



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK
Architectural Review Board

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Executive Board
Emily Grochowski, Chairman
Andre Laferriere, Vice Chairman
Edward Armstrong
Donna Leake
Kathryn Toolan

Alternate Members
Tina Rupp
Kate Caldarella

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
HYBRID MEETING

Monday, March 11, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.
Town Hall, 2nd Floor Conference Room
302 Main Street, Old Saybrook

I. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Roll Call

The Chair E. Grochowski called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Members Present – E. Grochowski, A. Laferriere, D. Leake, T. Rupp (seated).

Members Absent – K. Toolan, E. Armstrong, K. Caldarella

Staff – Carolina Maharbiz, Recording Clerk

B. Minutes - This agenda item was heard at the end of the meeting.

II. SIGN APPLICATIONS

A. “Thimble Island Brewing Company” Application for Certificate of Zoning Compliance for Signs

75 Main Street, Map 37/Lot 36, Central Business B-1 District

Applicant: Justin Gargano

Owner: Anthony Izzo

Justin Gargano presented. He explained that the existing sign will be used. It will be painted over with an overlay of the company logo and with the existing gooseneck lights. On the freestanding sign, the logo will be replaced on the same panel. E. Grochowski suggested that on the small sign, if “Thimble Island” is placed on two separate lines, the text can be bigger.

MOTION to approve “Thimble Island Brewing Company” Application as presented with the recommendation that the words “Thimble Island” on the small sign be stacked on top of each other to expand it. **MADE:** A. Laferriere; **SECONDED:** D. Leake; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** E. Grochowski, A. Laferriere, D. Leake, T. Rupp; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None. **APPROVED:** 4-0-0.

B. “Goodwill Stores” Application for Certificate of Zoning Compliance for Signs

707 Boston Post Road, Map 36/Lot 101, Shopping Center Business B-2 District

Applicant: Chris Dubord, One Look Sign Co. Owner: DF Shoreline, LLC

Chris Dubord presented. He explained that H&R Block will be moving to the front where Webster Bank was located and Goodwill will be moving into the space currently occupied by H&R Block. E. Grochowski stated that the Board likes to see a box around the sign to show the dimensions. Mr. Dubord stated that the measurements are for a box around the sign. He also stated that the sign is smaller than what is currently there because the regulations are different. Board members discussed the two freestanding signs, including the color limit, and agreed that H&R Block cannot be on both freestanding signs. Mr. Dubord stated that the building sign and freestanding signs will be internally illuminated. A. Laferriere stated that landscaping for the freestanding sign was discussed at a prior meeting and E. Grochowski noted that landscaping around the sign was not included in the application. Board members agreed with continuing the application and E. Grochowski stated that the application should include: (1) a notation on the drawing to show landscaping; (2) H&R Block removed from the freestanding sign; (3) a notation that no other signs (such as for donations, donation bins, or for windows) are part of the application or include any additional signs on the application.

MOTION to continue “**Goodwill Stores**” Application to the next meeting. **MADE:** E. Grochowski; **SECONDED:** A. Laferriere; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** E. Grochowski, A. Laferriere, D. Leake, T. Rupp; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None. **APPROVED:** 4-0-0.

- C. “**H&R Block**” Application for Certificate of Zoning Compliance for Signs
707 Boston Post Road, Map 36/Lot 101, Shopping Center Business B-2 District
Applicant: Chris Dubord, One Look Sign Co. Owner: DF Shoreline, LLC

Chris Dubord presented and stated that there will not be a wall sign, just a freestanding sign. Board members discussed the rectangular piece on the bottom of the freestanding sign and whether it is possible to remove it. A. Laferriere suggested removing it, but if it cannot be removed then to paint it the same color as the legs. Board members also discussed having two freestanding signs and T. Rupp suggested adding the street numbers to each sign to distinguish them. Board members agreed to continue the application and asked that H&R Block be removed from the freestanding sign with the other businesses, that the application indicate whether the bottom piece will be taken off or painted, include a notation of landscaping, and that the applicant indicate whether any other signs will be part of the application.

MOTION to continue “**H&R Block**” Application to the next meeting. **MADE:** A. Laferriere; **SECONDED:** D. Leake; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** E. Grochowski, A. Laferriere, D. Leake, T. Rupp; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None. **APPROVED:** 4-0-0.

- D. “**Ameriprise Financial**” Application for Certificate of Zoning Compliance for Signs
191 Main Street, Map 37/Lot 2, Central Business B-1 District
Applicant: Chris Dubord, One Look Sign Co. Owner: One Ninety One Main, LLC

Chris Dubord presented and stated that the applicant will be reusing the existing panel, taking the vinyl off and putting the Ameriprise logo on. On the directory sign, will be taking the existing panel and repurposing with the new logo. D. Leake asked if there is a gap in the freestanding sign and noted that there is no landscaping.

MOTION to recommend approval of **“Ameriprise Financial”** Application with the following additional recommendations: (1) that the posts are painted white; (2) that some plantings are added in the grass area; and (3) that the blank slats are removed or gathered together so there is no gap. **MADE:** E. Grochowski; **SECONDED:** A. Laferriere; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** E. Grochowski, A. Laferriere, D. Leake, T. Rupp; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None. **APPROVED:** 4-0-0.

