

From: Lois Laczko October 4, 2010 10:32:17 AM  
Subject: Design Review Board Minutes 09/14/2010 ADOPTED  
To: SimsburyCT\_DesignMin  
Cc:

ADOPTED

Design Review Board Minutes  
September 14, 2010  
Regular Meeting

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Dahlquist called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. The following members were present: Kevin Gray, Rita Bond, William Gardner, Mark Naccarato, Anthony Drapelick, Rick Schoenhardt, and John Carroll. Also present was Hiram Peck, Director of Planning.

II. APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATES

Chairman Dahlquist appointed Commissioner Bond to serve in the absence of Commissioner Stephenson and Commissioner Carroll to serve in the absence of Commissioner Stewart.

Commissioner Schoenhardt made a motion to move the item regarding the application of Jeffery Hoffman next on the agenda. Commissioner Drapelick seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

III. PRESENTATION(s), DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE

a. Application of Jeffrey Hoffman, Hoffman Enterprises, Owner, T. J. Donohue, Jr., Attorney, Agent, for Signage on property located at Hoffman Enterprises, Albany Turnpike and West Mountain Road. B-3 Zone

Commissioner Naccarato recused himself from the Board during this discussion.

Attorney Donohue stated that the last time the applicant was before this Board, they requested that the applicant come back with their sign engineer.

Mr. Lauretano, Sign Engineer, showed the Board members a PowerPoint presentation regarding the signage on the site. Regarding the regulatory signs, he stated that they have taken a common sense approach to the fire lane signs and stop signs on the property. Mr. Lauretano stated that he has personally walked the property and watched the flow of traffic to get a good understanding of the property. He showed a map to the Board members of the regulatory signs that are existing on the site. He stated that they are trying to stop people at strategic points and to get people to not park where they could cause a hazard. Mr. Lauretano stated that he is recommending some additional stop signs than what is currently there; this will help prevent chaos. He is also recommending 5 additional fire lane signs. These additional signs will prevent people from parking where they should not park.

Commissioner Schoenhardt questioned if there are any requirements regarding spacing between signs. Mr. Lauretano stated that they have personally watched people come and go on this property. He feels that it is essential in these areas to make sure the point is clear that people do not park in these areas. He stated that there is a lot of traffic and activity on this site.

Regarding free standing fire lane signs versus striping, Mr. Lauretano stated that in his experience, painting stripes is an adjunct to signage that is on posts. There are times during the year when striping is not sufficient all by itself from preventing people from parking in these areas.

Regarding directional signs, Mr. Lauretano showed the Board members a map depicting the existing directional signs on the property. He stated that they are reducing the clutter that is currently there regarding sandwich signs with the proposed directional signs. The primary directional signs have a clean design with crisp graphics. The letter height will be readable for approximately 40 seconds if people are driving at the speed limit. Each sign has two purposes; they lead people in as well as out.

Mr. Lauretano showed the Board members the replacement wayfinding signs that will guide people to the Best Buy delivery area. He stated that there is also a need for clear signage when pulling into the different car dealerships; there are a variety of brands of cars on this site. He stated that he is also recommending triangular light post signs to direct people to the new or used cars at each dealership. He also showed the Board members the replacement Hoffman Auto Body sign.

Mr. Lauretano stated that there is 371.1 square feet of signage in the directional sign inventory. This proposed signage increases this total to 393.34 square feet, for a net increase of 22.04 square feet.

Chairman Dahlquist questioned if all of the signs could be put onto one map. Mr. Lauretano stated that it would be too cluttered and confusing to put everything on one map.

Commissioner Bond stated that she has compared the signage on this site to the mall across the street. She stated that it seems that there are far fewer signs at the mall. The Hoffman site is not a very large area; the buildings are very well labeled. She stated her concerns with too many signs. She feels that this may be more confusing to people.

Attorney Donohue stated that this site has more intensity and action than any other site in Simsbury. There are ten separate businesses on it; three separate aspects to the car dealerships and two separate aspects of Best Buy.

Chairman Dahlquist stated that he has been at this site and has never gotten lost. He feels that there is too much duplication of signage on the site. Where someone needs to go, he feels, is clear without all the signs. He also feels that there are too many fire lane signs; there is too much clutter of signage on the site. He feels this is a safety issue; there is too much information to be consumed, read and understood by people. He feels the replacement wayfinding signs and triangular signs are fitting for this site. The other signage is duplicated and redundant.

Mr. Lauretano stated that the use of this site is different than the shopping mall across the street. Regarding the regulatory signs and the quantity of them, he stated that they also do signage for The Hartford. That site has a great deal of signage for their own employees. He stated that they took a professional approach and carefully calculated the number of signs that have been recommended for the Hoffman site. He has taken a safety first approach to this signage.

