DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

AGENDA

January 24, 2023 7:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

Due to the growing concerns regarding the COVID-19 virus, we will be conducting 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 (Cell phone or Landline Required) OR citizens can participate by copying the link (Phone, Computer, or Tablet required). Please click on https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81014864986 or call on your phone at 1-929-205-6099, meeting ID is 81014864986

7:00 PM Compassionate Wellness Center – 37 East Central Street Replace sign faces – non-lit

General Matters:

Approval of Minutes: January 10, 2023

Discussion: Sign Bylaw Review

Old Business: New Business:

Adjourn:

COMMENTS: These listing of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law. This agenda is subject to change. Last updated: 1/19/2023 Next meeting is 2/28/2023

FORM Q

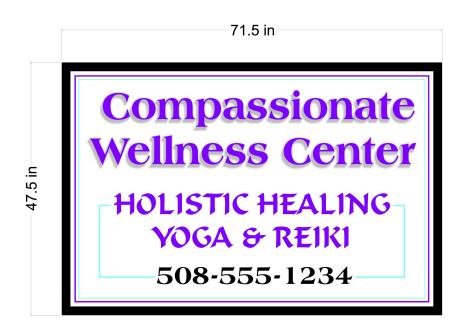
TOWN OF FRANKLIN DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATION FOR §185-31(2) OF THE ZONING BY-LAW

A) General Information
Name of Business or Project: Compassionate welliers Center
Property Address 37 East Central St.
Assessors' Map # Parcel # _ 279 - 240 - 000 - 000
Zoning District (select applicable zone):
Zoning History: Use VarianceNon-Conforming Use
B) Applicant Information:
Applicant Name:Signs By Cam, Inc.
Address: Suite C-18 Franklin, MA 02038
Telephone Number: 508-364-2905
Contact Person:
C) Owner Information (Business Owner & Property Owner if different)
Business Owner: Tina Mitchell Property Owner: Bird Challes Address: 37 East Central. Frankly MA 02038 Frankly MA
All of the information is submitted according to the best of my knowledge Executed as a sealed instrument this Signature of Applicant Signature of Owner
Print name of Applicant Print name of Owner

*FOR SIGNS COMPLETE PAGES 1 & 2 ONLY.
FOR SITE PLANS, BUILDING PLANS, PROJECTS, COMPLETE PAGES 1 – 4

SEE ADDENDA ATTACHED FOR ASSISTANCE IN COMPLETION OF FORM Q

D) Architect/Engineer/Sign Com	pany Information (if not the applicant)	
a. Sign Company	Signa Dy Com Inc	
Business Name:	837 Upper Union Street	
Contact Person:	Suite C-18	
Address	Flanklin, MA 02038	
Telephone Number:	Signs By Cam, Inc. 837 Upper Union Street Suite C-18 Franklin, MA 02038	
h Ambitaat/Engineer (when an	nlicable)	
Business Name:		
Contact Person:	, included the second of the s	
Address		
Telephone Number:		
E) Work Summary		
Summary of work to be done:	replace sign faces	
	non-lit	
F) Information & Materials to	be Submitted with Application	
a) FOR SIGN SUBMISSIONS	ONLY:	
THE FOLLOWING MUST BE Mkinhart@franklinma.gov	SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY TO	
1. Drawing of Proposed Sign wh	nich must also include	
type of sign (wall, pylon size/dimensions	materials	
style of lettering	lighting-illuminated, non-illuminated and style	
style of lettering	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	
2. Drawing and/or pictures indica	ating location of new sign.	
3. Picture of existing location and	d signs (if previously existing location)	
b) FOR BUILDINGS/DEVELO	PMENTS OR PROJECT SUBMISSIONS:	
THE FOLLOWING MUST BE	SUBMITTED W/APPLICATION to Mkinhart@frank	linma.gov
Practices Guide	e Plan showing plantings. Plantings must be from Best Dev	elopment
2 Lighting Plan indicating light	ing levels & specifications of proposed lights	
3. Building drawings, indicating	size and height of building(s); front, rear and side elevationing buildings) and floor plans	as
4 Drawings or nictures of existi	ng conditions	
5. If any signage on the building	g or site, provide information from above Signage Checklist	<u>C</u>







