Town of Franklin



Design Review Commission

Tuesday, May 18, 2021
Meeting Minutes

##### Chair Fitzgerald called the above-captioned meeting to order this date at 7:00 PM, as a Remote Access Virtual Zoom Meeting. Members in attendance: Chair Mark Fitzgerald, Vice Chair Chris Baryluk, James Bartro, Sam Williams, Gerald Wood, Associate Venkata Sompally. Members absent: None. Also present: Maxine Kinhart, Administrative Assistant.

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.

Chair Fitzgerald authorized Associate Venkata Sompally to vote.

1. **Entegris – 10 Forge Parkway -** Install Non-Illuminated Monument Sign at 15 sq. ft. (text area approximately 4.5 sq. ft.)

Ms. Heather Dudko of Philadelphia Sign Company, representing the applicant, reviewed the existing sign. She stated the applicant would like to replace the sign with an updated version. She stated the text area is approximately 4.5 sq. ft., and the entire monument sign structure is 15 sq. ft.; the sign will be non-illuminated. Chair Fitzgerald confirmed the sign meets the requirements.

**Motion:** To **Approve** the sign package as submitted. Motioned by J. Bartro. Seconded by S. Williams. Roll Call Vote: Bartro-YES; Williams-YES; Wood-YES; Baryluk-YES; Sompally-YES; Fitzgerald-YES. Voted 6-0-0.

1. **Factory Square – 1 Fisher Street -** Install two monument signs

Mr. Cam Afonso of Signs by Cam, Inc., representing the applicant, stated that they met on site with Building Commissioner Gus Brown and Director of Planning and Community Development Bryan Taberner. He stated that he presented them with drawings, and they came to the final conclusion of these two free-standing signs. He said the signs would be externally illuminated with down lighting, and brightness will be controlled with a dimmer switch. The signs will be located at the main entrance on Rt. 140 and at a secondary entrance on Fisher Street. Chair Fitzgerald reviewed the bylaw for the commercial business corridor district. Mr. Afonso stated that they are allowed 100 sq. ft. combined, and the signs are at 80 sq. ft. He discussed future tenant signs and directional signs.

**Motion:** To **Approve** the sign package as submitted. Motioned by J. Bartro. Seconded by G. Wood. Roll Call Vote: Bartro-YES; Williams-YES; Wood-YES; Baryluk-YES; Sompally-YES; Fitzgerald-YES. Voted 6-0-0.

Chair Fitzgerald noted that the signage is within the square footage allowed.

1. **iFix Phones dba iFixonwheelz LLC – 15 East Central Sign -** Install sticker banner over existing sign

Ms. Kinhart stated that the representative for iFix Phones was not in attendance at the meeting. Chair Fitzgerald suggested that the proposed sticker would not last very long. He is not sure why a large sign from another location is shown in the sign package. Ms. Kinhart confirmed the applicant was scheduled for 7:10 PM; it is now 7:16 PM. Chair Fitzgerald stated that this item would be tabled. He asked Ms. Kinhart to email the applicant and ask them to remove the lighted box from the sign submission because it is not relevant.

**General Matters:**

**Pop Shop Signage**

Building Commission Gus Brown provided an overview of the Pop Shops Franklin spaces. A pop up space will feature changing vendors as new small businesses "pop up" to use the space for short timeframes. They would like to use a small window sign to showcase the different vendor logos as they come and go. These will be temporarily hung from suction cups on the interior of the window and will meet certain specifications for size. He explained that Ms. Anne Marie Tracey, Marketing and Communications Specialist, received a grant to open a pop up shop in the downtown to allow people who wanted a start-up business to locate their business in the property that the Town is going to lease. He stated that Ms. Tracey asked what she needs to go through regarding Design Review. He explained that the Town is exempt from site plan requirements in parts of Town. He discussed Ms. Tracey’s two pop-up shop locations: one located in Brad Chaffee’s new building at 70 East Central Street, and the second in the recently sold property at 2 Main Street. He stated that Ms. Tracey wanted to put up wall signs on the outside of the buildings and asked if the Design Review Commission would require her to go before them for approval. He stated that this is based on grants Ms. Tracey received; it is not a permanent thing. The businesses want to test the waters to see if their business will have any sort of life. He stated that Ms. Kinhart received pictures of the proposed signs. He noted that the location at 2 Main Street has had a slight change in plan. Greco Design Company is looking to use that pop up space for at least four months, potentially longer until the grant expires at the end of December 2021. After speaking with the business owner and Mr. Cam Afonso of Signs by Cam, Inc., it makes more sense to have that sign be primary and the Pop Up Shop sign be smaller and in the window space.

