



TOWN HALL
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DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
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June 4, 2010

DRB Memorandum #2010-5

Memo to: Bonnie Weeks, Building Commissioner
Jonathan Tucker, Planning Director
From: Christine Brestrup, Senior Planner
Subject: DRB Meeting – May 18, 2010

The Tuesday, May 18, 2010, meeting of the Design Review Board began at 6:35 p.m. in the First Floor Meeting Room of Town Hall. Design Review Board members Janet Winston (Chair), Anita Licis, Jonathan Salvo and Jim Wald were present. Kathryn Grandonico had recused herself from the discussion about Moti's, at 25 North Pleasant Street. Also present were Christine Brestrup, Senior Planner, and Arash Hashemkhani (of Moti's).

DRB 2010-00011, Arash Hashemkhani for Moti's Restaurant, 25 North Pleasant Street – review of proposed sign and lighting relocation and placement of banner sign

Recommended approval

Mr. Hashemkhani presented the application. He is proposing to take over the space occupied by Bucci's hairstylists, which is adjacent to the current Moti's Restaurant on North Pleasant Street. Mr.

Hashemkhani proposes to paint the entire sign panel black (thereby removing the painted sign for Bucci's) and move the sign for "MOTI'S" (individual red letters mounted on the sign panel above the door). He would like to position the sign for "MOTI'S" in the middle of the black sign panel, centered over the entryway to the two spaces.

Section 8.20 of the Zoning Bylaw limits the size of signs in the B-G zoning district to 10% of the building wall that is controlled by the owner of the business. There were questions about the size of the sign.

Currently there is a vertical bar that separates the signs for Moti's and Bucci's, creating an area for the Moti's sign that is in conformance with the Bylaw. If the individual letters are moved to the middle of the sign panel with no vertical bars installed to limit the sign area, the entire sign panel may be determined to be the size of the sign, under Section 8.041, 1), which states that:

The surface area of any sign, either freestanding or attached, shall be considered to be the full visual presentation of the sign's display, including all lettering, numerals, symbols, decorative borders, background surface, framing or ornamental structure, whether open or enclosed.

This area is 14.5' x 17', which equals 246.5 square feet, or more than 10% of the building wall area.

There was general agreement that the Board liked the individual letters mounted directly on the sign panel. However, recognizing that the Building Commissioner may determine that the entire sign panel is included in the area of the sign, they recommended that the individual letter could be mounted on a separate panel, that would be painted black and then mounted on the black sign panel. This would provide an area for the sign that is smaller than 10% of the wall area. Otherwise they were satisfied with the relocation of the sign.

The Board also reviewed the proposed relocation of the lights. The existing gooseneck lights will be mounted over the sign in the middle of the sign panel. The Board was satisfied with this relocation.

Then the Board reviewed the existing banner sign that had been mounted on a pre-existing bracket. After having been informed that this banner sign was the appropriate distance off the sidewalk (83”) the Board was satisfied with the banner sign and its location.

Old Business

Public Works New Policy on Review of Transportation and Roadway Projects – Eastman Lane and North Pleasant Street Intersection

At its April 27th meeting the Board had been informed about a new policy instituted by the Department of Public Works and the Select Board whereby the Public Works Committee would hold public hearings on public works projects and invite other boards and committees to attend and comment. This is different from the previous way of reviewing public works projects, in that the staff of the DPW will no longer come to meetings of each relevant board and committee to give a presentation and seek comments.

With this in mind the Design Review Board had been invited to attend the May 4th public hearing, held by the Public Works Committee, to review the proposed improvements to the intersection of Eastman Lane and North Pleasant Street. The DPW and University of Massachusetts are proposing to install a roundabout at that intersection.

Mr. Wald and Ms. Brestrup had attended the May 4th Public Works meeting and reported on the presentation. Mr. Wald noted that the issue of pedestrian safety had been discussed. The crosswalks that traverse the roundabout are oriented in such a way that people crossing the road will be turned in the direction of the traffic that is approaching them. Therefore they will be more likely to see an approaching vehicle than they would be at a standard crosswalk that is oriented perpendicular to the direction of traffic.

Mr. Wald displayed on his laptop computer a video that had been shown at the public hearing of the operation of a roundabout, including images of vehicles and pedestrians moving through the intersection with vehicles stopping to allow pedestrians to cross. This helped to allay concerns of Board members regarding some safety issues.

Ms. Winston asked what materials would be used to construct the crosswalks and whether they would be brick and concrete or some other material. She agreed that it would be appropriate to have a “gateway” feature at that point along the road, announcing the beginning of the UMass campus.

Board members asked if the crosswalks would be raised above the travel lanes and if so, how much.

Mr. Wald stated that there were currently no planting plans to review, but noted that planting in the area of the roundabout may help to slow traffic. The Design Review Board members asked to see plans for planting and lighting when they become available.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Future Meetings

Tuesday, June 8, 2010

Tuesday, July 13, 2010

Tuesday, July 27, 2010

Cc:	Anita Licis, DRB	Nate Malloy, Associate Planner
	Janet Winston, DRB	Jeffrey Bagg, Senior Planner
	Jim Wald, DRB & HC	Larry Shaffer, Town Manager
	Jonathan Salvon, DRB	Jason Skeels, Town Engineer
	Kathryn Grandonico, DRB	Guilford Mooring, DPW Superintendent
	Aaron Hayden, Sel. Board	Arash Hashemkhani, Applicant