Tel: (508) 520-4907 Fax: (508) 520-4906

Town of Franklin



Design Review Commission

Tuesday, January 10, 2023 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: Chair James Bartro, Vice Chair Sam Williams, Gerald Wood, Paul Lopez. Members absent: Cassandra Bethoney, 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. Dell Technologies – 50 Constitution Boulevard – Replace existing building signs (2 sets) and 1 monument sign.

Mr. Joseph Buchholz of Buchholz Signs Since 1899 and Mr. Paul Fitzgerald, Project Manager Dell, addressed the Commission. Mr. Buchholz stated that he would like to separate the two signs. He stated that he believes the Commission, in theory, approved of replacing the monument. He stated that they would like to get the permit for the monument as they work on the process for the wall sign which may have to get a variance. He confirmed that the new monument sign is about 1 sq. ft. smaller. Vice Chair Williams said that the Commission can take a vote on the monument sign separate from a vote on the rest of the sign package. Ms. Kinhart confirmed that if the Commission denies the wall signs due to the size, then the applicant could go before the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) to get approval of the signs. Mr. Buchholz stated that this evening he would like the Commission to vote on the monument sign and discuss the wall signs to see if the Commission agrees with what they are thinking.

Chair Bartro entered the meeting.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that one of the challenges is that they are changing their brand. He explained that the new logo Dell Technologies is long and the building is huge; they want the sign to be meaningful. Chair Bartro noted that the bylaw regarding this issue is under discussion. He stated that the monument sign can be addressed tonight. Mr. Buchholz stated that the new monument sign is the same as the existing one in that it is non-illuminated, same structure/style of the existing sign, slightly smaller than the existing, and existing ground lighting will not be disturbed.

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

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Chair Bartro stated that the applicant could discuss the wall sign submitted. Mr. Buchholz stated that they would like to discuss it so they will know if they have to get a variance package submitted. He noted that they are rebranding everything, so there is a time crunch. He discussed the measurements of the sign and noted that the size of the building is approximately 19,000 sq. ft. Chair Bartro noted the building is in the industrial/commercial district. He discussed the bylaw regarding sign size allowance. Ms. Irena Stevens noted her attendance at the meeting. Mr. Lopez stated that last week they discussed that the building was on a corner. Chair Bartro confirmed that the allowance would be 90 sq. ft. divided by two signs. Mr. Buchholz stated that they were looking for 114 sq. ft. He showed and discussed a picture of the building with the proposed sign. He noted that this is Dell's corporate headquarters for manufacturing worldwide, so it is important that they get their image on the building. He stated that they do not want the sign to look disproportionate to the building. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that they looked at a sign of 45 sq. ft. and it did not look correct on the building; therefore, they do not want to go forward with that, Mr. Buchholz asked the Commission to either approve or deny the sign so they will know if they have to go for a variance. Chair Bartro stated that they do not want to slow down Dell, but the Commission cannot do something that is not allowed. He noted that the applicant is 14 ft. over at this time. Mr. Lopez stated that it is significantly larger than what is currently there. Chair Bartro stated that how the bylaw is currently written hamstrings them. He stated that if the Commission voted to deny, then the applicant could take it to the variance process. He stated that the Commission could table the vote as well. He stated that the Commission could indicate that they do not feel this is a disproportionately large sign to the building mass; however, based on how the bylaw is written, the Commission does not have the ability to override the bylaw in this case. Mr. Lopez stated that he would be fine with that. Ms. Kinhart suggested that the Commission take the vote and have it reflected in the minutes what the Chair just said.

