



Design Review Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, April 25, 2022
7:30 PM

Board Members:

Mark Gluesing, Chair (P)
Susan Opton, Board Member (P)
Chad Reilly, Board Member (P)
Deborah Robinson, Board Member (P)
Rana Mana-Doerfer, DRB Recording Secretary (P)
Elisa Litchman, Administrative Specialist, Planning & Community Development (P)

Review of Applications for Outdoor Seating:

1. Marc Mandel, The Needham Channel located at 257 Chestnut Street and requesting an informal review of landscaping.
2. Jason Gagnon, Sousa Signs representing Home Décor Group located at 1424 Highland Avenue and applying for signage.
3. Jeff Lyons and Randy Goldberg of Intrum Corp. located at 110-116 Gould Street, 95-101 Hampton Avenue, 11 Ellis Street and 45-55 Kearney Road and applying for façade work.
4. Mike Moskowitz, owner Needham Gateway located at 100 and 120 Highland Avenue and applying for installation of additional dumpster enclosure review per the Needham Planning Board.
5. Hank Haff, Director Building Design & Construction for Town of Needham, applying for minor site plan review for renovations at 1330 Highland Avenue Emory Grover Building.
6. Paul Good, Revitalization Trust Fund, applying for wall banner design to be located at 1037 Great Plain Avenue exterior wall facing west towards Eaton Square.
7. Paul Good, Revitalization Trust Fund, applying for QR Code/Banner System sign to be located in Eaton Square Plaza.

Applicants & Attendees:

1. Marc Mandel, The Needham Channel located at 257 Chestnut Street.
2. Jason Gagnon, Sousa Signs representing Home Décor Group located at 1424 Highland Avenue.
3. Jonathan Tapper, Home Décor Group located at 1424 Highland Avenue.
4. Randy Goldberg, of Intrum Corp. located at 110-116 Gould Street, 95-101 Hampton Avenue, 11 Ellis Street and 45-55 Kearney Road
5. Jeff Lyons of Intrum Corp. located at 110-116 Gould Street, 95-101 Hampton Avenue, 11 Ellis Street and 45-55 Kearney Road
6. John LeFreniere, Project Architect for Intrum Corp. located at 110-116 Gould Street, 95-101 Hampton Avenue, 11 Ellis Street and 45-55 Kearney Road

7. Hank Haff, Director Building Design & Construction for Town of Needham.
8. Joel Bargmann, Architect with BH+A for the Town of Needham.
9. Kyle Zick, Landscaper for Emory Grover Building Project.

Mr. Chair called the meeting to order on April 25, 2022, at 7:30 PM EST.

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

Agenda Item 1:

The Needham Channel located at 257 Chestnut Street and requesting an informal review of landscaping.

- Marc Mandel

Mr. Mandel came before the Board for an informal landscaping review. At the February meeting the Board reviewed signage for the property asked Mr. Mandel to think about the landscaping for the property. There were bushes that were removed that left the property looking empty, and an attendee at the signage meeting asked if landscaping could be added to liven the property, as in her opinion the signage made things look sterile. Mr. Mandel had a landscaper come out and assess the property and the landscaper submitted a plan, the plan includes planting a mixture of azaleas, boxwoods and hostas.

Ms. Opton had some feedback regarding the landscaping plan, because the suggested planting area probably does not get a lot of water, and it probably also deals with salt from snowplowing activities. She suggested grasses and flowers that get cut??? down during the winter, so that plants can stay healthy and thrive after a rough winter season. She also said that boxwoods tend to get diseased and require a lot of monitoring.

She suggested a boxwood like plant that is native to the area called *Ilex glabra* (Gem box variety), as well as *Spirea Bumalda* which is a drought tolerant flowering shrub that can grow 2 to 3 feet and are 3 to 5 feet wide, a ground covering was also suggested which is called Bearberry which is a low-growing ground cover, which is native to the area, for a more grassy look the Pennsylvania sedge was suggested. All these plants will do well in the harsher conditions of planters close to the sidewalk and the street which gets a lot of sun, not a lot of water and of course might get salt from plowing activities in the winter.

