

Town of Franklin



Design Review Commission

Tuesday, April 23, 2024
Meeting Minutes

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 Sam Williams, Vice Chair Paul Lopez, Amy Adams, Andrew Pratt, Associate Priya Natarajan. Members absent: Cassandra Bethoney, Associate James Bartro. 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. Guardian – 290 Beaver Street - Install new signs.

Mr. Jamie Fisher of I.D. Sign Group representing the applicant addressed the Commission. He said Guardian is relocating from Mansfield to Franklin. The proposal is to install three non-illuminated aluminum flat 1 in. thick belt signs. He reviewed the three signs: the entrance sign is a way-finding sign, the rear loading dock belt sign is helpful for way finding, and the main entrance sign is a sign taken from their current facility to be used at their new facility in Franklin. He showed photographs of the existing conditions and elevation. He said this is an industrial warehouse zone.

Chair Williams asked if Guardian was the only tenant in the building. Mr. Fisher said he is not sure; however, there are no other signs on the street front. Chair Williams discussed the two signs that would be way-finding signs. He said typically, when they allow for way-finding signs, they ask for them not to be branded; however, if there is another tenant, the drivers and people need to know which facilities and docks they are going to. He said it makes sense to allow those two signs as way-finding signs and remove them from the overall limits of signage.

Ms. Adams asked about the first sign and if it was part of the package. Chair Williams showed the first sign in the submittal which is the “Will Call Entrance” sign. He said it is a way-finding sign. He said the main sign seems like a reasonable size. Mr. Pratt asked for the location of the “Will Call Entrance” sign. Mr. Fisher said that in the submission it is noted that the applicant will determine the exact location at time of installation. He said it is less than 1 sq. ft.

Motion: To **Approve** the sign package as submitted. Motioned by P. Lopez. Seconded by A. Pratt. Roll Call Vote: Pratt-YES; Lopez-YES; Adams-YES; Natarajan-YES; Williams-YES. Voted 5-0-0.

2. 240 East Central Street – Condominium – 240 East Central Street – 9 Lewis Street – Construction of 14 Townhouse units.

Chair Williams confirmed the applicant had not yet delivered the samples that the Commission asked for and the applicant requested to be continued to the next meeting. Ms. Kinhart confirmed that she received

an email from the applicant who asked to be postponed to the next meeting. she said the applicant will provide samples.

Motion: To **Table** 240 East Central Street submission until May 14, 2024. Motioned by S. Williams. Seconded by P. Lopez. Roll Call Vote: Pratt-YES; Lopez-YES; Adams-YES; Natarajan-YES; Williams-YES. Voted 5-0-0.

3. Marcus Partners Industrial Warehouse - 555 King Street - Approval to increase building height from 40' to 43'.

Mr. Brandon Fritz of Marcus Partners confirmed they submitted an updated version with a few minor tweaks. He said this project was previously reviewed and approved in February 2022. He said they went back to Planning Board on March 25 for an increase in building height. He said one of the Planning Board's conditions was that they go back to Desing Review Commission for review which is why they are here. He said the building itself is generally the same. He said the building height majority is 41 ft. 6 in. along the two long sides. He said the short sides will step up to 42 ft. 6 in. He said the other changes are aesthetic and include some added glass, a canopy over the main entrance, and some accent colors on the building as well as some light fixtures. He showed renderings of the building. He said the grades of the site have been dropped to coordinate with National Grid. He said the orientation of the building is the same.

Chair Williams said this is a pretty standard industrial building. Mr. Lopez said he does not see any reason to change the Commission's previous recommendation to approve. Chair Williams said he does not think the height is the Commission's purview; however, the motion can include mention of the height.

Motion: To **Recommend** the façade and the increase of the building height to 43 ft. as submitted. Motioned by P. Lopez. Seconded by A. Pratt. Roll Call Vote: Pratt-YES; Lopez-YES; Adams-YES; Natarajan-YES; Williams-YES. Voted 5-0-0.