Motion: To **Reject** the wall signs indicated as #2 and #3 due to the size as submitted. Motioned by P. Lopez. Seconded by S. Williams. Roll Call Vote: Williams-YES; Wood-YES; Lopez-YES; Bartro-YES. Voted 4-0-0.

Chair Bartro discussed when tonight's meeting minutes would be available. He stated that Ms. Kinhart could circulate an unapproved version of the meeting minutes. Mr. Buchholz requested the meeting minutes be sent to him and he will circulate to others.

2. Motion Ai – 38 Forge Pkwy – Installing two (2) non-illuminated wall signs, one in front of building and one on side.

Mr. Edward Batten of Batten Bros. Sign Inc. addressed the Commission and reviewed the sign package. He stated that there is an existing sign on the northeast corner and on the northwest corner of the building. He stated that Motion industries came in and would like to replace the signs on the building. He stated that both signs are non-illuminated and come in at 17.5 sq. ft. He stated that there is a small multi-tenant non-illuminated sign also to be replaced. Commission members had no comments.

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

Approval of Minutes: December 13, 2022 & December 20, 2022

Mr. Lopez explained that although the meeting minutes provided for December 20, 2022, reflected what he said, he made a mistake regarding his comment as to the size of the Dell signage. Mr. Lopez stated that he said 48 sq. ft. when the actual size was 113.1 sq. ft. for each of the two signs. Chair Bartro stated that

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this information should be provided in the meeting minutes for tonight's meeting that a mistake was made by Mr. Lopez. He asked Ms. Kinhart to make a note of this information.

Motion: To **Approve** the December 13, 2022 Meeting Minutes as presented. Motioned by S. Williams. Seconded by P. Lopez. Roll Call Vote: Williams-YES; Wood-YES; Lopez-YES; Bartro-YES. Voted 4-0-0.

Motion: To **Approve** the December 20, 2022 Meeting Minutes as presented. Motioned by P. Lopez. Seconded by S. Williams. Roll Call Vote: Williams-YES; Wood-YES; Lopez-YES; Bartro-ABSTAIN. Voted 3-0-1.

General Matters – New Business

None.

General Matters – Old Business

Chair Bartro stated that he finally provided to Ms. Kinhart the reviewed notes from the last time the Commission reviewed the sign standards from York, ME, for input into the Commission's own. He stated that some notes were taken during a Commission open meeting session. He stated that he consolidated those notes into a document that he provided to Ms. Kinhart. He stated that he hopes this will be on the next meeting agenda in two weeks so the Commission can review. Ms. Kinhart confirmed that she had the document from Chair Bartro. Mr. Lopez stated that he has to think the ZBA would be in favor of these changes because they do not want to deal with these variances coming to them where we say we would approve it if we could. Chair Bartro stated that he does not think that the ZBA gets a chance to weigh in on that; he thinks it would be town counsel and first it would be planning.

Motion: To **Adjourn** by G. Wood. Seconded by S. Williams. Roll Call Vote: Williams-YES; Wood-YES; Lopez-YES; Bartro-YES. Voted 4-0-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Lizardi

Judith Lizardi Recording Secretary In Q4 of 2022, the Franklin Massachusetts Design Review Commission continued a multi month review of our sign standards and bylaws. In the past we have brainstormed potential clarifications to the Franklin sign bylaw in open meetings. In Q4, we did conduct a search of sign guidelines in other New England communities that we believe have strongly written, clear, and concise language. We believe building on and improving the language of the Franklin bylaw would which would help the commission better administer this bylaw through our review of proposed signage, and would help business owners better navigate the requirements for permitting by providing less ambiguity for them to have to navigate. The commission examined the York Maine bylaw in detail and found several items we believe would be beneficial to implement in our own bylaw. We have documented those items in the below document and now wish to review them with the various town entities to gauge their alignment and support. If we achieve that support, we will want to work with town council to implement bylaw changes.