Mr. Chair explained that the Board's recommendations would be sent to the applicant in writing.

Agenda Item 2:

Sousa Signs representing Home Décor Group located at 1424 Highland Avenue and applying for signage.

- Jason Gagnon, Sousa Signs

Jason Gagnon attended and represented Home Décor Group who is seeking to install a wall sign on the front entrance. The sign is an internally LED lit channel letter set, mounted to a low-profile raceway, which will be painted to match the building exterior color. The sign is 131 ½" by 34". Secondly, they also want to change the awning color from red to a blue/grey color. Lastly, they would like to install a 45 7/8" by 6" sign that says "Benjamin Moore" with the logo on the side wall facing the parking driveway. The sign is made of non-illuminated letters which are to be installed on a backer panel.

Mr. Chair asked Mr. Gagnon if they are proposing any signage on the backdoor. Mr. Gagnon said no, no signs to be installed at this time.

Ms. Robinson said the front sign might look better if it is installed a bit higher on the façade.

Mr. Reilly said he finds the sign too big for the façade as the storefront is small and the traffic is slow there, so he finds that sign larger than it needs to be. Mr. Chair said that the words Home and Décor are 22 inches high, and typically they limit lettering between 14 and 18 inches for this section of stores. Mr. Reilly suggested reducing the font size.

Mr. Chair asked if the sign facing the parking lot can be changed from a stark white background. Or to be toned down as it is too stark in comparison to the red building background. Mr. Chair also thought the front sign is too dense for the storefront.

Motion to approve the front sign with the condition that the letters be reduced in size from 22 3/8" to 18 inches high, that the letter width be adjusted proportionally and raise the sign 8" from the height shown on the submitted photograph by Mr. Reilly.

Motion seconded by Ms. Opton.

Name	Aye	Nay
Mark Gluesing	Aye	
Susan Opton	Aye	
Chad Reilly	Aye	
Deborah Robinson	Aye	

Motion to approve the awning color change as submitted by Mr. Reilly.

Motion seconded by Ms. Opton.

Name	Aye	Nay
Mark Gluesing	Aye	
Susan Opton	Aye	
Chad Reilly	Aye	
Deborah Robinson	Aye	

Agenda Item 3:

Intrum Corp. located at 110-116 Gould Street, 95-101 Hampton Avenue, 11 Ellis Street and 45-55 Kearney Road and applying for façade work. - Jeff Lyons and Randy Goldberg of Intrum Corp.

Mr. Goldberg, Principal of Intrum Corp. acquired the Tocci properties located at 110 to 116 Gould Street, 95-101 Hampton Avenue, 45 to 55 Kearney Road and 11 Ellis Street. The site spans approximately three and a half acres, two building are on the site which total approx. 80,000 square feet. They propose to upgrade the building facades. The improvements include new windows, new accent bands on the Gould Street façade as well as the Kearney Road façade. They also plan to paint the buildings, install new storefront entry systems, and install new architectural canopies and features at the existing entries.

Project Architect John LeFreniere shared his screen and walked the Board through the proposed façade changes.

Mr. Reilly said he found the package was well put together. He wanted more information on how signage will work since they are a multi-tenant building in regard to the multi-tenant entry. He also asked them if they have any proposed landscaping or outdoor seating on the property. Mr. Goldberg said that Intrum Corp. is very sensitive to tenant signs and the last thing they would want is to end up with multiple signs. Each entry as

shown on the rendering is not a shared tenant entry but a private entry to the tenant space. Presently they have 9 tenants. As for the landscaping the site contains a lot of asphalt, there are no sidewalks. They do not have a landscaping plan in place.

Mr. Chair said that neighborhood is difficult because it is all paved wall to wall so there is little room for landscaping.

Ms. Robinson asked what the plan for lighting on the façade is. Mr. Goldberg said the building has existing wall packs; they are intending to keep this lighting as is. They are only thinking of adding recessed entryway lighting under the tenant entry canopy.

