**TOWN OF DEDHAM**

**Design Review Advisory Board**

Bryce M. Gibson, Chair

Christine M. Perec, Vice Chair

Steven R. Davey

John C. Haven, RLA, ASLA

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**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**



**DESIGN REVIEW ADVISORY BOARD**

**MINUTES**

**Wednesday, September 11, 2019, 7:00 p.m. Lower Conference Room**

**Present:** Bryce Gibson, Chair

Christine Perec, Vice Chair

Steven Davey

John Haven, RLA, ASLA

**Administrative:** Jennifer Doherty, Assistant

Call to order 7 p.m. The plans, documents, studies, etc. referred to are incorporated as part of the public record and are on file in the Planning and Zoning office.

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| **Applicant:** | **850 Washington Street, LLC** |
| **Project Address:** | **850-888 Washington Street, Dedham** |
| **Property Owner/Address:** | Greg Salvatore |
| **Representative:** | Peter A. Zahka, Esquire |

Peter Zahka was representing the applicant, Greg Salvatore, who was also in attendance, along with Bart Steele of Viewpoint Signs. Attorney Zahka explained that there had been two applications filed for the applicant, the first was in relation to changes that were being made to the property for a new tenant. They clarified that the first order of business was the renovation, and the second was the sign package for the entire building. Attorney Zahka further explained that the applicant had already gone before the Planning Board for the changes to the loading dock area. The loading dock was being changed into a patio area for a new tenant. It had been stated by the building commissioner that it was a big improvement over the existing loading dock.

Chairman Gibson asked the reason for raising the patio area, and it was answered that it was already slightly raised as a loading dock. This would also now be the front entrance to the tenant’s area, and a handicap ramp would be added. The patio would be poured concrete with a nicer composite wood finish that was noncombustible per code. Greenery was to be added for aesthetics. The board agreed that it was a huge improvement. John Haven made a motion to approve the proposal as presented. Christine Perec seconded the motion, and all agreed. 3-0. Mr. Davey abstained as he had arrived late and had not heard the entire presentation.

Moving on to the Sign Package, Attorney Zahka explained that although the property was four buildings, there was one parking lot that served the entire area, and for most purposes, including the assessor’s office, it was usually treated as one building. Attorney Zahka had therefore treated the building and signage as one entire building. With the new proposed sign package, they would end up with a little less than 500 square feet of sign area. Since the buildings had over 900 feet of frontage, they were allowed up to 1800 square feet of signage under their zoning district, which meant that 500 square feet was very little compared to what they legally could install. They would also like to increase the free-standing signs for the tenant directory at 888 Washington Street. It met the sign code for the setback, height, and area. However, they would need to go to the Zoning Board of Appeals for the new tenant directory sign. Per the sign code they are limited to 25 feet in height and they would be over that.

There were some questions as to the lighting of the signs. It was explained they would be “halo lit” at night and it would be consistent with all the buildings. Mr. Haven asked if keeping the buildings lit at night was necessary since they were offices, especially since the neighborhood was residential. A short discussion ensued regarding this matter. It was pointed out that the Zoning Board might question the lighting due to the neighbors as well. The board agreed with all the designs for the signs.

Attorney Zahka explained there would be three waivers to be recommended:

1. Generic one for height
2. To allow three free standing signs
3. For 165 square feet total freestanding signs instead of 100 square feet

Christine Perec made a motion to approve the sign package as presented, including the waivers, and recommend it to the Zoning Board of Appeals. John Haven seconded the motion, and all agreed, 4-0, unanimous.

