

Arlington Redevelopment Board
Monday, August 12, 2019, 7:30 p.m.
Town Hall Annex, Second Floor Conference Room
Meeting Minutes

This meeting was recorded by ACMi.

PRESENT: Andrew Bunnell (Chair), David Watson, Kin Lau, Rachel Zsemlery

ABSENT: Eugene Benson

STAFF: Jennifer Raitt, Director, Planning and Community Development and Erin Zwirko, Assistant Director

The Chair called the meeting to order and notified all attending that the meeting is being recorded by ACMi.

The Chair introduced the first agenda item, Environmental Design Review, Docket #3348 Public Hearing for signs for CVS at 833 Mass Ave. The Chair introduced applicant Gary McCoy who presented the request.

Mr. McCoy, representing the sign company, would like to replace two existing internally lit CVS logo signs with signs with the new logo and repaint the façade of the building.

The Chair explained that a board member is missing so in order to get approval there would have to be a unanimous vote from the board members present. The Chair said that Mr. McCoy could ask for a continuance if he chooses.

Ms. Raitt explained that the request will increase the number of signs; the do not enter sign is new. Mr. McCoy said he would remove the do not enter sign from the package if necessary. Ms. Zsemlery asked about painting the façade and asked if the signs are internally lit and are individual letters. Mr. Lau asked about the previous agreement that the special permit approval would be contingent upon receiving the plans for the neighboring abandoned building from the owner. The project was approved 10 years ago and Mr. Lau said he feels that his only choice is to ask for a continuance until the board hears from the property owner. Mr. McCoy asked what the owner was obligated to do. The Chair explained that there was an agreement that the owner would maintain the neighboring property. Mr. McCoy requested a continuance to the next meeting September 9, 2019.

The Chair said the board would take public comments even though this case is being continued.

Chris Lorette asked Mr. McCoy if the new signs will be LED and if they would be on 24 hours per day. Mr. McCoy said the new signs will be LED and will be on until one hour after store closing. Mr. Lorette also asked the board to review the original landscaping agreement with CVS. Mr. Lorette said he feels that the landscaping has fallen by the wayside over time.

The Chair entertained a motion to continue the meeting until September 9, 2019. Mr. Lau motioned to continue the meeting, Mr. Watson seconded, all voted in favor 4-0.

The Chair said that the board would move on with other business and wait to start the hearing for Food Link at 8:00 p.m. as scheduled. The Chair introduced the third agenda item, Request for Public Hearing Continuance and Waiver of Special Permit Filing Fee. The Chair said he would like to be able to continue this hearing to a future meeting pending questions about the board's authority to waive fees and have all members of the board are present. Mr. Lau asked for the total amount of fees that the board would be waiving. Ms. Raitt explained that the fees for the special permit filings are outlined in her brief filed with the ARB meeting.

The Chair moved to continue the Request for Public Hearing Continuance and Waiver of Special Permit Filing Fee to September 9, 2019 or to October 21, 2019, as requested in a letter from the proponent. Mr. Lau motioned to continue this hearing on October 21, 2019. Mr. Watson seconded, all voted in favor 4-0.

The Chair moved to continue the 1211-1207 Mass Ave Special Permit hearing until October 21, 2019. Mr. Lau motioned to approve, Ms. Zsemlery seconded, all voted in favor 4-0.

The Chair introduced the second agenda item, Environmental Design Review, Docket # 3604 Public Hearing for Food Link at 108 Summer St. Docket # 3604. The Chair confirmed that all presents for the Food Link Public Hearing were present and invited them to set up for their hearing. The Chair opened the hearing for Food Link. Food Link Co-Founder Julianna Kremer introduced herself, DeAnne Dupont Co-founder, and Carl Solander, Peter Zambelletti, architects. Ms. Kremer gave an overview of Food Link's history and the local organizations that Food Link partners with. Food Link has a staff of four and works with volunteers from Arlington. Carl Solander reviewed the current structure and plot plan. Mr. Solander said they plan to gut the interior of the building and make selective improvements to the exterior, including a ramp to make the building fully accessible. Mr. Solander also said they plan to enclose the loading dock, create offices, a food sorting area, a cold storage area, and conference room. The exterior canopy design will incorporate shelter for an existing bus stop. The exterior plan will include a new retaining wall, more permeable pavers in the parking area, and two dry wells to capture water from the asphalt. There will be a new bike storage facility with six spaces for long term bike storage and four short term bike parking spaces next to the building. There will be eight parking spaces on site. Food Link requested parking relief. They conducted a parking study to see how many vehicles are parked on the property per hour, which is currently up to five on the weekend. Food Link asked a neighboring property to allow for weekend volunteer overflow parking. The current stucco façade will be painted.

