



Design Review Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 7, 2022
7:30 p.m.

Board Members:

Mark Gluesing, Board Chair (P)
Bob Dermody, Board Member (P)
Susan Opton, Board Member (P)
Kristan Patenaude, DRB Recording Secretary (P) [
Elisa Litchman, Administrative Specialist, Planning & Community Development (P)

Applicants & Attendees:

1. Marie Mercier, Sign Design, Inc. – Special Permit request for M&T Bank located at 827 Highland Ave.
2. Mark Evangelous, Gemini Sign Corp – representing Verizon Communications located at 66 Pickering Street
3. George Giunta, Jr., attorney – representing BTE Development, LLC owner of 40 & 50 Central Avenue
 - Marianna Dagatti, MGD+ LLC
 - Trevor O’Leary, MGD+ LLC
4. Evans Huber, attorney with Frieze Cramer Rosen & Huber, LLP representing Coca-Cola located at 9 B Street and applying for site plan review with revised landscaping proposal.
 - Mark Nogueira, Design Group
 - Chris Novak, VHB
 - Erik Bednarek, EJB Designs LLC, landscape architect

Chair Gluesing called the meeting to order on November 7, 2022, at 7:31 p.m.

Chair Gluesing notified attendees of new public meeting orders issued by the governor of Massachusetts.

Agenda Item 1:

Public notice is hereby given that M&T Bank to be located at 827 Highland Ave., has made application to the Design Review Board for a Special Permit pursuant to the Sign By-Law Section 5.5.3.1. b) applicant is requesting a second wall sign, not designating an entrance. and any other applicable sections of the By-law.

Marie Mercier, Sign Design, Inc., is applying for a special permit for a second sign on the side of the building due to a rebranding of the bank. When looking at the building, this would be on the left side. The proposed internally illuminated sign size is approximately 17 s.f. on a new raceway which will be painted to match the existing background.

Mr. Dermody noted that there was previously a sign in this location, the new one is a different size.

In response to a question from Mr. Dermody, Ms. Mercier stated that any mounting holes from the old raceway will be filled with a matching silicone to the brick. The M & T Bank letters of the sign will be white in color and illuminated. The intention is to center the sign vertically between the two horizontal bands on the building and justified left face to the right column.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Ms. Opton, it was voted to approve the sign as submitted for a Special Permit. Susan Opton – aye; Bob Dermody – aye; and Chair Gluesing -aye. Motion passed 3-0.

Agenda Item 2:

Public notice is hereby given that Sheraton Hotel located at 100 Cabot Street, has made application to the Design Review Board for a Special Permit pursuant to the Sign By-Law section 5.5.3.1 a) Installing more than one freestanding sign and one additional wall sign, and any other applicable sections of the By-law.

This hearing will be continued to 12/5/2022 due to the non-notification in the local newspaper.

Agenda Item 3:

Mark Evangelous, Gemini Sign Corp. representing Verizon Communication located at 66 Pickering Street and applying for signage.

Mark Evangelous, Gemini Sign Corp., explained that the proposal is a new sign for Verizon, but will be in the same size, location, frame, and material, as the existing sign. Verizon recently changed their logo.

In response to a question from Chair Gluesing, Mr. Evangelous stated that the background will change from black to gray.

Mr. Dermody questioned the location of the sign on the façade. It seems low for a two-story building and far from the door. Chair Gluesing noted that this building site is more of a space for company equipment, instead of offices.

Chair Gluesing asked why the panel is being left at the current size instead of, for example, 2', when the actual graphic area is proposed to be reduced. Mr. Evangelous stated that this was his belief that it would be likely to streamline the permit process. He noted that he recently installed this exact same sign in Framingham for that Verizon location. He believes this is the design Verizon prefers.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Ms. Opton, it was voted to approve the sign as submitted. Susan Opton – aye; Bob Dermody – aye; and Chair Gluesing -aye. Motion passed 3-0.

