that as part of that work, they are proposing a free-standing monument sign that was never there and a building mounted sign that has been there for a number of years. Mr. Riggs reviewed the proposed signage. He stated that there are no residential abutters. He explained that they are adding 8,000 sq. ft. to the building. He stated that they are planning to keep the mounted sign. He stated that they would like to add a new monument sign that announces the building from Constitution Boulevard. He stated that they are proposing an anodized aluminum slab; he reviewed the size, lettering, and surrounding landscaping features. Chair Bartro reviewed the regulations in this district and what is allowed for a monument. Ms. Bethoney and Mr. Williams agreed that they would like to see the sign closer to the allowable size. Mr. Hartnett stated that it is Plansee's desire to announce the building from the street. He stated that they are not sure if 50 sq. ft. total panel is appropriate given where it would be placed on the landscape. He asked what the mechanism would be to seek an approval of 60 sq. ft. and if it would be through Design Review Commission. Chair Bartro stated that the sign is new construction and there is not a lot of ambiguity in this part of the bylaw. He stated that he thinks that an applicant would go to the Zoning Board of Appeals if they did not like the answer they got at the Design Review Commission. Ms. Bethoney's comments on the plantings included, but were not limited

to, that she requested native species, she would like clarification on the size container for the juniper, and she recommended 2 ft. on center for the spacing. Mr. Chris McCarthy stated that all the plantings were from the list that the Town has on the website; however, he would be glad to replace the planting that Ms. Bethoney did not like. Mr. Lopez asked if the landscape plan was discussed with the Planning Board. Chair Bartro clarified that the Commission’s role is that on signage they are the approving board; however, on landscape, elevations, and all other matters having to do with aesthetics, the Commission is a recommending board. Mr. Lopez confirmed that the Planning Board already approved the landscaping and the applicant only needs to go to the Design Review Commission for the signage. Chair Bartro stated that given the feedback on the signage, he recommends this item be continued.

Motion: To **Continue** the application to September 27, 2022. Motioned by S. Williams. Seconded by P. Lopez. Roll Call Vote: Williams-YES; Lopez-YES; Bethoney-YES; Bartro-YES. Voted 4-0-0.

Approval of Minutes: August 23, 2022

Motion: To **Approve** the August 23, 2022 Meeting Minutes as presented. Motioned by P. Lopez. Seconded by S. Williams. Roll Call Vote: Williams-YES; Lopez-YES; Bethoney-YES; Bartro-ABSTAIN. Voted 3-0-1.

General Matters - New Business

Chair Bartro stated that it was brought to his attention that Bob’s Discount Furniture put up a large sign in Franklin Village Plaza; he does not believe it came before the Commission. He stated that he brought this to the attention of the building commissioner who has reached out to Bob’s. He stated that Bob’s acknowledged they neglected that step in the process and will come before the Commission retroactively to review the sign package. Chair Bartro stated that Bob’s will be coming before the Commission in the future. Ms. Bethoney asked about how this will be treated as it is an already installed sign. Chair Bartro stated that they will review the statute and the square footage that is installed.

General Matters - Old Business

Mr. Williams stated that he has mentioned in the past about improving the bylaws using material from other towns. He stated that he has pulled together the bylaws from York, Maine, which he thinks are very good in defining signage types and how to calculate the area of signs. Ms. Kinhart stated that the information can be sent to Commission members; however, Commission members cannot comment on it or it would be a violation of Open Meeting Law. She stated that the information can be sent to her and she will put it in an upcoming agenda packet for discussion. Chair Bartro confirmed the process for submitting information for potential bylaw amendments. He noted previous items brought up under Old Business. He told Commission members that if they see signage items of concern around town, please bring them up during a Commission meeting. Ms. Kinhart noted that the building commissioner went to the Pilates by Gwen business and told them their sign was in violation.

Motion to Adjourn by S. Williams. Seconded by P. Lopez. Roll Call Vote: Williams-YES; Lopez-YES; Bethoney-YES; Bartro-YES. Voted 4-0-0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Lizardi

Judith Lizardi
Recording Secretary