Mr. Chair thought the improvements are very nice. He asked what kind of mechanical equipment services these buildings. Mr. Goldberg said they are rooftop and inset and they are not seen from the street.

Motion to approve façade changes as submitted by Mr. Reilly.

Motion seconded by Ms. Opton.

Name	Aye	Nay
Mark Gluesing	Aye	
Susan Opton	Aye	
Chad Reilly	Aye	
Deborah Robinson	Aye	

Agenda Item 4:

Needham Gateway located at 100 and 120 Highland Avenue and applying for installation of additional dumpster enclosure review per the Needham Planning Board. - Mike Moskowitz, owner

Mr. Moskowitz came before the Board because he is applying for an additional dumpster as part of his site plan approval with the Planning Board. The dumpster is to be moved from its current enclosure to a parking spot in the far corner of the lot.

Mr. Chair clarified for the attendees and applicants that the Board is simply reviewing the adjustment to the site plan review, and they will send their comments to the Planning Board. Mr. Chair noted that this agenda item is a not a public hearing and they won't be taking comments.

Mr. Moskowitz explained that he was originally granted a special permit back in 2005/2006, there was an existing fence structure between his property and a residential property, and he enclosed a portion of his property with the same type of fencing for a cardboard dumpster. At the time he didn't know he needed a special permit approval for the dumpster structure, so when he went back to the Planning Board, he got another special permit approval. The enclosure is made of white PVC.

The fence is 6 feet high, and the dumpsters are 43 inches high.

Ms. Opton expressed her opinion that there are too many different types of materials being used for different dumpster enclosures in the parking area. Mr. Chair asked what the dumpster that exists in the center of the

parking area is made of. Mr. Moskowitz said it is a compactor that takes the non-cardboard trash. It's made of split face block.

Mr. Reilly said he does not generally like PVC fencing, but he is not particularly bothered by it in the proposed location. He did notice in the package there is a photo of the existing PVC, and it shows the posts and the caps only sit a little higher than the adjacent fence, whereas in the drawing, the diagram makes it look like the posts set up quite a bit higher than the fence. Mr. Moskowitz said he is planning to duplicate what is in the photo. Mr. Reilly said he noted there is one post with a decorative cap and one without. He is looking to confirm that all the fixed posts will have a cap. Mr. Moskowitz said that yes, caps will be added where they can. The swing gate will not have the caps as that would prevent the gate from opening. The photos are correct, the drawings show the caps higher than what is proposed.

Mr. Chair asked why the fencing/gate is being re-used, as the hinges have been moved twice, and the gate has a hole in it. Mr. Moskowitz said it is a question of cost, he can buy some new pieces like a new gate, but other pieces will be reused.

The Board's comments will be sent to the Planning Board. There's no major objection to it generally and its visual impact is not that strong.

Agenda Item 5:

Town of Needham, applying for minor site plan review for renovations at 1330 Highland Avenue Emory Grover Building. - Hank Haff, Director Building Design & Construction

D. Robinson recused herself from the meeting at this point and left the zoom meeting.

Mr. Haff came before the Board applying for minor site plan review for the Emory Grover Building, which is the current Needham School Administration building.

This will be a full gut renovation project, and a restoration project of the exterior envelope.

Mr. Bargmann, the Architect for the project shared some historic photos of the building that show the front of the building was not paved originally and the Historic Commission and the School Administration would like to restore the front yard as much as possible. There are three criteria that lead to the design: The access road from Highland Avenue is also an easement to the abutting residential condos to the north; the front driveway has to lead to the back parking lot since Oakland Ave has some challenges allowing staff to enter; that the front be restored as much as possible to the quality of the landscape.

Kyle Zick the Landscape Architect for the project talked about the removal of the pavement, and the plans to retain existing trees and the existing flagpole, as well as the pedestrian path on the south side, and another accessible path from the three parking spaces that leads to the north portico. He described the evergreen screen plantings along Oakland Avenue and St. Joseph's school. In the center of the parking lot an H-shaped parking configuration is proposed.