Agenda Item 4:

George Giunta, Jr., attorney representing BTE Development, LLC owner of 40 & 50 Central Avenue and applying for site plan review.

Attorney Giunta Jr. stated that this item is proposed to be before the Planning Board on November 15th. He explained that this location contains Panella's Market, with offices above. There is a small one-story building which is vacant on the property as well. The proposal is to combine the two properties, tear down both structures, and rebuild a three-story structure to house 15 residential dwelling units and three commercial bays on the first floor. One is expected to be occupied by Panella's and the others are TBD. The property is located in the Neighborhood Business District. The proposal is for two driveways, one off Central Avenue and one off of Reservoir St. A landscape and hardscape buffer are proposed to be installed.

Marianna Dagatti, MGD+ LLC, reviewed the project plans. This is a proposed lot which has two frontages. As a proposed mixed residential unit, a different color was used to signify each space. Design and color have also been proposed to match other buildings in the area. The proposed design will lower the upper scale of the building a bit through material changes. The side facing Central Avenue will contain the residential entrance. The entrance for the parking will mainly come from Central Avenue, under the building, to the rear of the lot. With a lot of fenestration, the proposal looks to bring in as much light and open views as possible. There will be balconies included with a few of the residential units on Reservoir Street, with Juliet balconies on the Central Avenue facade. Regarding landscaping, she explained that, as a corner lot, the group understands that this is a corner feature that will be significantly exposed. The group is also taking a lot of consideration toward the lighting of the site. There is a designated area from the first floor for outdoor access for the residents. There will be a landscaped screened area with 10' high plantings between this property and the abutter. This area may also contain a community garden. Trash removal and bike storage areas are specified on the plan. The structure will have one- and two-bedroom units with a central hallway.

In response to a question from Chair Gluesing, Ms. Dagatti stated that the commercial floor wall is recessed under the second floor between 5'-7'. There is a fully covered outdoor corridor in front of the commercial area.

Ms. Opton stated that she likes the proposed scale of the building. She believes the building will make quite a statement on the corner. There are a lot of dogwoods proposed along the street, and she noted that other species may want to be included. She also suggested other plantings for the boxwoods around the outdoor seating in the rear of the building. She noted that grass lawns take a lot of maintenance and there are other species of groundcover that could be planted which do not require mowing and less watering. The Chair noted that Ms. Opton will supply a list of suggested alternatives and that will be included in the DRB memo to the Planning Board.

In response to a question from Mr. Dermody about concerns regarding access to the trash area in the parking lot, Ms. Dagatti explained that the intention is to roll out the trash receptacle for it to be picked up.

In response to a question from Mr. Dermody regarding the proposed columns of the building located in the parking area, Mr. O'Leary explained that the columns are 18"x18" bases of

concrete with a 12” column above that, with a material covering TBD. The spaces located next to these columns will be 8’ compact spaces in part of the lot and marked as such. Other spaces with columns near them are often larger than the minimum width.

In response to a question from Mr. Dermody regarding what looks to be a deck area on the plan, Ms. Dagatti stated that this is a proposed seating area or an amenity for the commercial area. It is a stone patio. This is not intended to be at a different level from the walks and grade.

In response to a question from Chair Gluesing, Ms. Dagatti stated that the landscaping will likely be irrigated. Chair Gluesing suggested some reduction in grass cover on the site, with some additional ground cover instead.

In response to a question from Chair Gluesing regarding the trash enclosure, Ms. Dagatti stated that there is a proposed 6’ fence material of some sort around this area. Mr. Dermody suggested it not be bright white in color. The sample in the documents was a dark color, which the Board prefers.

In response to a question from Mr. Dermody regarding lighting for the parking lot, Ms. Dagatti stated that there will be recessed lighting on the second floor and bollards at walkways providing low lighting. A small amount of pole fixtures will also be installed in the open area of the lot.

