



TOWN HALL
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DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
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June 17, 2008

DRB Memorandum #2008-6

Memo to: Bonnie Weeks, Building Commissioner
Jonathan Tucker, Planning Director
From: Christine Brestrup, Senior Planner
Subject: DRB Recommendations of June 3, 2008

The Tuesday, June 3, 2008, meeting of the Design Review Board began at 7:35 p.m. in the Town Room, Town Hall. Members Janet Winston and Anita Licis were present, along with Senior Planner, Christine Brestrup.

Also present were Duncan Ferguson of Ferguson Signs, for Environ, John Kuhn of Kuhn Riddle Architects for Amherst Cinema LLC, Franklin Wells and Peter Lillya for the Public Transportation Committee and Walter Wolnik, interested citizen. Although a quorum of the Board was not present the members made the following recommendations and discussed the following topics:

The Board turned to Appointments.

DRB #2008-00014, 28 Amity Street, Duncan Ferguson of Ferguson Signs, Environ
Recommended Approval of the proposed sign for Environ, with conditions.

The proposed sign will spell out the word ENVIRON in freestanding letters, 10" high, 1" deep, stud-mounted directly on the brick wall, on the second story of the west façade of the Amherst Cinema Building. The sign will be located between two second-story windows, just to the north of the break between the two sections of the building. The letters are proposed to be brush-finished aluminum. There will be free-standing bars of the same brush-finished aluminum above and below the letters. The sign will cover less than 10% of the side wall of the building.

The Board's recommendations were as follows:

- Consider moving the sign to the left so that it will be mounted, as nearly as possible, centered between the two windows on the second story;
- Raise the sign up so that the whole grouping of lettering is centered on the mid-point of the windows or, alternatively, line up the upper bar of the sign with the mid-point of the windows;
- Consider raising the letters off the brick slightly to accentuate the shadows cast by the letters.

Board members commented that the proposed sign is simple and elegant and the location will be noticed by passers-by.

DRB #2008-00015, 28 Amity Street, John Kuhn of Kuhn Riddle Architects, Amherst Cinema LLC

Recommended Approval of the sign plan for the building, as proposed.

The sign plan was submitted to the Design Review Board for review as required by Condition #5 of Special Permit ZBA 2005-00028, as proposed.

Mr. Kuhn explained the sign plan and showed photographs of the existing signs in place, including the directory sign on the east side of the building, near Amity Street, the Amherst Coffee sign, the Chamber of Commerce sign, the Amherst Cinema signs and the blade signs for businesses accessed from the walkway along the east side of the building. Mr. Kuhn explained that the concept for the sign plan had been explained to the Zoning Board of Appeals during the Special Permit public hearing process and that the signs that had been installed conform to the concept plan presented to the ZBA.

Mr. Kuhn stated that there was a proposal to have a directory sign on South Pleasant Street, in the form of a sandwich board sign, a pole sign or a column. This could take the place of the proliferation of sandwich board signs that have sprung up along the sidewalk, and would help to direct pedestrians to the businesses located in the Amherst Cinema Building, which are not visible from South Pleasant Street. Mr. Kuhn will explore the possibility for such a directory sign with the owner of the Amherst Cinema Building.

New Business

Appearance by Members of the Public Transportation Committee

Peter Lillya, a member of the Public Transportation Committee, spoke to the Board about the need for pedestrian safety and universal access improvements at the intersection of Pomeroy Lane and West Street (Route 116). Mr. Lillya stated that there are currently no sidewalks along the north side of Pomeroy Lane and no curb cuts and no provisions for push-buttons to activate the crossing signals at the intersection. He noted that a design has been prepared by the Department of Public Works for pedestrian improvements to the intersection. He asked that the Design Review Board lend its support to “something that needs doing”.

The Board members expressed their interest in the issues that Mr. Lillya had brought to their attention and resolved to look into the details of the design for the intersection. Ms. Winston noted that the sidewalk should be extended on one or both sides of Pomeroy Lane so that children would be able to ride their bikes to school. The Board decided to invite the Town Engineer, Jason Skeels, to the next DRB meeting to explain the design plans for the intersection and to discuss the proposed pedestrian and accessibility improvements.

Cc: Kathleen Fisher, DRB member
Anita Licis, DRB member
Janet Winston, DRB member
Applicants:
Duncan Ferguson, Ferguson Signs
John Kuhn, Kuhn Riddle Architects
Carolyn Holstein, Zoning Staff Assistant