Commission members asked questions. Mr. Afonso stated that the signs are within the size requirements in the bylaws, and he explained the proposed signage for both locations. Mr. Bartro stated that for consistency, he would like to bring them before the Design Review Commission. Chair Fitzgerald stated that when someone puts up a sign, they have to pull an indemnity policy. He asked that as this would be the Town, would the Town have to pull an indemnity policy. Mr. Brown stated that he is not sure if it is needed if the sign does not overhang the sidewalk. Chair Fitzgerald stated that at this time, he could not see how anyone could complain that the Commission is showing favoritism and allowing things that are not in the bylaw; Mr. Afonso is following the bylaw by making the signs the right size and following the character. He asked what is the point of the Town pulling a permit for themselves. Mr. Bartro stated that he feels the Town should do that. Mr. Brown asked if there were any openings earlier than two weeks from now for the Commission to discuss this as they need to move fast on this item. Mr. Bartro stated that even a Town project has to pull a building permit. He asked that aside from coming to the Commission for sign approval, is Ms. Tracey going to pull a permit for the sign. Mr. Brown stated that Ms. Tracey would have to pull a sign permit, but the fee would be waived.

Chair Fitzgerald noted that the only thing that would change would be at the Allstate site as it would be an inside sign that would rotate with the pop up shop owner. They are trying to avoid having each pop up shop owner come before the Commission for approval when they will most likely be there for a very short period of time. Mr. Williams noted that the pop up shop owner will know in advance when they are scheduled to go into the shop. He stated that the Commission should expedite those reviews so they can meet their timeline; they should not be exempt. Chair Fitzgerald suggested providing a construct/template for the pop up shop signs. Commission members informally agreed. Mr. Afonso stated the problem for this pop up is the timeline; however, future ones should not have this time constraint. Mr. Brown stated that he would relate this information to Ms. Tracey. Mr. Bartro stated that they could have a meeting next week if they can get it posted in time. Chair Fitzgerald stated the pop shop is a good idea. However, he can understand the Commission members’ feelings about the signs. He would like to put something in the bylaws about signage for incubator and pop up shops. Commission members discussed pop up shop signage and the next meeting. Mr. Afonso stated that he could have the signs ready; the Commission could meet as scheduled on June 1st, and he could put the signs up on June 2nd. Commission members and Mr. Brown agreed. Mr. Afonso reviewed the proposed signage and stated that he will provide the required information to Ms. Kinhart by May 26th for the June 1st meeting.

**Chair and Commission Member Comments**

Commission members discussed the possibility of issuing a memo to all businesses in Town letting them know to clean up their signage. Chair Fitzgerald stated that he once gave a PowerPoint presentation at the Chamber of Commerce and signage was cleaned up for a while; he offered to do that again.

Chair Fitzgerald stated that Vice Chair Baryluk is looking to take a reduced roll on the Commission. He would like to offer his Vice Chair position to a new member who plans to be on the Commission for a length of time. Chair Fitzgerald further stated that sometime in the next year he would be moving out of Franklin. He would like to make a succession plan. He would like anyone interested in the chair or co-chair positions to let him know and prepare a letter regarding their interest. Ms. Kinhart stated that this should be a nominate and vote item.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes: May 4, 2021**

**Motion:** To **Approve** the May 4, 2021 Meeting Minutes as presented. Motioned by S. Williams. Seconded by C. Baryluk. Roll Call Vote: Bartro-YES; Williams-YES; Wood-YES; Sompally-YES; Fitzgerald-ABSTAIN; Baryluk-YES. Voted 5-0-1.

**Response Letter to Ms. Whalen**

This item not taken.

**Motion** to **Adjourn** by S. Williams. Seconded by G. Wood. Roll Call Vote: Bartro-YES; Williams-YES; Wood-YES; Baryluk-YES; Sompally-YES; Fitzgerald-YES. Voted 6-0-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:56 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Judith Lizardi

Recording Secretary