In response to a question from Mr. Dermody, Mr. O’Leary stated that a retaining wall on the south side of the property will have a max of 4’ and will then sit at grade. The material is not yet confirmed but will likely be a stacked block. This is well-screened from abutting lots.

Mr. Dermody suggested that the transformer enclosure be done tastefully. Ms. Dagatti stated that this will require a platform and a similar fencing material to the trash enclosure will be proposed.

Mr. Dermody asked about the front corner of the building not having a support. He also noted that there seem to be four or five colors and materials used throughout the building. Ms. Dagatti stated that there are three colors and materials proposed: red brick, a recessed portion of dark chocolate gray board and batten, and an off-white James Hardie board.

Chair Gluesing noted that the wall sconces are up/down lights. he sometimes prefers for the lights to shine down instead of up to avoid skywash. Mr. Dermody suggested that the upward lights could be dimmer than the downward.

In response to a question from Ms. Opton, Ms. Dagatti stated that the walkable areas will be distinguished from other areas using a different material, concrete pavers.

In response to a question from Mr. Dermody, Mr. O’Leary stated that, due to grading issues, there is a small 30” retaining wall proposed next to the parking area along the side of the building.

Chair Gluesing stated that a memo will be drafted to the Planning Board before this item is heard by it next week.

Agenda Item 5:

Evans Huber, attorney with Frieze Cramer Rosen & Huber, LLP representing Coca-Cola located at 9 B Street and applying for site plan review with revised landscaping proposal.

Evans Huber explained that the Board previously had concerns regarding landscaping along 3rd Avenue and at the corner of 3rd Avenue and Kendrick Avenue. The Planning Board also had comments regarding increase recharge on the site. The planting plan has been upgraded to respond to these comments.

Chris Novak explained that some of the comments regarding the previously presented plan include reducing the grass lawn within the parking lot triangle area, additional infiltration, additional landscaping at the corner of 3rd Street and Kendrick, additional landscaping along 3rd Avenue in the form of ornamental grasses, and the potential for including solar on the roof. The triangle area has been converted to a bioinfiltration/rain garden area. The basin will be a wet seed mix. The landscaping along the corner will be enhanced with some lower ground cover plants, trees, and shrubs. Some weedy trees will be thinned out along Kendrick Avenue, filled in, and the landscaping will be continued down. On 3rd Avenue, the proposal is to replace lawn area with ornamental grasses and a mulch ground cover. An ornamental fence will be replaced with a vinyl fence, as there will be landscaping in front of it.

Chair Gluesing stated that these are great changes to the plan.

Ms. Opton expressed concern with potential overplanting on the slope of the corner. The palette could be 3-4 plants in this area with a grading pattern. Mr. Bednarek explained that the plan is misleading. There are bearberry, and Bar Harbor juniper proposed along the back of the corner, while the front features red twig dogwood, inkberry, dark American arborvitae, and eastern red cedars 10-12', with red maples in the back for additional screening. This corner is very sparse currently. The Board agreed that the drawing scale made it hard to read the planning density. The proposed planting was acceptable.

In response to a question from Mr. Dermody, Mr. Bednarek stated that a few trees will be removed from the corner, and the area will be layered from low to high with the new plantings. Some red plants will be utilized to match the Coca Cola brand. There is an existing concrete block on site which will be removed, but a large light pole facing the back of the building will remain.

Chair Gluesing stated that an updated memo will be sent to the Planning Board.

Minutes:

Minutes from the 10/17/2022 meeting

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Ms. Opton, it was voted to approve the meeting minutes of October 17, 2022. Susan Opton – aye; Bob Dermody – aye; and Chair Gluesing -aye. Motion passed 3-0.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Dermody and seconded by Ms. Opton, it was voted to adjourn at 9:05 p.m. Susan Opton – aye; Bob Dermody – aye; and Chair Gluesing -aye. Motion passed 3-0.

Next Public Meeting – December 5, 2022 at 7:30pm via Zoom Webinar