SIGN STANDARDS from the York Maine 'article 16' we believe would be helpful to implement:

- 1. We would like to explore clearer description of sign types that are permitted in the town:
 - a. Sign Types reviewed in York bylaw that through our years of experience reviewing Franklin sign applications we believe are applicable and helpful:
 - i. A-frame sign: An advertising sign located on the ground, not permanently attached and easily movable, and usually two-sided. Also called a "sandwich board".
 - ii. Banner. A sign composed of light weight cloth, plastic material, r other non-rigid material, affixed to a structure either by ropes, pins, cables, etc. or by framing, in such a way that it moves in the wind.
 - iii. Billboard. See Article Two, Definitions.
 - iv. Blade Sign. Hanging or placard style signs which project from the front façade of the building over the sidewalk, fixed at an angle or perpendicular to the wall on which it is mounted. These signs are typically two sided and either square, rectangular, or oval in form.
 - v. Business Directional Signs. Off premise Business Directional Signs are governed by the Town of York's Directional Sign Ordinance.
 - vi. Changeable Signs. An on-premise sign created, designed, manufactured, or modified in such a way that its message may be electronically, digitally or mechanically altered by the complete substitution or replacement of one display by another. Signs that contain changeable copy that can only be altered by manual means shall not be considered changeable signs.
 - vii. Directory Sign. A directory of the business establishments occupying a building affixed to the exterior wall of a building containing multiple businesses.
 - viii. Freestanding Sign. A directory of the business establishments occupying a building containing multiple businesses.

- ix. Information Sign. A sign, without commercial speech or advertising material, designed and intended to convey information about a permitted use, whether it be a business, institution, school, church, public building, fraternal or service clubs, to convey regulations or restrictions, or otherwise to provide needed guidance to the general public; for example, "no trespassing", "exit", hours of operation and other useful information.
- x. Open Flag. A flag placed outside a business, during business hours, indicating a business is open.
- xi. Window Sign. A sign printed on, affixed to, in contact with or etched on a window and intended for viewing from the exterior of the building.
- xii. Wall Sign. A sign attached to, erected against or hanging from the wall of a building, with the face in a parallel plane to the plane of the building wall. Signs on awnings shall be considered wall signs. Wall signs shall include only letters, background, and an optional logo. Information shall consist only of the name and/or logo of the business. Wall signs shall not list products, sales, other promotional messages, or contact information.
- 2. Below is an example of Performance Standards we believe augment our existing language.
 - i. Signs shall not be attached or affixed to any tree or to any public utility pole.
 - ii. Signs are prohibited on roofs, and shall not project above the eave lines or parapet walls of buildings to which they are attached. For flat roofed buildings that employ roof fronts that give the appearance of a pitched roof, signs are prohibited on the roof front.
 - iii. Signs shall not be placed so as to interfere with free ingress to or egress from any door, window or fir escape, or parking lot.
 - iv. Signs shall not be placed so as to adversely impair vehicular or pedestrian safety or circulation.
 - v. All signs, including any supporting posts or structural elements, shall be appropriately maintained. Appropriate maintenance consists of the sign remaining in the same condition as when it was installed. Missing lettering, cracked or broken glass or plastic, insecure or broken signs, or any other sign condition that may cause unsafe or unsightly conditions shall be repaired or removed.
 - 1. See section 6 "non-conforming signs" section of this document for more on maintenance
 - vi. Any sign which advertises a business no longer being conducted shall be removed within 6 months of the business closing.
- 3. We spend time in our meetings discussing Illumination of Signs with applicants. Below are examples of language we believe would help us facilitate more productive conversations with applicants about illumination:
 - a. Current Franklin Bylaw language:

