

**FRANKLIN HERITAGE COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING
CITY HALL- BASEMENT MEETING ROOM
Wednesday, October 26, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.**

MINUTES

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

- **Salute to the Flag**
- **Roll Call**

Present: Councilor Glen Feener, Bob Lucas, Michael Mullavey, Paul Trudel, Richard Lewis (Planning and Zoning Director) and Planning and Zoning Assistant Angela Carey.

Absent: Jeff Whitney.

- **Approval of Minutes: August 10th, 2015 Heritage Commission Meeting**

MOTION: Member Lucas moved and Member Trudel seconded to approve the minutes of the August 10th, 2015 Heritage Commission regular meeting. It was indicated that on page 3 it states “40 inch” reveal instead of 4-inch reveal and this needs to be changed; also, the minutes approved were the July 14th, 2014 minutes and this needs to be changed. All others were in favor of approving the minutes as amended; motion passes.

New Business

- **H15-002:** Trestleview Properties, LLC, Owner; Jason Grevior, Applicant, requests approval to place two new internally illuminated red, white and blue signs, on property located at 446-448 Central Street, Tax Map/Lot # 117-161-00, New Map N8, B-2 Zone (High- Density Business and Commercial District).

Public Comment

Annette Andreozzi indicated it would be helpful if the applicant would indicate what they are planning to do prior to her questions, as she may have more afterwards. She stated that she would like to know why the applicant feels it necessary to have an internally illuminated sign to do more business.

Jason Grevior was present as the applicant. He stated that this is a Gallery program for Serta Mattress. He stated America’s Mattress Gallery is in the top 10 retailers overall. With his business being chosen to be part of America’s Mattress Gallery comes branding and their signage. Lighted signs bring more attention. He is excited for this opportunity as they have worked hard and had to fight to get a small family owned company approved for this branding. The business is 84 years old and has always been located in Franklin, and the location of the business has been an obstacle for the business. Only 15% of the business to Grevior’s is from Franklin, so they are bringing in business from outside of Franklin.

Ms. Andreozzi stated she agrees a lit sign attracts more attention, but it doesn’t have to be internally lit. Mr. Grevior indicated by being chosen for this program means receiving their signs, which are all the same and that is the sign he is seeking approval for. He added that since the 50’s Grevior’s has always had an internally lit sign, of which he provided pictures. The previous signs were fluorescent and bright

and this one will not be. The old sign, for which the brackets are still present on the building, ran the length of the entire building. America's Mattress Gallery was only going to give them one sign when they negotiated with them, but he indicated he needed two that could be seen traveling in both directions.

Scott Brown, Chair the Housing and Economic Development Committee of Franklin for a Lifetime, was present to speak. He indicated the Franklin for a Lifetime has been speaking about the possibility of sign ordinance changes. With the proposed changes this waiver might not be unnecessary.

Ms. Andreozzi indicated she understands the need for the application, and has no problems with the colors of the sign. She indicated she agrees with the proposal to remove a sign or two when erecting these signs. She did however ask that if the board allows the sign on the Trestleview Park Side, that they make some changes to the proposed motion, to include: not allowing the sign to be lit all day and have it shut off when the business closes; and, that they remove the wording from the proposed approval document that internally illuminated signs were not uncommon in the 20th century, as plastic was uncommon and to be internally lit you would need plastic.

Bill Doherty indicated businesses need to be able to draw attention to their businesses and the committee should be more concerned about the changes to the facades of the buildings downtown that are more of an issue and filling the empty store fronts. He stated Grevior's has always had lit signs, they are a viable family business that has been around for 80 years and brings in 85% of their business from outside of Franklin.

Leigh Webb stated he doubts if anyone is not supportive of the Grevior's and he would hesitate to have them do anything that could hurt the business, but there are basic guidelines present to grant a waiver. The issue is that the signs are internally illuminated and he wanted to make sure that approving this would not set precedence, and as long as the committee is going to look at any future applications on a case by case basis then precedence will not be set. He indicated he would rather see something done with the sign located across from City Hall and indicated he is not opposed to this.

Member Trudel moved and Member Lucas seconded to close the public hearing as there was no further comment brought forward. All were in favor.

Board discussion

Member Lucas asked if there was a smaller sign, would that would give him the same affect. Mr. Grevior stated they have bigger signs but when going through the paperwork there were no signs smaller than the 4' x 6' that he is applying for. He indicated when being branded, you have to do things how they want them done. He indicated they review the area and make a determination based on what will work for the area.