Commissioner Gardner stated that there are duplicated signs, although this business feels that all of these signs are needed. He feels that although there may be too many signs, the business owner will be stuck with them.

Commissioner Schoenhardt stated that this Board's responsibility is to comment. If the proposed signs are clean and readable, they should make comments only on that. In terms of the quantity of signage and safety, he stated that he does not believe this Board should be involved with those issues.

Commissioner Drapelick stated that the current sandwich boards on this site are an eyesore. These proposed signs will get rid of that clutter.

From a graphic standpoint, Chairman Dahlquist stated that there are no major issues. He questioned if any of the signs would be lit. Mr. Lauretano stated that they are not proposing any lit signs. Chairman Dahlquist stated that he feels the stop sign placements are legitimate.

Commissioner Carroll questioned if the applicant has done an internal traffic study. Mr. Lauretano stated that no traffic study has been done, although he has spent a great deal of time walking the site and has watched the flow of traffic during different times of the day. Attorney Donohue stated that Fuss and O'Neill, at the time the primary application was approved, did a traffic study.

Commissioner Carroll questioned if Hoffman has had any significant problems with accidents on this site. An employee of Hoffman stated no, not to her knowledge. Mr. Lauretano stated that there is the potential for accidents without the appropriate signage on this site.

Chairman Dahlquist stated that the Board could send a recommendation to the Zoning Commission approving this application as presented; the Board can make a recommendation with modifications and identify the signs that are repetitive and redundant; or the Board can make a recommendation to study this further in order to reduce the number of signs.

Mr. Peck stated that he will talk to the applicant, Police Department and Fire Marshal prior to going to the Zoning Commission. If the Police or Fire Marshal has any suggestions regarding modifications, this can be discussed. Attorney Donohue stated that this would be acceptable to the applicant.

Commissioner Drapelick made the motion that, regarding the application of Jeffrey Hoffman, Hoffman Enterprises, Owner, T. J. Donohue, Jr., Attorney, Agent, for Signage on property located at Hoffman Enterprises, Albany Turnpike and West Mountain Road, the following referral be made to the Zoning Commission: the Design Review Board finds this application substantially consistent with the intent and principles of the Guidelines for Community Design and recommends approval as presented on sign package, dated 9/14/2010. Commissioner Schoenhardt seconded the motion. Commissioners Carroll, Drapelick, Schoenhardt and Gardner voted in favor of the motion. Commissioners Bond, Gray and Dahlquist voted in opposition of the motion. The motion passed 4-3.

Commissioner Naccarato returned to the Commission.

b. Application of Thomas R. Evans, Owner, Kratzert, Jones & Associates, Agent, for a Site Plan Approval for a proposed Dunkin Donuts on property located at 138 & 142 Hopmeadow Street. B-1 Zone (continued from

meeting of 7/27/2010)

Mr. Fanning stated that they met with this Board back in July. Since that meeting, they have made several modifications to the Site Plan, which include mostly landscaping and building design changes.

Mr. Quirk stated that they have already received approval from the Conservation Commission. Regarding the changes that have been made to the Site Plan, Mr. Quirk stated that the impervious cover has been reduced, although they have maintained the number of parking spaces. They reduced the impervious coverage through the aisle width and configuration. He stated that the impervious coverage is down from 53% to 48%. They will be exploring the option of an impervious walkway for the other tenant next to this building if possible. He stated that the rain gardens have been increased; the southerly and easterly rain gardens have approximately doubled in size. The landscaping plan has been completely changed; they will use native species with more variety than what was shown on the original plan. He stated that there will also be additional landscaping up against the building, which was also not shown on the original plan.

Mr. Quirk stated that they have submitted a lighting plan, which has been revised. They have reduced the wattage from 400 to 250 watts for the fixtures and they have also reduced the mounting height to 20 feet.

Regarding the building design changes, Mr. Fanning stated that they have moved the signage to the side of the building facing the driveway. Along this same elevation, they have put in windows to break up the expanse of the siding. He showed the Board members the color scheme of the building materials. He stated that the color scheme is consistent with the area. Regarding the goose neck lighting, they have reduced this to 12 lights. The cupola on the top has been eliminated. The overall height of the building has also been reduced.

Regarding the signage, Mr. Quirk stated that they are proposing a monument sign that will be externally illuminated, which will be located adjacent to the entrance. This signage is to help people locate the vehicular entrance to the site.

Commissioner Schoenhardt stated that he feels the size of sign is acceptable and the graphics on the sign is their corporate style. He stated that he likes the simplicity of the sign.

In response to a question by Commissioner Naccarato, Mr. Fanning stated that this sign will be a painted sign on wood.

