

DESIGN REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE

January 7, 2021

Remote meeting by Live Internet Video Stream and Telephone

Members Present: Carol Bramley and alternate member William Jones. Chairman J. Savage arrived at 9:25 and alternate Danielle Restivo arrived at 9:40.

Absent: Patricia McTague. W. Jones was appointed regular member.

Also present: Dr. Dennis Tobin; Land Use Administrator, First Selectwoman Denise Raap, Zoom meeting host, Michael DiStasi, Materia Ristorante, Matthew Darling and James Cassidy, N.E.R.P.

Call to order: 9:16 a.m.

1. DiStasi (Materia Ristorante) – 637 Bantam Rd. – Signage.

Signage for the former La Cupola restaurant was presented by Michael DiStasi, the new owner. The posts, lighting, location and size will be unchanged from the existing sign.

After review of the proposed sign, C. Bramley moved and W. Jones seconded a favorable recommendation for the sign as presented. C. Bramley and W. Jones voted in the affirmative.

2. N.E.R.P. (Tractor Supply Co.) – Torrington Rd. (Map 145/021/010) – New (23,097 sf) Tractor Supply retail building and signage.

J. Cassidy of Hallisey, Pearson & Cassidy, engineer for the project, gave an overview of the lighting and landscaping modifications made since the 12/3/20 meeting. Cut sheets for the three types of fixtures to be used and the Merchney Greenhouse Catalog detailing the materials proposed for the structures over the outdoor display as shown on site plan LS-1.0 and LS-1.1 revised December 18, 2020.

Lighting fixtures:

D- Series Size 1 LED Wall Luminaire, down light fixtures placed on the Tractor Supply façade; High Light ornamental fixture with down light canopy in Tractor Supply logo red across the front façade;

High Resolution RSX1 LED, parking lot pole down lights on 4-inch square steel posts with 24" round and 30" tall pre-cast concrete bases, total height 20 feet.

One double headed, fixture has been shifted to the east along the Optimum property line to the island where the parking meets the corner of the accessway increasing light spillage to between 3.9 and 2.9 foot candles at the front of the store;

Second, a quad fixture, is shifted from the northwest corner of the parking area to the inside corner adjacent to the outdoor display area;

Pole lights along east side of the common driveway are single head with house shields as well as the lights to the east of the bank building property to prevent light spillage onto adjacent lots.

Landscaping:

An additional landscape island with canopy tree has been added to the west end of the Tractor Supply parking area to meet the zoning requirement there be an intermediate island for every 15 or fewer parking spaces;

There are 118 spaces, requiring 12 canopy trees, Princeton Elms and Sugar Maples are the proposed species;

A row of Canyon Firs and Arbovitae evergreens are proposed for the east and south property borders of the bank property;

No landscape material is proposed for the west border of the bank building adjacent to Peaches and Cream due to the existing 7 to 8 foot high retaining wall located on the property line with some tall evergreen trees;

The bank property is proposed to have an increase in grade of 3-4 feet.

Greenhouse Structures:

The plant yard will be covered with a pre-manufactured Merchney Greenhouse structure, aluminum framing with polycarbonate roof panels only, sides open;

Outdoor display/pickup area, framed with the same greenhouse framing material, with polycarbonate panels covering the gabled sections only as shown in submitted photographs.

J. Savage noted he joined the meeting at 9:25 and resumed his seat as Chairman and regular committee member. D. Restivo returned to alternate member.

Tractor Supply Building Signage:

There was discussion as to whether the zoning regulations limit the height of a building sign to 18 feet as noted by Atty. Byrne and the Commission's consultant, W. Walter, Alfred Benesch & Company, in their memos to P&Z at the December 21st meeting. Using Google Earth to look at the signs on the new Stop & Shop building as well as the Walgreens and Ocean State building signs, it was felt the intent of G.l.d. of the Zoning Regulations stating "no sign attached to a building shall project higher than 15 feet as measured from the highest point of the sign to the average level of the outside ground ..." has been interpreted to refer to a sign hung from a bracket perpendicular to a building (such as the hanging signs in the Borough), not the height of a sign attached to the face of a building.

The existing and recently approved signs mentioned and reviewed above are more than 15 feet off grade indicating the P&Z Commission has consistently interpreted the regulation to apply to bracketed hung signs, not wall mounted signs. Dr. Tobin stated he had reviewed the regulations

prior to the revisions implemented in January, 2019 and noted the language was unchanged. It was stated clarification of the statement in G.I.d. needs to be reviewed and possibly revised to be clearer in intent by defining “projecting” to eliminate future confusion with interpretation.

W. Jones moved a favorable recommendation for the site plan as submitted (including additional submissions for the 1/7/21 DRAC meeting), including lighting, landscaping and signage. The motion was seconded by J. Savage, with W. Jones, C. Bramley and J. Savage voting in the affirmative.

3. N.E.R.P. (Tractor Supply Co.) – Torrington Rd. (Map 145/021/010) – Signage – directory/identification at entrance.

The directory sign proposed location is on the east side of the driveway just beyond the substantial State highway take line. The sign is supported by two steel columns painted white to a height of 15 ft. with a gabled pediment with lighting fixtures extending 3 feet above the columns. The Tractor Supply sign is 52 sq. ft. and is made of the same materials as the sign on the Tractor Supply building. A space of 45.5 sq. ft. has been allocated to the future tenant of the second building on the property for a total area of 97.5 sq. ft. As shown, the overall height of the directory sign is 18 feet. J. Cassidy stated he read the regulation to mean the sign could be no more than 15 feet, excluding the architectural element in the maximum height. He stated the reason for the added height was to allow traffic on 202 to be able to see the sign past the Optimum sign which is 8 foot high and located opposite the proposed sign on the west side of the driveway.

There was discussion as to the lack of flexibility in the zoning regulations to allow the additional 3 feet in height. W. Jones suggested the sign be scaled down to 15 feet while still including the gabled architectural upper portion. Applicant M. Darling, N.E.R.P., noted the lowering of the entire sign to 15 feet would cause any signage for a future tenant in the second building to be hidden behind the Optimum sign. W. Jones suggested the architectural element be removed and it was suggested the 4-inch gray band at the top of the Tractor Supply sign be replaced with a red band matching the Tractor Supply logo color scheme. It was suggested it would be ideal if all the signs for businesses on the accessway were located on the one directory sign. M. Darling agreed that if the opportunity were to arise in the future to speak with representatives of Optimum, he would be willing to work with them to include their sign on the directory sign.

C. Bramley moved a favorable recommendation for the directory sign as presented with a maximum height no more than 15 feet, the gabled feature be removed and with a red 4-inch band be placed to cap the top of the sign. The motion was seconded by W. Jones with C. Bramley, W. Jones and J. Savage voting in the affirmative.

4. Approval of Minutes – December 3, 2020

D. Restivo questioned whether there had been a resolution to the discrepancy in the heights of the signs at 499 Bantam Road as approved at the last meeting. It was noted the Sparkle and Shine sign was not yet installed and Dennis will look into the matter.

C. Bramley moved the minutes with the following corrections: page 2, first full paragraph line 6 to read “No signage is proposed for fencing or any additional locations other than what is shown on the plans”; page 2, 3rd paragraph 12/7/21 to read 1/7/21. Seconded by J. Savage, voting in the affirmative C. Bramley, J. Savage and W. Jones.

C. Bramley moved to adjourn at 10:39 a.m., seconded W. Jones with C. Bramley, J. Savage and W. Jones voting in the affirmative.

Design Review Advisory Committee

Date