- E. **“Waterview Landscaping”** Application for Certificate of Zoning Compliance for Signs
5 Jade Court, Map 42/Lot 9-2, Gateway Business B-4 District
Applicant/Owner Kenneth Reid

Kenneth Reid was present and answered questions. E. Grochowski stated that the sign is not compliant with the regulations because taking a sign that is not internally illuminated and making it internally illuminated and bigger. The current sign is already too tall and the proposed sign is bigger than the size that is allowed for internally illuminated signs. Mr. Reid asked if the sign remains downlit whether it can remain in its current configuration. E. Grochowski stated that ARB does not allow applicants to increase the size of nonconforming signs and also noted that the measurements shown on the application are incorrect. Board members discussed the color allowance for the freestanding sign. E. Grochowski further stated that the options are to keep the nonconforming sign and only change the panels within the area where they currently are located or, if replacing the sign, then need to meet the regulations, including conforming on the height and area for internally illuminated signs.

MOTION to continue **“Waterview Landscaping”** Application to the next meeting. **MADE:** E. Grochowski; **SECONDED:** A. Laferriere; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** E. Grochowski, A. Laferriere, D. Leake, T. Rupp; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None. **APPROVED:** 4-0-0.

III. REFERRAL

- A. **“A-1 Home Improvement” Application for Special Exception Use** for a 3,107 s.f.
Office for Home Improvement Sales/Training
813 Boston Post Road, Assessor’s Map 36, Lot 5, Business B-2 District, Pedestrian Node
Applicant: Zachary Ziegler, Agent: Joe Wren, P.E.
ACTION: Review and report to ZC for their 3/18/2024 public hearing

Joe Wren and Zachary Ziegler were present. Mr. Wren reviewed the aerial and site plan. He explained that there is currently no landscaping and reviewed where landscaping will be added, including at the entrance. There will be no changes to the existing building. The proposed changes will make the site more conforming. Mr. Wren further stated that the freestanding sign is currently in the DOT right-of-way. That sign will be removed and the new sign will be moved. Mr. Wren also explained that the applicant agreed with the adjacent property owner to share the cost of planting on the left side in order to have an island separating the two properties. He showed images of the freestanding internally illuminated sign with dimensions and discussed the plantings at the base. He also confirmed that there will be no site lighting. Mr. Ziegler confirmed that he will not add a building sign at this time. Board members

discussed adding an L-shaped 8-foot fence panel at the rear, perpendicular to the building, to block the mechanicals, to which Mr. Ziegler agreed.

MOTION to recommend approval of “A-1 Home Improvement” Application as presented. **MADE:** D. Leake; **SECONDED:** A. Laferriere; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** E. Grochowski, A. Laferriere, D. Leake, T. Rupp; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None. **APPROVED:** 4-0-0.

- B. **“Van Wilgen’s Garden Center” Application for Special Exception Use (Updated Site Plan)** for a garden center development with two seasonal greenhouses, shed/outdoor display area and parking on 18,362 s.f. property at 1560 Boston Post Road, Map 26/Lot 30, Gateway Business B-4 District, Coastal Area Management Zone.

ACTION: Review and report to ZC for their 3/18/2024 public hearing

Attorney Edward Cassella presented and Brian Van Wilgens answered questions. Mr. Cassella explained the redesign after going before the ZBA due to the property owners on Orchard Lane not wanting a driveway. The redesign has only one entry and exit on Route 1, with the parking and building flipped from what was previously proposed. The redesign allows for a 10-ft. buffer all the way around. Mr. Cassella discussed the landscaping and stated that the redesign meets all of ARB’s conditions from the prior application. He further stated that the only thing that still needs to be changed is to continue the line of landscaping where the driveway had previously been proposed, which includes sweetgum trees and grasses. The sign will be in the same spot.

MOTION to recommend approval of the updated “Van Wilgen’s Garden Center” Site Plan with the understanding that the applicant will continue the sweet gum and grasses along the Orchard Lane side of the property. **MADE:** E. Grochowski; **SECONDED:** D. Leake; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** E. Grochowski, A. Laferriere, D. Leake, T. Rupp; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None. **APPROVED:** 4-0-0.

Discussion of Agenda Item I.B. Minutes that was moved to the end of meeting:

MOTION to approve the Minutes of February 26, 2024, as amended. **MADE:** A. Laferriere; **SECONDED:** E. Grochowski; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** E. Grochowski, A. Laferriere, D. Leake, T. Rupp; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None. **APPROVED:** 4-0-0.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to adjourn the meeting of March 11, 2023 at 8:22 p.m. to the next regular meeting scheduled for Monday, March 25, 2024, at 7:00 p.m., Town Hall, 2nd Floor Conference Room. **MADE:** E. Grochowski; **SECONDED:** D. Leake; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** E. Grochowski, A. Laferriere, D. Leake, T. Rupp; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None. **APPROVED:** 4-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Carolina Maharbiz, Recording Clerk