

Town of Franklin



Design Review Commission

**Tuesday, November 16, 2021  
Meeting Minutes,**

Vice Chair Sam Williams called the above-captioned meeting to order this date at 7:00 PM, as a remote access virtual Zoom meeting. Members in attendance: Vice Chair Sam Williams, Gerald Wood, Mark Fitzgerald, Venkata Sompally. Members absent: Chair James Bartro, 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. Birchwood Bakery & Kitchen – Replace blade sign**

Mr. Cam Afonso of Signs by Cam, on behalf of the applicant, addressed the Commission. He stated that this is a new tenant for the former Cake Bar. He stated that the existing bracket will be used. It will be a solid PVC sign with raised PVC letters and a matte black background. There will be a small logo on the door. He noted that there is already existing lighting, and all the previous window lettering has been removed. He stated that the sign is the same size as the existing sign.

**Motion:** To **Approve** the sign package as submitted. Motioned by M. Fitzgerald. Seconded by G. Wood. Roll Call Vote: Fitzgerald-YES; Sompally-YES; Wood-YES; Williams-YES. Voted 4-0-0.

**2. Marcus Partners Industrial Warehouse – King Street - Construction of a new 293,000 sq. ft. tilt up concrete wall industrial warehouse**

Vice Chair Williams stated that this item is a site plan review for a new development proposed on King Street near Rt. 495 exit.

Mr. Josh Berman of Marcus Partners and Mr. John Kucich of Bohler Engineering addressed the Commission. Mr. Kucich stated that they were before the Planning Board last night for the proposed new industrial building off the King Street exit ramp off Rt. 495. He stated that they are proposing construction of a new, approximately 293,000 sq. ft., tilt up concrete wall industrial warehouse. He stated that it will be just shy of the 40 ft. zoning requirement. He stated that they own three of these types of standard warehouse buildings on Grove Street. He stated that a landscaping plan has been provided. He noted that the building is set far back from King Street and that there is a wetland along the frontage. He discussed the location of the building, the power lines, and the wooded area. He stated that the trees between Taft Drive and the site will not go away.

Vice Chair Williams questioned if the parking lot could be relocated to the side and not be located near the residential area. Mr. Berman stated that his team talked about this. He noted that the power lines are very restricting. He stated that they are working through an easement with National Grid. He stated that the building would be shrunk down if the parking lot were put on the other side. He stated that a traffic engineer is onboard, and they plan to update the traffic lights to improve the area. He stated they have also created a trailer storage area for trucks to pull into. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that he is concerned about the trucks on the residential side of the project. Vice Chair Williams asked about rooftop units. Mr. Berman stated that a heating unit would be on the roof and the electrical transformer would be on the ground; there will be minimal noise from the roof. Vice Chair Williams confirmed that there would be nothing shining off the site according to the photometric plan. Mr. Berman confirmed the light will not go into any residential properties.

Vice Chair Williams said the Commission can recommend on the lighting plan, aesthetics of the building, and the landscaping plan.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated he is concerned how the building is sited and that the neighborhoods on Washington Street and Taft Drive are both going to be blown away by the trucks going in and out. However, he noted that it is not the Design Review Commission's purview. He stated that the truck bays pointing to the neighbors are not a good situation. He stated that he is going to put forth a motion to not recommend the plan as submitted due to the siting of the truck bays and their orientation to the adjoining neighborhoods.

**Motion:** To **Not Recommend** the Site Plan as submitted due to the siting of the truck bays and their orientation to the adjoining neighborhoods. Motioned by M. Fitzgerald. Seconded by G. Wood. Roll Call Vote: Fitzgerald-YES; Sompally-YES; Wood-YES; Williams-YES. Voted 4-0-0.

**Motion:** To **Recommend** the Lighting Plan as submitted. Motioned by S. Williams. Seconded by M. Fitzgerald. Roll Call Vote: Fitzgerald-YES; Sompally-YES; Wood-YES; Williams-YES. Voted 4-0-0.

Mr. Fitzgerald discussed that the minimum tree caliper should be 3 in. to 4 in., not 2.5 in.

**Motion:** To **Not Recommend** the Landscaping Plan as submitted based on the calipers of the trees. Motioned by M. Fitzgerald. Seconded by G. Wood. Roll Call Vote: Fitzgerald-YES; Sompally-YES; Wood-YES; Williams-YES. Voted 4-0-0.

Vice Chair Williams reiterated that the Design Review Commission is a recommending board. The Planning Board will take the Commission's recommendations under consideration. Commission members noted that they would like to see the business end of the proposed building not pointed at the residential neighbors.

#### **General Matters:**

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that this is his last meeting. He will attend the next meeting on December 7, 2021, to vote on meeting minutes only. He stated that he will submit an email resignation to Chair Bartro.

**Motion to Adjourn** by S. Williams. Seconded by G. Wood. Roll Call Vote: Fitzgerald-YES; Sompally-YES; Wood-YES; Williams-YES. Voted 4-0-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:27 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Judith Lizardi  
Recording Secretary