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# CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

## Urban Design Commission

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### MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the City of Newton Urban Design Commission (UDC) was held virtually on Wednesday, **December 14, 2022** at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84106255841>

Ruthanne Fuller,  
Mayor

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

Barney Heath,  
Director  
Planning & Development

#### I. Roll Call

Those present were Michael Kaufman (Chair), Jim Doolin, John Downie, and Bill Winkler. Barney Heath, Planning Director, was also present.

Shubee Sikka,  
Urban Designer  
Planning & Development

#### II. Regular Agenda

##### Sign Permits

Staff informed the Commission before the meeting by email that 384-400 Beacon St (the Mary Baker Eddy House) and 208-214 Sumner St (Pondejoy Mochi Donut) will not be heard at the meeting as the applicants have to revise their applications and resubmit at a later date based on the revisions needed.

Members  
Michael Kaufman, Chair  
Jim Doolin, Vice Chair  
John Downie  
William Winkler  
Visda Saeyan

Mr. Kaufman asked if the Commission felt there were any applications they could approve without discussion. The Commission agreed to approve the following signs without discussion:

#### 3. **43-53 Lincoln Street – Motion Study**

##### Proposed Sign:

- One wall mounted split principal sign, non-illuminated, with approximately 9 sq. ft. of sign area on the southern building façade facing Lincoln Street.

**MOTION: Mr. Kaufman made a motion to approve the signs at 43-53 Lincoln Street—Motion Study. Mr. Winkler seconded the motion, and none opposed. All the members present voted, with a 4-0 vote, Michael Kaufman, Jim Doolin, John Downie, and William Winkler in favor and none opposed.**

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#### 1. **159 Wells Avenue – Mass General Brigham**

Applicant/Representative: Eric, Design Communications

##### Proposed Signs:

- One free-standing principal sign, internally illuminated, with approximately 40 square feet of sign area located in the front yard perpendicular to Wells Avenue.

[www.newtonma.gov](http://www.newtonma.gov)

- One wall mounted secondary sign, non-illuminated, with approximately 27 square feet of sign areas on the western façade facing Wells Avenue.
- One wall mounted secondary sign, non-illuminated, with approximately 8 square feet of sign area on the eastern façade facing the rear parking lot.
- Three directional signs, non-illuminated, 3 sq. ft. each of sign area throughout the property.
- One window sign, non-illuminated, 2 sq. ft. of sign area.

Presentation and Discussion:

- Mr. Winkler asked if the font on the directional signs could get bigger. The applicant responded that they can increase the size by 20%. Mr. Winkler commented that it will help to look at the size and check if it is readable from a distance. Mr. Doolin commented that people don't come here everyday so it will be helpful to have the font a little bigger.

**MOTION: Mr. Kaufman made a motion to approve the signs at 159 Wells Avenue—Mass General Brigham. Mr. Doolin seconded the motion, and none opposed. All the members present voted, with a 4-0 vote, Michael Kaufman, Jim Doolin, John Downie, and William Winkler in favor and none opposed.**

**2. 1010 Chestnut Street – Echo Bridge**

- Proposed Sign:

The UDC also recommended approval for:

- One wall mounted secondary sign, non-illuminated, with approximately 16 square feet of sign area on the southern façade facing Chestnut Street.

The Urban Design Commission (UDC) reviewed the proposed Signage at 1010 Chestnut Street and recommended approval with a condition for:

- One free-standing principal sign, internally illuminated, with approximately 24 sq. ft. of sign area located perpendicular to Chestnut Street.

Based on the signage submitted and the presentations by the applicant, the Urban Design Commission recommends approval for the proposed free-standing sign on the **condition** that the applicant submit a revised application to the Urban Design Commission for the free-standing sign that confirms the dimensions of the current and proposed free-standing sign and that the applicant seek a special permit for the free-standing sign. The applicant may seek permission for a temporary sign to cover the existing free-standing sign.