Member Lucas asked if one or two signs were being removed by the placement of these signs. Jason indicated he is not sure yet, but definitely one sign will be. He indicated he use to have a long sign in front of the store that was much larger, and now there is only one little sign on the main building. The two new signs will be on separate buildings and one will face up the hill and one will face towards the bank.

Member Trudel asked if the signs could be put inside the building and Mr. Grevior stated he does not have a window front that is large enough. He indicated he lost his window frontage when he donated the Trestleview Park to the city.

Chair Feener asked if with the proposed signage if any other signs will need to be removed so that he meets the zoning requirements. Richard Lewis stated that the amount of signage is based on the size of the building. These are two separate buildings on two separate lots. He indicated the National Furniture sales sign would need to come down. Mr. Grevior stated that the other building lost a sign due to it being hit by a truck, and the sign was not replaced.

Chair Feener asked if the signs would be blinking and Mr. Grevior stated they would not. He indicated he will look into whether it is cost effective to shut off the lights when the city sleeps.

MOTION: Member Lucas moved and member Trudel seconded that the Franklin Heritage that the Franklin Heritage Commission approve the waiver for Grevior Furniture to allow the installation of two internally illuminated signs on the property at 440-448 Central Street [tax map/lot 117-161-00] and to allow the color scheme as presented by the applicant. These approvals are supported by the findings and conditions outlined in the draft approval prepared by the Planning Director, and reviewed, modified, as needed, and approved by the Commission.

The Commission indicated that the motion includes the findings and conditions as listed below:

- a. The installation of the proposed signs will not have an adverse impact on the City's heritage or on the significant elements of its cultural or architectural history since the Furniture store used to have an internally illuminated sign and these types of signs were not uncommon in the early 20th century.
- b. The proposed signs will not adversely impact the character of the City and the signs respect the architectural traditions established when the original illuminated sign was installed and operating.
- c. The proposed signs will strengthen the economy of the City and will protect and enhance the business community by providing for reasonable business signage that supports downtown businesses; this also helps to support and enhance property values.
- d. The proposed signage will help promote the private use of the subject property and encourage the prosperity of this well established local business.
- e. The color scheme proposed reflects the traditional and historical colors of the American flag, which are appropriate for this historical district.

Member Trudel indicated he wants to make sure that this does not set a precedent, and doesn't open others up to be able to get approval for blinking signs as these should not be allowed.

The Following Condition shall apply:

1. The applicant shall submit and obtain a building permit or mechanical permit to address the proper installation of the signs and the associated electrical work for the internal illumination.
2. The signs shall be professionally installed to ensure that it is correctly attached to the building so as to be safe for the general public.

All were in favor and the motion passed.

Jason Grevior stated that his son was just in Bozeman, Montana for school and the community there does not allow any chain stores or businesses and only mom and pop stores.

Old Business: None.

Other Business:

There was a discussion about the Lazy Daze Smoke Shop sign. Mr. Lewis stated he has spoken with the owner who he asked to come to the meeting tonight, but he has not shown up. He indicated he would like to know how the board would like him to pursue this. After a lengthy conversation by the board, it was indicated they would like Richard Lewis to send the owner a letter indicating that within thirty (30) days he must either bring the sign into compliance or apply to the Heritage Commission for a waiver.

The board indicated the owner was given fair and ample opportunity to rectify the issue and has done nothing. A sign permit was not applied for and if the applicant had taken the right course of action for his sign, then he would have learned that the sign was not in compliance prior to spending the money on the sign, so the fact that this could be a financial hardship is outweighed by him not going through the property channels. The board did add that if he removes the sign and redoes it and the sign meets the required color palette as set forth in the approved colors for the Historic District then he can amend the sign by just receiving the building permit will not have to come before the board.

Chair Feener noted that some members of the Franklin for a Lifetime Housing and Economic Development Committee were present to see the issues that come before the Heritage Commission; Scott Brown mentioned that they have started to look at signage issues in the downtown, with the goal of making future recommendations to the Planning Board on how signage ordinances could be modified to address concerns of the business community as well as the interests of the City.

Public Comment: None.

Adjournment

MOTION: Member Trudel moved and Member Lucas seconded to adjourn the October 26th, 2015 meeting of the Heritage Commission, at 6:50 p.m. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela Carey
Planning and Zoning Assistant