

MINUTES OF WESTBOROUGH DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
June 15, 2016

The Westborough Design Review Board held a regularly scheduled meeting in the Forbes Municipal Building, second floor, Suite 23. Members present for discussion were Debbie Schradieck, Mike Hally, Todd Alexander and Charlie Diamond. Member Cindy DuBose and Dan Martin were absent.

At 8:30 a.m. the Design Review Board met on a request to resurface the existing sign of Sachi Japanese Steakhouse Restaurant at 200 Union Avenue.

Mr. Gary Cunningham, Sunshine Signs said they plan to update the current signs with the new corporate logo for “Sachi Japanese Steakhouse”. They will reface the existing tenant panel signs with the new company logo and install 1 (30”) diameter blade sign with the new company logo to increase visibility. The proposed changes to the existing sign conform to approved standards for signs at Bay State Commons. The proposed Blade sign also conforms to the approved standards.

Member Mike Hally asked what the existing signs are over the restaurant. Are they vinyl?

Mr. Cunningham replied yes and they are going to remain the same.

Chairman Debbie Schradieck said the request is for the blade sign and other signage.

Mr. Cunningham said they are also updating the two tenant panels out near East Main Street.

Chairman Debbie Schradieck asked about lighting for the signs.

Mr. Cunningham replied the existing lighting is overhead gooseneck lighting. It is black to match the sign face. There are LED lights attached on the back of the letters within a box. We do not have much information on the lighting. There will be lighting over the Blade sign which is on the park side of the building.

Chairman Debbie Schradieck said she is in favor of the Blade sign. She wants people to see them. One thing we can do as a Board is going to the site to see what size signs would be appropriate.

Ms. Li said their problem is customers come in from Union Street and do not see their business. This is why they would like to blade sign there to help direct them.

Member Mike Hally asked are you okay with vinyl on this sign where it is not a dimensional sign but flat.

Mr. Cunningham said generally a sign of this size would not be symmetrical.

Chairman Debbie Schradieck said she is fine with the location of the blade sign. She likes the graphic on the sign better.

Discussion:

Chairman Debbie Schradieck commented in the past we have not been in favor of signage for businesses on the Park side of the building. People use Google and Map Quest and get directions to this restaurant directing them to go down Union Street looking for Sachi and can't find it because they are coming in from East Main Street down Union Street to the back of the building with no signage. She is suggesting we should revisit the issue of signage on the back side of the buildings facing the park.

The Town Planner agreed that we have not allowed it except where deliveries are. It is up to the Board. He is sure if you allow it then other businesses are going to request signs on the back of their buildings too.

Member Mike Hally said from a sign count, we are allowed to have this.

The Town Planner said yes, you are allowed to have two wall mounted signs. It will definitely change the way the development looks from the park by allowing signage on the back of the buildings.

Chairman Debbie Schradieck reviewed the Blade sign for Sachi. It is not dimensional lettering. They are proposing downward lighting over the blade sign.

Mr. Tin Htway, Building Commissioner said that he and the Town Planner have been working on signage in the DPOD area and the downtown district. He has no problem with signage on the back.

Chairman Debbie Schradieck agreed. She wants the businesses to succeed and be seen. This is a learning curve. Customers are having a hard time finding businesses because they come in on Union Street and because of this she is inclined to allow signage on the back of buildings.

Mr. Tin Htway remarked that under Section 4900, Subsection 4954, multiple signs may be allowed on a lot or building in a Mixed Use project by Special Permit from the Planning Board. The number, size and locations of signs shall be based on the nature, size, architecture and location of each building. We need to give businesses more latitude.

Chairman Debbie Schradieck agreed. The entrance from Union Street has no signage.

The Town Planner said the Special Permit for Bay State Commons allows only one pylon sign and it is already facing East Main Street. Union Street is not part of Bay State Commons but a town street. Bay State Commons starts where the end cap with the clock tower is. The apartments are not part of Bay State Commons.

Mr. Cunningham suggested placing another pylon sign at the Union Street entrance to Bay State Commons.

The Town Planner said this would probably require coming back to the Planning Board for a special permit.

Member Todd Alexander said this requires further investigation.

Chairman Debbie Schradieck asked the Board are they fine with the signs for Sachi.

Member Mike Hally said the small sign is fine. The Blade sign should be dimensional. He is happy with the way the light to go over the Blade sign looks but would like to see specifications on it.

Chairman Debbie Schradieck said the simplest solution is to allow signs on the back of the buildings.

Chairman Debbie Schradieck asked if Member Hally would prefer raised lettering on the Blade sign. If the letters of Sachi were dimensional, it would meet our standards.

Mr. Cunningham asked can the Board rule on this now or does he have to come back.

Member Hally responded the Board would need to have him come back because we need to see what is dimensional and what is not on the sign and we need details on the lighting.

Chairman Debbie Schradieck said we need to see the dimensions, material to be used, etc. She likes the design. We need a revised plan with dimensions and specifications on the lighting to be reviewed at another meeting.

The Design Review Board decided to visit the site to review the existing signage to try to match the existing sign materials of the other tenants.

The minutes of March 02, 2016, March 24, 2016 and April 19, 2016 were reviewed and endorsed.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 9:32 a.m.

The Town Planner discussed signage at Bay State Commons. The Town Planner said once you start allowing signage on the back of the buildings, all the businesses will be in for signage (Boston Ski & Tennis, maybe the Dry Cleaner). Design Review Board is in control of where you allow additional signage on Bay State Property. Once you get off the property on Union Street, a sign would not be permitted for good reason. You could end up with too much signage and therefore clutter. Note: A site walk to Bay State Commons to review signage will be scheduled).

Respectfully,

Sandy Spinella/Administrative Assistant

APPROVED:

----- Debbie Schradieck, Chairman	----- Cindy DuBose	----- Dan Martin
----- Mike Hally	----- Todd Alexander	----- Charlie Diamond