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| **Applicant:** | **Washington High, LLC** |
| **Project Address:** | **574-585 High Street, Horse Thieves Tavern** |
| **Representative:** | Lawrence |

The owner of Horse Thieves Tavern was in attendance to request sign approval. Mr. Haven asked if the sign was back lit and the answer was no. Mr. Davey asked what happened to the blade sign that had originally been proposed. The owner replied it did not fit with what they wanted. Chairman Gibson brought up the lighting again. Goose neck lights were recommended for the location, the more modern ones that were currently in the Square. Chairman Gibson asked if they knew what their current square footage allowance was? Mr. Davey also asked did they need to go to the Zoning Board before for the mural to be approved. The answer was yes. It was then asked if the mural was being considered as part of the total allowable sign area. Mr. Haven remarked that based on the numbers, it did look as if the mural was being counted towards the total allowable signage. Mr. Haven remembered that had come up before and he remembered it being included. A short discussion ensued as to the allowable footage. The owner stated that he would check and make sure they were within the allowable with the new signage before proceeding to the building department for a permit. The letters were raised with white lettering with a black background. The Board would like to see the sign lit.

John Haven made a motion to approve the signage with the recommendation that the owner consider lighting the sign with goose neck lighting. The motion was seconded by Steve Davey and all agreed, 4-0, unanimous.

The Board and applicant Animal Rescue League agreed to be heard later in the night out of order of the agenda so that others could be heard before them.

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| **Applicant:** | **Dedham Veterinary Associates** |
| **Project Address:** | **326 Bridge Street, Dedham, MA** |
| **Representative:** | Steven Schwede of Fast Signs Needham |

Steve Schwede from Fast Signs of Needham was in attendance for Dedham Veterinary Associates who wished to install new signage. They had wanted to install a blade sign but since it was not allowed in the zoning district, and the would have had to do some construction to the building to install a blade sign, they instead were looking to insert a pole at the property and put a sign on the pole.

Chairman Gibson asked about the awnings that were at the property, he wished to know if they were being taken down? The answer was no, they had not been planning to. The issue of if the awnings contributed to the total signage was raised. Mr. Davey asked why a blade sign was not allowed, and the answer was because it was restricted in this particular zoning district. Chairman Gibson noted that Hertz had done the same with their sign and installed it on a pole. Mr. Haven remarked that with the grey background they should make sure the teal was legible.

Mr. Davey asked about the parking spaces out front of the property. He had questions as to where to put the sign to get the most visibility. A discussion ensued as to the location of the sign. The Board then discussed the color scheme of the sign versus the existing color scheme of the awnings so that they would match. Mr. Davey asked if the pole would be painted and the sign gentleman was not sure.

Christine Perec made a motion to the signage as presented with the recommendation that the awning complement the new logo colors. Mr. Haven seconded the motion, and all agreed, 4-0. Unanimous.

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| **Applicant:** | **The Goddard School** |
| **Project Address:** | **20 Carematrix Drive** |
| **Representative:** | Peter McNulty |

Mr. McNulty was in attendance. He explained the new signage that they wished to install for the Goddard School. He explained the exact location of the entrance and sign. Christine asked about the logo and it was expressed that was the corporate logo. Mr. Haven asked for more details about the entrance. Mr. McNulty explained the school had its own private entrance. Mr. Haven felt the sign should possibly be moved to the other entrance as it would make more sense.

Mr. Haven made a motion to approve the new sign with the recommendation that the sign be placed adjacent to the main entrance and exit door instead of the door shown on the plans to provide continuity to the façade. The motion was seconded by Mr. Davey and all agreed, 4-0. Unanimous.

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| **Applicant:** | **Flagship Motors** |
| **Project Address:** | **8 Ames Street** |
| **Representative:** | Steve Chen |

Steve Chen was in attendance. He explained that there was a sign that was there previously, and he wished to take it down. The proposal he was showing was well within the allowance given the frontage of the establishment. The sign was a pure white background. It will be wrapped and mounted to the building. Mr. Davey asked the applicant to just make sure it was in a straight line with the top of the doors.

Mr. Davey made a motion to approve the sign as presented, with the stipulation that the sign lined up with the top of the doors. The motion was seconded by John Haven and all agreed, 4-0, unanimous.

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| **Applicant:** | **DAA Restaurant Group** |
| **Project Address:** | **320 Washington Street** |
| **Representative:** |  |

The owners of the restaurant La Taqueria were in attendance. The building is split between two businesses and they wished to put the sign in the exact same material as the store they would be next to, and the same dimensions. Mr. Gibson asked about the colors for the sign. There was also discussion regarding the approval for the awning to be painted. Mr. Haven asked if the lights were existing, and the answer was yes, they were.