Mr. Bargmann also talked about an addition on the north roof, it will be used to store the mechanical equipment currently on the back of the building, and it will also serve to obscure the elevator that is to be added. The roof will be replaced with new slate, and the gutters will be replaced, and the cornice will be repaired with copper material that matches the existing material.

The reason that the elevator is going to be in the northern part of the penthouse is because the interior of the building is complicated, and this was the best spot for accessibility reasons. The building will be all electric, fossil fuel free.

The ten current parking spaces in the front of the building will be reduced to three on the access road and sixty-two parking spaces will be located in the back where there currently are sixty-four. A dumpster and fenced enclosure will also be added towards the back of the parking lot. The building is built with roman brick some which will be salvaged from closed in windows and then used as much as possible but loading dock and dumpster enclosure will be clad in metal.

The front entry will be filled in with a window adding 100 square feet of space to the building. The slightly recessed vault will be retained but the doors removed so it is not confused with an entry.

The outside of the building will see full replacement of windows, reglazing, brick repair and repointing, a service dock will be added at the south-east corner, and the north portico will be enclosed to function as a vestibule and add concealed structural support. On the back of the building the currently bricked-in six historic openings will be reopened to bring light and air to the second floor/third floor above grade. The north portico will have a ramp leading up to it from the east and infilling the steps to that north portico that lead directly to the driveway. Some of the salvaged bricks will be used at this north portico.

Mr. Reilly said that the modernization of the building is tasteful. He shared his comments. Firstly, where the clock used to be there is a dark accent at the top of building on the historic photograph as well as a balustrade, he was wondering if the circle can be painted dark, to make that area a visual accent with a font that is era appropriate with the building number on it or perhaps a solar dial. Mr. Reilly said that the DRB packet materials show a bush screening the front parking area which would be good, but the plans shared at this meeting don't show that. He also noticed a very large tree will be removed and wanted to know why. Mr. Zick said that the large tree will be removed because its proximity to the addition will impact its roots. Mr. Reilly asked if some low but dense bushes be added to the front lawn so that the parking doesn't become the front lawn image. Mr. Reilly also asked if the glazing of the old center entry could be set back a little bit more from the two flanking arched windows it might help with the reading as not a building entrance. Also consider having something like a low planter with something cascading over it that makes it clear that is not an entry stairway.

Mr. Chair asked Mr. Zick to walk the Board through the landscaping plan. Mr. Zick said on the Highland Avenue side, three trees will be planted, two American Elms and one Katsura Tree. Some currently existing trees will remain. Low shrubs that will be installed at the base of the building. On the parking lot side of the building deciduous shade trees will be added, and an evergreen screen hedge are proposed along St. Joe's property line and replacing the existing vinyl fence along Oakland Avenue. In terms of tree removal- there are two oak trees, one is within the proposed parking, and one is south of the dumpsters. Both will be removed.

Site lighting will be a 20-foot tall, contemporary fixtures that will be added in the parking lot for vehicular and parking, and 12 feet tall, dark sky compliant pedestrian scale lighting to be added on the path from the lot to the building. There will be shielding on the light fixtures. There is no plan for lighting on the building except as required at entrances.

Ms. Opton felt that the landscaping is extremely basic, she feels like there is an opportunity for beautification of the front lawn, she would like to see more plants and less lawn. She also agreed with Mr. Reilly about the former clock oval and that it should be used more creatively.

Mr. Chair had a few comments regarding the loading dock and the roof enclosure. The roof enclosure is just a box with continuous louvers. It appears too big and perhaps could be broken up a bit. The loading dock could

show more of an effort to be an extension of the building without trying to match the building in his opinion. He also agrees with his colleagues regarding the clock area, and in doing something creative in that area; perhaps show a recessed, dark panel, with some detail and let the ghost of the clock exist there, no hands or numbers necessarily. Currently shown as white on the plans it looks like something is missing. He also agrees with Mr. Reilly about more detail on the lower panel at the former entry or planting beds in front. He appreciates the stairs remaining.

