

Arlington Redevelopment Board
May 7, 2018, 6:45 p.m.
Senior Center, Main Room, First Floor
Meeting Minutes

This meeting was recorded by ACMi.

PRESENT: Andrew Bunnell (Chair), Andrew West (arrived at 7:30), David Watson, Eugene Benson, Kin Lau

STAFF: Jennifer Raitt, Director, Planning and Community Development

The Chair opened the meeting at 6:45 p.m. and turned to the first item on the agenda, continued public hearing, special permit, Docket #2644, Leader Bank, new and replacement signage at 180 Mass Ave.

Mr. West was not at the table during the first part of the meeting.

Proponents John Fanciullo, Leader Bank Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer; and Richard Batten, owner, Batten Brothers Inc., introduced themselves. Mr. Batten showed and described preferred design, option 3. Mr. Lau requested Mr. Batten discuss options 1 and 4; Mr. Lau explained his preference for option 4 and suggested additional changes. The Chair stated he was not in favor of signage above first level. Some discussion regarding size and placement followed.

Ms. Raitt requested option 4, since option 1 does not conform to zoning bylaws. She also noted letter received from Arlington Vision Center, for the record.

Mr. Lau asked about the proposed sign on the side of the building; proponents stated they are withdrawing it.

Mr. Watson stated he did not mind options 3 or 4, but is concerned with night visibility. He also asked if other condo owners in the association agreed with signage plans. Mr. Fanciullo confirmed they did and that the new signage would conform to nearby signage. He stated his preference for option 3. Mr. Batten continued the discussion of visibility of the 180 building number. The Chair also favored option 3 as less busy and more effective. Mr. Watson asked if only options 2 and 3 had been approved by the condo association; Mr. Fanciullo stated if the Board approved different options, he would need to go back to the association.

Mr. Benson asked Mr. Fanciullo about illumination for the signage; Mr. Fanciullo and Mr. Batten stated it was for evening visibility. They also stated that their light would shine on neighboring signs as well. Mr. Fanciullo also stated they were active as a business and not just corporate HQ. Mr. Benson explained his preference for option 3.

The Chair concurred, but suggested removing "Corporate HQ" from signage. Discussion followed. The Chair stressed that this is a corporate HQ and not a bank branch.

Mr. Lau favored option 3 with "Corporate HQ" retained.

The Chair opened the floor to public comment.

John Dunn of Arlington Vision Center requested that the number 180 Mass Ave remain where it is. Mr. Lau stated he is happy with option 3. Mr. Benson asked if they needed to see approval documents from the condo association. Ms. Raitt stated Board would address this. Mr. Dunn stated he provided a letter of association approval. Ms. Raitt stated she did not have this document but that it could be provided again. Mr. Benson stated his preference for option 3, with or without "Corporate HQ."

Mr. Lau moved to approve option 3 with "Corporate HQ," on condition that condo association approval is provided. Board voted 3 in favor, 1 opposed. The Chair expressed that he voted no because he did not feel that the proposed signage fit with the rest of signage at the property and that the condominium association approval of the proposed signage should have been provided in writing to the Board.

Mr. Fanciullo and Mr. Batten joined the Board members at the table.

Ms. Raitt explained to Mr. Fanciullo that the proposal was denied because they did not have the necessary four votes, and that she would be in touch to follow up.

The Chair closed this docket and opened special permit Docket 3552, continued public hearing for Food for Thought, LLC. Manager David Spinney provided revised drawings of signage as it pertains to transom glass. Mr. West expressed his approval of the revisions. Discussion followed regarding color, trim, aluminum, and other signage details. There were no further questions from the Board.

Ms. Raitt suggested the Chair move to approve the proposal as presented, but that it would need review/approval by Arlington Historical Commission. She suggested removing Special Condition 2, in reference to site improvements, of which there were none.

Mr. West moved to approve Docket #3552, with drawings attached per 4/11/18, and with conditions as outlined by Ms. Raitt. Board voted all in favor (4-0).

Mr. Fanciullo of Leader Bank requested an explanation of the Board's negative vote. The Chair again explained his opposition to the proposal. Mr. Fanciullo stated the proponents did not understand the ground rules, which was unfair. The Chair advised Mr. Fanciullo he could appeal the decision within twenty days of filing.

Mr. Fanciullo stated he had been advised in the past that he could continue an application or would have been informed that the vote had to be unanimous. He stated that he would have submitted other options, and that the evening's procedure was unfair. The Chair again advised the proponents to appeal or work with Ms. Raitt on alternatives.

Meeting Adjourned.