4. Autumn Hill Senior Village – 496 – 488 Summer Street - 42 Units of attached 55+ Condominium Units.

Mr. Brian Frigon, representing the applicant, said he is the designer/architect of the buildings. He said this is a 42 unit 55 and over community. He showed and reviewed the site plan and noted they are broken into cluster units. He said the property is fairly sloped downward toward the pond. He said they are still working on the landscaping and street lighting, and those will be submitted under separate cover.

Chair Williams showed the photometric plan. Mr. Frigon said there will be some retaining walls to accommodate for the sloping. He showed a schematic of the Autumn Hill Condos. He reviewed the proposed floor plan. He said the units are offset from each other by 4 ft. He noted the gable and hip-style roofs, dormers, and different roof lines to provide interest. He said it will be all vinyl siding. He reviewed the proposed exterior colors and noted all trim would be white. He noted they have single-car garages.

Ms. Adams said she thinks it looks good. Chair Williams said he likes the architecture of it. He said that as a senior unit, it is kind of huge. He said it is like the second floor is not needed if this is true single floor living. Mr. Frigon said the units are 2,200 sq. ft. He noted other locations in Franklin that have a second floor living space. He said this is 55 and over living; it is not senior living. Chair Williams said if this were true senior housing, he thinks of downsizing, and this is a lot of square footage. He noted that floor plan is not really in the Commission's purview.

Ms. Adams asked if this is the same design plan used for Wrentham and Millis. Mr. Frigon said it could be; he was not involved in those. Chair Williams discussed other styles of similar developments. He said as a requirement of submission, the Commission would like to see physical samples of the façade

materials. Mr. Frigon said they will provide a sample board to the Commission and are working on that. Chair Williams said that the sample board could be dropped off at Town Hall.

Mr. Lopez noted the lighting plan is in there and confirmed the planting plan would be provided later. He confirmed the Commission would be voting on the lighting plan and tabling the other two. Chair Williams reviewed the provided lighting plan. Mr. Lopez said .1 spillage seems okay to him.

Motion: To **Recommend** the lighting plan and table the facade and landscaping recommendations until the Commission receives the landscaping plan and the material samples, until May 14, 2024. Motioned by P. Lopez. Seconded by A. Pratt. Roll Call Vote: Pratt-YES; Lopez-YES; Adams-YES; Natarajan-YES; Williams-YES. Voted 5-0-0.

GENERAL MATTERS

Ms. Kinhart said 7-Eleven contacted her today. She noted that their sign had a black border, and they want to go back to the green border and want to know if they have to come back before the Commission. Mr. Lopez said no because they are not going back to white; it is a color. He said we know what the green will look like as it is already there. Chair Williams said he is okay if they do not come back. He said the intent of the black was to shrink the border, so that is okay. Mr. Pratt said he assumes the green would not shed any additional light. Chair Williams said they can add the green back as long as it is opaque; that seems fair.

Approval of Minutes: April 9, 2024

Motion: To **Approve** the April 9, 2024 Meeting Minutes. Motioned by P. Lopez. Seconded by A. Adams. Roll Call Vote: Pratt-YES; Lopez-YES; Adams-YES; Natarajan-YES; Williams-YES. Voted 5-0-0.

Old Business

Chair Williams said there were a few enforcement items that Building Commission Gus Brown has enforced. He said Jimbo's sign has come down. Ms. Kinhart said they will be at the next meeting. Chair Williams said he needs to talk to Mr. Brown regarding the sign at 67 Degrees. Mr. Lopez explained there are two signs at 67 Degrees.

New Business

None.

Motion: To **Adjourn**. Motioned by A. Pratt. Seconded by A. Adams. Roll Call Vote: Pratt-YES; Lopez-YES; Adams-YES; Natarajan-YES; Williams-YES. Voted 5-0-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Lizardi
Recording Secretary