



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Urban Design Commission

MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the City of Newton Urban Design Commission (UDC) was held virtually on Wednesday, **December 8th**, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86005462139>

Ruthanne Fuller,
Mayor

The Chair, Michael Kaufman, called the meeting to order at 7:02 P.M.

Barney Heath,
Director
Planning & Development

Shubee Sikka,
Urban Designer
Planning & Development

Members
Michael Kaufman, Chair
Jim Doolin, Vice Chair
John Downie
Robert Linsky
Carol Todreas
William Winkler
Visda Saeyan

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I. Roll Call

Those present were Michael Kaufman (Chair), Jim Doolin (Vice Chair), John Downie, Bill Winkler, Robert Linsky, and Carol Todreas. Shubee Sikka, Urban Designer, was also present.

II. Regular Agenda

Sign Permits

1. 1126 Beacon Street – Skin Tight Medspa

The applicant was not present at the meeting to answer Commission's questions, so the application was moved to the next meeting.

2. 7 West Street – Café Martin West Street

Applicant: Adam Knauer, SRP Sign

Proposed Sign:

- One wall mounted principal sign, externally illuminated, with approximately 20 sq. ft. of sign area on the eastern façade facing West Street.

Discussion:

- Staff informed the Commission about the revised sign the applicant submitted before the meeting. The revised sign was 20 sq. ft and compliant with the zoning ordinance, hence staff recommended it for approval.

MOTION: Mr. Kaufman made a motion to approve the sign as resubmitted. Mr. Linsky seconded the motion, and none opposed. All the members present voted, with a 6-0 vote, Michael Kaufman, Jim Doolin, John Downie, Robert Linsky, Carol Todreas, and William Winkler in favor and none opposed.

4. 1210-1230 Washington Street – Free-standing sign

Proposed Signs:

- One free-standing principal sign, internally illuminated, with approximately 35 sq. ft. of sign area facing Washington Street.

5. 1210-1230 Washington Street – Panera Support Center

Proposed Signs:

- One wall mounted secondary sign, internally illuminated, with approximately 49 sq. ft. of sign area on the southern façade facing the Massachusetts Turnpike.
- One wall mounted secondary sign, non-illuminated, with approximately 6 sq. ft. of sign area on the northern façade facing Washington Street.
- One wall mounted secondary sign, non-illuminated, with approximately 8 sq. ft. of sign area on the western façade facing the neighboring property.

6. 1210-1230 Washington Street – The Rockport Group

Proposed Signs:

- One wall mounted secondary sign, non-illuminated, with approximately 6 sq. ft. of sign area on the northern façade facing Washington Street.
- One wall mounted secondary sign, non-illuminated, with approximately 8 sq. ft. of sign area on the western façade facing the neighboring property.

Discussion:

- Staff summarized the above signs (items #4, 5, and 6) and relief needed for all the signs.
- Mr. Doolin recommended that the Commission could recommend the smaller secondary signs for approval to ISD and the recommendation/opinion for the two wall mounted signs facing Mass. Pike. could be made to the City Council as part of the Special Permit process.
- Mr. Kaufman recommended that this is a package and UDC would like to make a recommendation to the City Council for the entire package since all the signs are connected and it also includes a sign that will be removed.
- Mr. Kaufman commented that he does not have any problem with the smaller secondary signs and free-standing sign.
- Mr. Kaufman commented that both the wall mounted signs facing Mass. Turnpike shouldn't be there because they serve as billboard signs and it doesn't help anybody to get to the business since you cannot access the business from the Pike. He also commented that he stands by the earlier discussions that UDC had about signs facing Mass. Turnpike (not in favor). Mr. Winkler agreed.
- Mr. Doolin complimented the applicant for providing the visuals for the free-standing sign, they were very helpful.

Recommendations:

- Recommend the 4 secondary signs for approval (6 and 8 sq. ft. each for Panera and Rockport).

- Recommend the free-standing sign for approval. This location has unique circumstances because of the deep setback of the entrances and hence the free-standing sign should not be a precedent for other buildings on Washington Street.
- UDC does not recommend 2 wall mounted signs facing Mass. Turnpike for approval because they don't belong there. Signs on the Turnpike should not be allowed because UDC's point of view is that they don't comply with the ordinance. The ordinance says that it has to be either a street or a drive and unless you are driving a train, you cannot access the building from there. There is no direct access to the businesses from Mass. Turnpike.
- Removal of 41 sq. ft. sign

MOTION: Mr. Kaufman made a motion to make the above recommendations to the City Council. All the members present voted, with a 6-0 vote, Michael Kaufman, Jim Doolin, John Downie, Robert Linsky, Carol Todreas, and William Winkler in favor and none opposed.

