

Town of



TOWN HALL
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AMHERST Massachusetts

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
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March 5, 2016

DRB MEMORANDUM

Memo to: Rob Morra, Building Commissioner
Christine Brestrup, Planning Director
Jennifer Gannet, Permit Administrator
From: Jonathan Tucker, Senior Planner
Subject: DRB Meeting – March 4, 2016

The Thursday, March 4, 2016 meeting of the Design Review Board began at approximately 7:07 p.m. in the Second Floor Conference Room/Library, Town Hall.

Design Review Board members Jan Marquardt, Catharine Porter, and Jonathan Salvon were present. Member Derek Noble was absent. Introductions were made and Ms. Marquardt was welcomed to the Board.

Staff present included Senior Planner Jonathan Tucker.

Applicants present included Town Engineer Jason Skeels. Carol Johnson was also present representing the Amherst Cinema.

Applications

DRB 2016-00012, Town of Amherst – Amity Street parking lot – General improvements to the parking lot.

Recommend approval as proposed, with one condition.

Mr. Skeels presented site plans for improvements to the parking lot, including a new layout, repaving, restriping, new lighting, and new landscaping on the interior of the lot.

Ms. Johnson expressed gratitude that the parking lot was being improved, and for the increase in parking spaces and handicapped spaces. She expressed a number of concerns: 1) directional pavement arrows should not encourage drivers to pass between this lot and the Bank of America lot; 2) proposed ornamental trees in the two central landscape beds on the south end of the lot should be ornamental shrubs instead--something low that will not grow up to obscure view of the cinema's signs; 3) that

construction be planned and phased to be as brief as possible, so as to limit the impact of having the parking unavailable. Mr. Skeels said that it was an involved project and would take a month or two at the least.

After further discussion, the Board recommended approval of the site plan as proposed, with the following condition:

- 1) That the Tree Warden be asked to propose ornamental shrubs or short trees for the two southern central landscape beds that will not obscure the cinema signs or block internal vehicle sightlines as they mature.

DRB 2016-00011, Himalaya Friend's Corner – 61 Main Street – New main awning sign.

Recommend approval as proposed, with one condition.

The applicant did not appear, so the proposal was presented by staff. After discussion, the Board recommended approval of the awning sign as proposed, with the following condition:

- 1) That the word shown as “Friend’s” appear instead as “Friends”—i.e., without an apostrophe. The title as proposed is confusing because it seems to be indicating that the ‘corner’ (the restaurant) belongs or refers to a single friend. If the intention is to have the restaurant title indicate that it will serve as a ‘corner’ (gathering space) for multiple friends and the public at large, then presenting the word without an apostrophe will better convey that message.

The next meeting was set for Thursday, March 24, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Marquardt indicated that she would be out of the country until early May.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.