Commissioner Gray stated that he feels the signage fits well with this building. Commissioner Carroll stated that if the sign was a wood grain

plastic, this would be acceptable to him rather than a painted sign on wood that needs to be maintained. Chairman Dahlquist suggested that the applicant eliminate the free standing sign.

Regarding the site design, Chairman Dahlquist questioned if the drive-thru was a requirement. Mr. Fanning stated that this site would not work without a drive-thru.

Commissioner Naccarato stated that he feels the applicant has made improvements. He commented that the radius for the drive-thru seems too small. Mr. Quirk stated that there is sufficient width. Commissioner Naccarato questioned if there would be any landscaping between the building and the drive-thru. Mr. Quirk stated that there will be a lawn area; the menu board will be in this area also. The menu board, which is internally lit, will not be seen from Route 10.

Commissioner Bond commended the applicant for using native plantings. She suggested that they also plant perennials to add color; daylilies may be a good choice.

Chairman Dahlquist questioned if a truck could get to the location of the dumpster. Mr. Quirk stated that they are comfortable with a truck getting to the dumpster. Also, the dumpster gets emptied only at certain times of the day.

Regarding the architecture, Commission Schoenhardt stated that he is please with the changes that the applicant has made.

Commissioner Naccarato stated that there are still a lot of lights on the building. Also, the applicant is putting lighting on top of the brightest color on the building. He feels this dominates the entire façade and draws a lot of attention to itself. He would like to see the awnings be reduced as well as the lighting.

Mr. Fanning stated that the lighting is for safety purposes and security for the employees as well as the patrons. He is willing to use other lighting as long as safety is not compromised. Commissioner Carroll suggested that the applicant use lighting on the orange awnings that has no glare. He suggested using a soft lighting.

Chairman Dahlquist stated that, from his standpoint, this project is introducing another corporate signature into an area that does not currently have anything of this sort. He will be voting against this project. He stated that this may be the first of many projects to happen in this area and this project will set the course for future developments. He stated that he also opposes the site design. He believes there is too

much asphalt and it is too visible from the road.

Commissioner Schoenhardt made the motion that, regarding the application of Thomas R. Evans, Owner, Kratzert, Jones & Associates, Agent, for a Site Plan Approval for a proposed Dunkin Donuts on property located at 138 & 142 Hopmeadow Street, the following referral be made to the Zoning Commission: the Design Review Board finds this application generally consistent with the Guidelines for Community Design and recommends approval as presented on the drawings submitted, dated 8/10/2010, revised 8/31/2010. Commissioner Drapelick seconded the motion. Commissioners Carroll, Drapelick, Schoenhardt Gray, Bond and Gardner voted in favor of the motion. Commissioners Dahlquist and Naccarato voted in opposition of the motion. The motion passed 6-2.

c. Application of Mary Glassman, First Selectman, Town of Simsbury, Owner, Dale H. Cutler, Jr., Kenyon & Cutler, Agent, for Signage on property located at the Simsbury Town Library, 725 Hopmeadow Street. SCZ Zone

Mr. Cutler stated that they are proposing a replacement sign for the library. The existing sign is in the State right-of-way. He stated that they were led to believe that the sign could be replaced in that same location, although they have decided to move the location of the replacement sign. He stated that the new location will be behind the property line. He showed the Board members pictures of the site from the northerly and southerly directions.

Mr. Cutler stated that there will be a raised Brownstone planter below the sign. They may have seasonal plantings in this planter that volunteers will be maintaining. Outside of the Brownstone base will be a bermed area where they are proposing low evergreen plants. The current sign has two flood lights; they will relocate these lights to the new sign.

Commissioner Naccarato questioned how the planter around the sign relates to the library. Mr. Cutler stated that the current sign has the same brownstone. The idea is to have the same containment of plantings as the existing sign.

Commissioner Carroll made the motion that, regarding the application of Mary Glassman, First Selectman, Town of Simsbury, Owner, Dale H. Cutler, Jr., Kenyon & Cutler, Agent, for Signage on property located at the Simsbury Town Library, 725 Hopmeadow Street, the following referral be made to the Zoning Commission: the Design Review Board finds this application generally consistent with the Guidelines for Community Design and recommends approval as presented on the drawings submitted, dated 9/14/2010. Commissioner Gray seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

IV. DISCUSSION

Town Center Code Status

There was no discussion.

V. CORRESPONDENCE

There were none.

VI. STAFF REPORTS

There were none.

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of July 13, 2010, July 27, 2010, and August 10, 2010 meetings

This item was tabled until the next regularly scheduled meeting.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Gray made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 p.m.  
Commissioner Gardner seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.