Mr. Chair asked Mr. Haff if there is any discussion with the Planning Board regarding the site plan. Mr. Haff said he initially thought this would be a major project special permit, but with the simplification of the building, and the work being done inside the building, it was reduced to a minor site plan. It is a special permit because of request of waivers on parking to the Zoning Board of Appeals so they will need to stop at the ZBA as well.

Mr. Chair let Mr. Haff know he will pass the Board's comments along to the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Building Inspector.

Agenda Item 6 & 7:

Revitalization Trust Fund, applying for wall banner design to be located at 1037 Great Plain Avenue exterior wall facing west towards Eaton Square. - Paul Good

Revitalization Trust Fund, applying for QR Code/Banner System sign to be located in Eaton Square Plaza. - Paul Good

Mr. Good is seeking to install a temporary 8 ft wide by 4 ft high wall applique image of the completed Eaton Square Art Galerie Project. The purpose is to raise awareness of this project as they await funding for it. He wants the banner sign to be large enough for folks walking by can see and feel what the gallery will look like.

Mr. Chair said he finds the sign large, and he would want to shrink it. He also expressed concern that the rendition of the gallery on the sign will not look like the gallery once it's open. Mr. Good said he has no problem shrinking the image, and he is also very committed to accurately representing the gallery on the wall sign, and he is working with a designer to render up a dimensional version of the gallery so that it reflects as accurately as possible.

Mr. Reilly wanted to make sure the sign won't protrude as the sidewalk is narrow and he doesn't want folks to snag themselves on anything.

Mr. Chair asked that when Mr. Good is ready to install this sign, he would like to see a more a detailed application regarding the material, the application method, lighting, etc.

Motion to approve as submitted the 8' x 4' banner by Mr. Reilly

Motion seconded by Ms. Opton

Name	Aye	Nay
Mark Gluesing	Aye	
Susan Opton	Aye	
Chad Reilly	Aye	
Deborah Robinson	Abs.	

As for the light pole banners the Board did not have a problem with them as the QR codes will be helpful for Mr. Good to raise awareness about the project. Mr. Reilly had a concern about using the banners for advertising for other businesses. Mr. Good said he has no intention to do so, and he cannot do that due to a Needham Revitalization Trust Fund policy. The Board stated that if the QR sign was related to multiple light poles that only one QR sign be installed not one on each pole.

Motion to approve with the conditions that the QR signs in Eaton Square are limited to public service announcements only and limited to be on one pole by Mr. Reilly

Motion seconded by Ms. Opton.

Name	Aye	Nay
Mark Gluesing	Aye	
Susan Opton	Aye	
Chad Reilly	Aye	
Deborah Robinson	Abs.	

Minutes:

Motion to approve the minutes of February 28th, 2022 by Mr. Reilly.

Motion seconded by Ms. Opton.

Name	Aye	Nay
Mark Gluesing	Aye	
Susan Opton	Aye	
Chad Reilly	Aye	
Deborah Robinson	Abs.	

Motion to approve the minutes of March 28th, 2022 by Mr. Reilly.

Motion seconded by Ms. Opton.

Name	Aye	Nay
Mark Gluesing	Aye	
Susan Opton	Aye	
Chad Reilly	Aye	
Deborah Robinson	Abs.	

Motion to Adjourn:

Motion to adjourn the Design Review Board meeting by Mr. Reilly

Motion was seconded by Ms. Opton.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 PM.

Name	Aye	Nay
Mark Gluesing	Aye	
Susan Opton	Aye	
Chad Reilly	Aye	
Deborah Robinson	Abs.	

Future Meetings:

May 16, 2022	Via Zoom
June 6, 2022	Via Zoom
June 27, 2022	Via Zoom
July 11, 2022	Via Zoom
July 25, 2022	Via Zoom
Aug. 8, 2022	Via Zoom
Aug. 22, 2022	Via Zoom
September 12, 2022	Via Zoom
October 3, 2022	Via Zoom
October 17, 2022	Via Zoom
November 7, 2022	Via Zoom
December 5, 2022	Via Zoom
December 19, 2022	Via Zoom