The Chair notified the applicant that since the board is missing a member they can ask for a continuance if they choose. The Chair said he would like to see a transportation management plan to encourage people to use alternative methods of transportation. The Chair asked about the plans for tenant spaces. Ms. Dupont said they do not currently have any tenants interested in the space. Ms. Dupont said that they would like to secure tenants with a similar community service focus.

Mr. Lau asked about the height of trees in the back, and whether they would interfere with the solar array on the building. Ms. Dupont said that after speaking with the Town's Tree Warden she understood she would be able to trim the neighboring trees to allow for a flat solar array. Mr. Lau asked if the larger windows at the back of the building will allow for egress to the bike path. Ms. Dupont said at this time the large basement windows will not provide egress, the MBTA will not allow access to the bike path at that location at this time. Mr. Lau asked about moving the wood design element from the loading dock to the front door area. Ms. Zsembery asked if visitors will be using the front door or if Food Link will be asking visitors to use the accessible Summer Street entrance. Ms. Dupont said that they are looking for a facade that is easy to maintain to keep the operation costs for the building low. Mr. Lau said that the current design the front door does not look like the front door. Mr. Watson said he sees why the loading dock would be the focal point. Ms. Zsembery asked Food Link to take another look at the allocation of materials to think about the street view. Mr. Solander said that Food Link is entertaining the prospect of having murals on the façade of the building. Mr. Watson said he likes the project but is disappointed that the T will not allow a connection to the bike path. Mr. Watson suggested that part of Food Link's TBM plan should include information for visitors with the safest bike routes to the new facility. Mr. Watson said that if FoodLink is intending to include off-site parking spaces he would like to see a legally binding agreement put in place. Ms. Dupont said that FoodLink did not include the overflow parking numbers in their parking relief request. Ms. Raitt said that Food Link noted in their request for a parking reduction FoodLink would include a letter of agreement for the off-site parking. The Chair said that the four parking spaces should meet the requirements of the parking reduction. Ms. Zsembery asked if there was a handicapped parking space by the accessible ramp entrance. Ms. Zsembery asked if FoodLink would consider changing a visitor's parking spot to a handicapped space. Ms. Zsembery asked about free standing lighting for the parking. Mr. Solander said that they considered solar lighting in the parking lot. Mr. Lau asked if permitting would allow an easement from the MBTA to complete the retaining wall. Ms. Dupont said that they consider the easement request part of the construction manager's responsibilities.

The Chair opened the floor for public comments.

Guy Morello asked if the bus stop should be moved westbound on Summer St. He said he is concerned about tractor trailers stopping and blocking traffic. Food Link could then use the current bus stop space as a handicapped parking space. Ms. Dupont said that deliveries will be made by box trucks, not larger trucks.

James Cutler said he is happy to have Food Link as a new neighbor. Mr. Cutler suggested a new crosswalk that will connect the two bus stops on Summer Street. Ms. Raitt said the Town Manager is working with the Transportation Planner and the Transportation Advisory Committee to consider the bus stop and pedestrian activity in that area. Ms. Raitt said that they are also intending to pursue access to the bike path at the rear of the building.

The Chair moved to continue the meeting until September 9, 2019 to present any design and transportation management changes the board requested.

Mr. Lau said the board would like to see the following improvements to the plan:

- 1) Updates to entry area design;
- 2) Traffic demand management plan;
- 3) Parking space dimensions; and
- 4) Include a more detailed landscape design.

Ms. Dupont asked about the 21 day permitting timeline if the hearing is continued to September 9, 2019. Food Link has six months left on their current lease.

Mr. Watson asked how often the box trucks will be making deliveries. Ms. Dupont said that the deliveries are very fast. The deliveries are typically made on Thursdays at 11:00 a.m. Mr. Watson asked if traffic will be blocked when the deliveries are made. Mr. Solander said that there are two curb cuts to allow the trucks to pull in so they will not have to back in and block traffic on Summer Street. Ms. Raitt said that designing a new entry could have significant cost implications for Food Link. The extent of what Food Link can do to the façade is the canopy and the wood band. Ms. Raitt said the DPCD staff can work with the applicant to design a more prominent front door design. The Chair said that conditions of the special permit can include that Food Link continues to work with DPCD regarding the front entry design. The DPCD staff will also work with Food Link on their lighting and landscaping design and parking and transportation plan. The Chair motioned to approve the EDR special permit #3604 with special conditions as outlined by the Director. Mr. Lau moved to approve, Mr. Watson seconded, all voted in favor 4-0.

The Chair opened the floor to the public for the Open Forum portion of the meeting.

Guy Morello asked about the presentation, he asked if it was a power point presentation. Ms. Zwiko explained that the presentation was a downloaded PDF document.

The Chair moved to close the meeting. Mr. Lau motioned to adjourn, Ms. Zsembery seconded, all voted in favor 4-0.

Meeting adjourned.