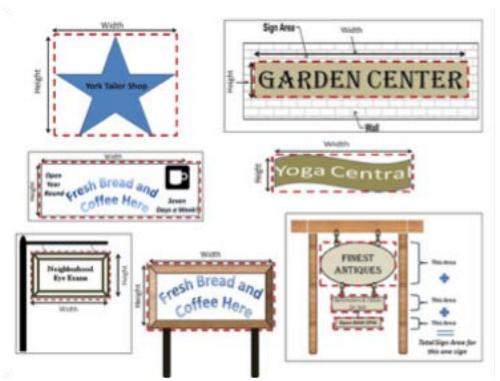
- (a) Signs may be externally illuminated provided that there shall be no glare cast onto adjacent residential properties or in a manner to disrupt the movement of pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
- (b) Signs may be internally illuminated in all sign districts other than the DCD and RD, provided that the background is dark in color and the letters are light in color, or there is an opaque shield between the light source and the sign panel that only allows the lettering area to be illuminated. Canopies or awnings may also be internally illuminated. There shall be no glare or direct light reaching any adjacent residential properties or in a manner to disrupt the movement of pedestrian or vehicular traffic from an internally illuminated sign, canopy or awning.
- b. We may want to state a photometric limit in our bylaw. For example "No more than 0.2 foot candle of light shall be detectable at the boundary of any abutting property." (used for example only- we should approach setting such a limit in a more scientific manner)
- c. Further examples from York bylaw:
 - i. "Light levels shall be deemed acceptable if they do not exceed a factor of 3 above the ambient light intensity at any point on the ground when measured with an incident light meter and the following procedure:
 - 1. The intensity of the sign illumination, in foot candles, is measured with all normal background and ambient illumination on.
 - 2. With the sign turned off, the same measurement is repeated.
 - 3. The ratio of the measurement in (1) to that in (2) shall not exceed 3.
 - 4. It shall be the responsibility of the applicant to provide documentation that proposed sign lighting meets the above maximums.
 - 5. Except in the case of permitted and/or grandfathered neon signs, LED lights shall be the source of sign illumination, unless it can be demonstrated that another bulb type is equal or greater in energy efficiency.
- 4. Dimensional Standards- The York standard includes a very detailed description of how the different styles of signs are to be measured and assessed for size. This is maybe the most important part of this review, as the ambiguity around this causes confusion to applicants and headaches for the commission. An example of ambiguity in our current bylaw is in the case of 'channel letters', where as a practice, we have only counted the 'positive space' of the sign, omitting the negative space from the calculation. This type of calculation requires either complex math of advanced CAD systems. Since it's not clearly spelled out it also requires the applicants to have their submissions tabled and return to subsequent meetings, slowing down the process for them and creating additional administrative overhead for the town. An example is included below of how the standard we reviewed lays out a graphical measurement guideline which is very easy to follow. We recommend incorporating a graphic like that below with associated guidance in a future version of the bylaw in Franklin.
 - a. Current Franklin Bylaw language:

(a) General.

- [1] The size of a sign consisting of individual letters or symbols attached to or painted on any type of surface, is the rectangular area that encloses all of the individual letters or symbols. This also includes canopies and awnings that have letters or logos as part of them. In addition, any area of material or color forming an integral part of the background of the display or which is used to differentiate the display from the backdrop shall be included in the total sign area calculation. [Amended 1-30-2019 by Bylaw Amendment 18-822R]
- [2] Only one side is counted in computing the area of a double-faced sign; however, not having a double-faced sign shall not allow the applicant to add additional square footage to the maximum square footage area allowed within the specific district that the sign is displayed.

b. Measurement of Sign Area

- Measurement of signs include the area of all boards, panels, frames, or sheets
 of material but does not include supporting posts or any structural elements
 outside the limits of such perimeter which do not form an integral part of the
 display.
- ii. In determining the area of wall signs or window signs, the entire area with a continuous perimeter enclosing the extreme limits of the actual letters, characters background surface, and any associated graphics shall be measured. For a sign consisting of individual letters or symbols without a distinguishable background, the area shall be that of the smallest rectangle which encompasses all of the letters and symbols.
- iii. Sign area shall be determined as the product of the maximum width and maximum height of the sign unit, excluding the supporting structure. However, if the supporting structure is built in the shape of a corporate symbol, its area shall also be counted.
- iv. Maximum Dimension shall mean the longer of either height or width.