3. 335 Walnut Street – Los Amigos Taqueria

Proposed Signs:

- One wall mounted split principal sign, internally illuminated, with approximately 36 sq. ft. of sign area on the southeastern façade at the corner of Walnut Street and Highland Avenue.
- One perpendicular split principal sign, internally illuminated, with approximately 4 sq. ft. of sign area on the eastern façade perpendicular to Walnut Street.

MOTION: Mr. Winkler made a motion to approve the signs as submitted at 335 Walnut Street – Los Amigos Taqueria. Mr. Linsky seconded the motion, and none opposed. All the members present voted, with a 6-0 vote, Michael Kaufman, Jim Doolin, John Downie, Robert Linsky, Carol Todreas, and William Winkler in favor and none opposed.

Design Consistency Review

1. 355 & 399 Grove Street – Riverside Design Consistency Review Process

Applicant/Representative:

David Roache, Mark Development

Summary:

As per the Council Order, all buildings, other than the Parking Garage, shall undergo a two- or three-step process set forth in Conditions #9 through 13 for review of each building to ensure the Project is constructed in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance, the Amended and Restated Special Permit/Site Plan Approval, and the Design Guidelines.

1. As per Condition #9 of the Special Permit, "Submission and Review of Schematic Plans"
 - a. At the schematic design stage, the Petitioner shall file the following with the Director of Planning and Development and its consultants, the City of Newton's Urban Design Commission (the "UDC"), and the Liaison Committee:
 - i. Individual building plans consisting of exterior renderings,

- preliminary building elevations, building footprints, and representative wall sections showing consistency with the Special Permit Plan Set and the Design Guidelines (the "Schematic Plans"); and*
- ii. a signed certificate from the Petitioner's architect and/or civil engineer certifying that the Schematic Plans are consistent with the Special Permit Plan Set.*
- b. Within thirty (30) days of receipt of a complete submission of the materials set forth in Condition #9(a), the Director of Planning and Development will review and provide an opinion as to whether the Schematic Plans are in full compliance with the Special Permit Plan Set and consistent with the Design Guidelines. If the Director of Planning and Development's review requires the input or assistance from a peer review consultant, the Petitioner shall pay the reasonable fees for such peer review. The Director of Planning and Development's opinion shall be submitted in writing to the Petitioner, the Commissioner of Inspectional Services, the City Council, and the Liaison Committee. If it is the Director's opinion that the Schematic Plans are not compliant with the Special Permit Plan Set or inconsistent with the Design Guidelines, such inconsistencies shall be expressly identified.*
- c. Within thirty (30) days of receipt of a complete submission of the materials set forth in Condition #9(a) (and concurrent with the review of the Director of Planning and Development), the UDC, after review of such submission at a public meeting, will provide an opinion as to whether the Schematic Plans are in full compliance with the Special Permit Plan Set and consistent with the Design Guidelines. The Petitioner shall provide the Liaison Committee and the Ward 4 City Councilors with notice of the date of the UDC's public meeting at least 14 days in advance and the UDC should make all efforts to take public comment. The UDC's opinion shall be submitted in writing to the Petitioner, the Commissioner of Inspectional Services, the City Council, and the Liaison Committee. If it is the UDC's opinion that the Schematic Plans are inconsistent with either the Special Permit Plan Set or the Design Guidelines, such inconsistencies shall be expressly identified.*
- d. Upon receipt of the written consistency opinions referenced in Condition #9(b) and (c) above, the Petitioner may proceed to the design development stage. If either the UDC or the Director of Planning issues an opinion that the Schematic Plans are inconsistent with either the Zoning Ordinance, the Special Permit Plan Set, or the Design Guidelines, the Petitioner must submit revised Schematic Plans in accordance with Condition #9(a)."*

The applicant is expected to submit for Review of Schematic Plans in January. The applicant is planning to group the buildings into the following groups:

- Group 1 will be buildings 1-4

- Group 2 will be buildings 7-10

The applicant has indicated the following timelines:

- 1/5/22 – Schematic design submission for 30-day review for group 1
- 1/19/22 – Schematic design submission for 30-day review for group 2
- Spring 2022 – Design development submission for 45-day review for group 1

Presentation & Discussion:

The applicant summarized the submission dates and meeting dates as mentioned above. The applicant also mentioned that they are planning to come back to UDC for Design Development review in early Spring 2022.

III. Old/New Business

1. Meeting minutes

Staff informed the Commission that the meeting minutes are still in progress and not ready for review.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Linsky made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Downie seconded and there was general agreement among the members.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Shubee Sikka

Approved on January 12, 2022