Chairman Gibson made a comment that he felt the teal lettering might get lost and not be able to be read well. The building owner planned to paint both awnings black, and there was prior approval for this.

Christine Perec made a motion to approve the signage with the recommendation that the existing teal color of the logo be made darker in order to stand out, and possibly black to match the awning. John Haven seconded the motion, and all agreed. 4-0, unanimous.

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| **Applicant:** | **Animal Rescue League** |
| **Project Address:** | **Anna’s Place** |
| **Representative:** | Peter Zahka, Esquire |

In attendance for the Animal Rescue League was: Attorney Peter Zahka, Susann Schland of MDS, Mary Nee, President of Animal Rescue League, Edward Schettino of Animal Rescue League, Lindsay Richard of QPD, and Steve Cecil of Harriman. The project was currently being heard by the Planning Board.

Attorney Zahka explained the project briefly. He explained they had a 22-acre site and were planning an administrative multi use building and replacing their maintenance building on the site. There was also associated parking, landscaping, traffic and lighting.

Mr. Davey asked what they meant by multi use, and Mary Nee explained that administratively they were currently spread out over Boston, Carver, and other sites, and mobile units. They wished to bring all the administrative offices under one roof at the space in Dedham. Mary Nee gave a history of the Animal Rescue League.

Susan Schland of MDS gave a presentation explaining the architecture of the proposal. Mr. Davey asked about the pet cemetery and Susan explained that the parking lot was not in the cemetery. There was a large open field they were proposing for the parking area. The pet cemetery would remain. She explained the design of the buildings and the site for the proposal. Steve Davey asked about the wood and the reply was it was Cedar. They wished for the natural wood to show through.

John Haven asked about the different orientations and different scales. A discussion ensued regarding the elevations, orientations, and locations of the buildings. The existing sign would come down during construction and something very similar to it would go back up after. Mr. Davey asked about the roof lines of the buildings. The group then moved on to discuss the parking. Landscaping and wildlife were discussed afterwards. The plantings would support the wildlife.

They would be installing some directional signage on the internal campus. The signage does not need to mark the location as much because people going to the site already know where they are going. Mr. Haven made some suggestions for the plantings that would be nearer to the parking. In the front to balance out he suggested something a little less ridged. He asked about the stair access on one of the buildings. It was explained that staircase was not meant for the public, it was an internal staff break room staircase.

Christine Perec asked if the site was heavily wooded, and the answer was it was more like a meadow. The building will need to be pushed as close to the ledge area as possible without getting into a “mining operation”. The Board remarked that there was quite a large buffer between the street and the proposed building.

John Haven asked if there were any waivers being requested for the project. Attorney Zahka answered there were some in relation to parking to help reduce the impacts.

John Haven made a motion to approve the design package, including the landscaping and site layout and building as shown, if the signage comes back later once it is prepared. Steve Davey seconded the motion, and all agreed, 4-0, Unanimous.

**Old Business/New Business**

62 Eastern Avenue

Peter Zahka explained that the planning board had approved the project at 62 Eastern Avenue and incorporated how they wanted it to look. He apologized and said the project had gone forth while Town Hall was in between planners and it had not been intentional that they skipped over the Design Review Board. He showed the board materials he had brought in that were to be used at the new project. He also showed them the plans and details of the project. He showed them the stone skirt material and the roof materials. John Haven reminded him that when a tenant was found for the property, they would need to come in for sign approval.

**Minutes**

Bryce Gibson made one change to the minutes: He said it should be noted that the applicant Joshua Cruz did not wish to return for an additional DRAB Meeting and instead agreed at that time to remove the gun graphics. It was his decision to not return for another meeting and his offer to remove the graphics.

A motion was made by John Haven to approve the minutes with the above change. The motion was seconded by Steve Davey and all agreed, 3-0, unanimous. Christine Perec had not been at the previous meeting and therefore abstained from voting on the minutes.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 pm.