- 5. The York guideline includes a dimensional standard for each sign type introduced at the beginning of the document. We believe it would be beneficial, if the sign 'types' described in this document were to be introduced, that we also suggest a relative sign size requirement specific to each type. This would allow the various sign technologies and construction methods to be used to their maximum effectiveness while also protecting the appearance of the town. An example of this could be in difference in the size of a case/box sign vs. a channel letter sign. A case sign in it's rectangular format creates a more imposing 'mass' on a building than a channel letter set does. Would it not therefore make sense for a channel letter set to have allowable square footage that maximizes it's noticeability to passers by?
 - a. If we propose to move forward in adopting a structure of 'types and sizes', this would require extensive research and proposal by the commission as to what is allowable
- 6. Non-Conforming Signs- today we feel there is little recourse for non conformance, though we frequently hear complaints from citizens of Franklin when non conformance exists. Examples of York's non conformance standards are below. NOTE- the area we most need guidance on as a commission is around 'grandfathering' and whether it exists and how to apply it in the context of these bylaws.

- a. Current Franklin Bylaw Language related to maintenance:
 - G. Sign maintenance.

All signs shall be structurally sound and free from all hazards caused or resulting from decay or the failure of structural members, fixtures, lighting or appurtenances. All signs shall be maintained in readable and clean condition and the site of the sign shall be maintained free of weeds, debris and rubbish.

Owners of signs that are determined to be a safety hazard by the Building Commissioner in consultation with the Police Chief shall be directed to correct the condition by the Building Commissioner. Failure to comply with the Building Commissioner's request will constitute an enforcement action.

- b. Continuance: A non-conforming sign that does not conform to the provisions of this Section, but which did met such provisions when the sign was installed, may continue.
- c. Maintenance: Any lawfully existing sign may be maintained, repaired or repainted, but shall not be enlarged, except in conformance with the provisions of this Section.
- d. Replacement: Any new sign of different size and shape replacing a non-conforming sign shall conform to the provisions of this Section, and the non-conforming sign shall conform to the provisions of this Section, and the non-conforming sign shall not thereafter be displayed. Any application to replace a non-conforming sign shall demonstrate that the replacement sign is no more non-conforming than the existing sign, or the application will be denied. After –the-fact permitting to replace a nonconforming sign shall not per permitted.
- 7. Prohibited Signs and Displays- we believe it's important to further codify in the bylaw prohibitions to the allowed signs as below (from York example)
 - a. Current Franklin Bylaw language:
 - E. Prohibited signs.
 - (1) Any signs having a part that moves or flashes, or signs of the traveling light or animated type, and all beacons and flashing devices, whether a part of, attached to or separate from a sign, are prohibited.
 - (2) No liquid crystal display or light emitting diode signs are permitted within the Town of Franklin other than gas station signs displaying one price and no more than 16 square feet in size.
 - (3) Roof signs, billboard signs, inflatable signs or banners are prohibited.
 - (4) No flags shall be allowed with the exception of those permitted in Subsection F(3).
 - b. Flashing, moving or animated signs, movable electric signs, changeable signs, intermittently lit signs, digital, and sings with variable color lighting or signs that display electronic images or video are not permitted. Signs indicating fuel prices, time and/or temperature are permitted provided they meet the other provisions of this Section.
 - c. A string of lights shall not be used for the purpose of advertising or attracting attention on non-residential properties, except that holiday lighting shall be permitted on non-residential properties from November 1 through January 10 or each year, and low

intensity landscape lighting shall be permitted year-round. Residential lighting is not governed by this lighting standard.