Presentation and Discussion:

- Mr. Kaufman asked about the canopy sign. The applicant responded there are Mobil colors, white and blue, on the canopy.
- Mr. Winkler commented it may help to decrease the amount of white behind the sign since this is in a historic district. Mr. Heath commented that this application will also be reviewed by Historic District Commission.
- Mr. Downie asked if the free-standing sign is bigger than the existing free-standing sign. The applicant responded that they are looking to just reface the sign although it looks bigger than the existing sign. Mr. Downie asked if the sign is 6 feet by 4 feet, the applicant confirmed that's correct.

- Mr. Kaufman commented that the two wall mounted signs look okay and Mr. Downie agreed. Mr. Doolin commented that the Commission should ask the applicant to provide information about the canopy sign and include it in the application. The Commission decided to not vote on the canopy sign since it is not included in the application and dimensions are not provided.
- Mr. Kaufman made a proposal to approve the canopy sign pending a revised application to the planning department. Mr. Downie seconded the motion. The applicant mentioned that the size of the canopy sign is 8 feet by 2 feet, a total of 16 sq. ft.

**MOTION: Mr. Kaufman made a motion to approve the signs at 1010 Chestnut Street—Echo Bridge. Mr. Doolin seconded the motion, and none opposed. All the members present voted, with a 4-0 vote, Michael Kaufman, Jim Doolin, John Downie, and William Winkler in favor and none opposed.**

#### **4. 793-821 Washington Street – Eastern Insurance**

Applicant/Representative: Rich Batten, Batten Brothers Signs.

Proposed Signs:

- One wall mounted principal sign, non-illuminated, with approximately 48 sq. ft. of sign area on the southern façade facing Washington Street.

Presentation and Discussion:

- Mr. Doolin asked about the proposed sign. The applicant responded that the proposed sign is temporary in nature, Eastern Insurance plans to be at this location for about 6-8 months. They moved their office; they took over this existing insurance agency. There's a brown background for this sign and the other signs of this building, and then there are individual letters mounted on to that and there's a wood molding around the perimeter of the sign. And so that the sign in essence is the building. And although our drawing shows the temporary sign covering that, that edge molding, we could easily bring that in, if it was just, you know, the board's feeling that it should be so that the molding, you know, was on the edge of the edge of the sign itself. So, this, the sign we're proposing is a flat sign with colors, Eastern insurances colors, and is relatively simple sign just because they are not really thinking that they'll be there all that long.
- Mr. Winkler commented that the brown color around the edge should be visible.
- Mr. Doolin asked if there can be a sunset clause to approving this sign? Maybe for a year? Who would enforce it? The Commission asked staff if that was possible, to put a time limit and who would enforce it? Staff responded they are not sure if it's possible and if it has been done in the past. The UDC asked the applicant if they will be willing to have a time limit on the sign. The applicant responded that a year time limit would be reasonable since the business is planning to be there for about 6 months.

**MOTION: Mr. Kaufman made a motion to approve the signs at 793-821 Washington Street—Eastern Insurance. Mr. Winkler seconded the motion, and none opposed. All the members present voted, with a 4-0 vote, Michael Kaufman, Jim Doolin, John Downie, and William Winkler in favor and none opposed.** The Commission recommended the sign for approval on the

**condition** that the sign be installed within the existing sign frame and that the sign approval is temporary and good for 1 year only.

### III. Old/New Business

#### 1. Meeting minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes of October meeting.

**MOTION: Mr. Downie made a motion recommending approval of the regular meeting minutes for October as submitted. Mr. Kaufman seconded the motion. All the members present voted, with a 4-0 vote, Michael Kaufman, Jim Doolin, John Downie, and William Winkler in favor and none opposed. The decision is hereby incorporated as part of these minutes.**

### IV. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Kaufman made a motion to adjourn the meeting and there was general agreement among the members.

**The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted by Shubee Sikka**

**Approved on February 8, 2023.**