

FRANKLIN HERITAGE COMMISSION MINUTES

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2023 at 5:30 P.M.

City Hall (downstairs) - 316 Central Street

- ❑ **Call to Order – 5:30 p.m.**
- ❑ **Salute to the Flag** - led by Director Creighton
- ❑ **Attendance** – Chairman Glen Feener, Bob Lucas, Tim Stangroom, Councilor Paul Trudel, Alternate Leigh Webb, Alternate Joya Pinkham Clark (seated for Colby Morrill), Planning Director Seth Creighton, Planning Administrative Assistant Judy Bibbins. Absent: Colby Morrill.
- ❑ **Approval of Minutes of the December 12, 2022 Public Meeting of the Board.**
Member Stangroom made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Councilor Trudel. **Motion carried 5-0-0**
- ❑ **Old Business:** None
- ❑ **New Business:**

H 23-01: The VFW Post 1698, owner, is applying for approval to replace an existing freestanding sign with a freestanding LED changeable electronic message sign. The property is located at 26 Peabody Place, Map/lot number 117-139-00.

Dennis Manning, Board member for VFW, spoke to the application. He acknowledged that they were not aware of the ordinances prohibiting this type of sign when they submitted the application. He explained the existing sign is neon and they want to improve visibility. The sign will be lit only when they are open and, while changeable, it will not flash. They are trying to make it visible from Central Street on the other side of the river. The manufacturer says the optimal viewing distance is 50'-150'.

Councilor Trudel asked what the budget is for their sign and whether they had spoken to Peabody Home about their sign in order to compliment what they are doing. Mr. Manning said the budget was \$15,000 and they had not spoken to anyone at Peabody Home.

Member Lucas suggested he speak to John Benham at Peabody Home for suggestions as he had just been through this process. He also asked if the movable sign would go away with the installation of a new sign. Mr. Manning confirmed that it would and said they have been trying to clean up the image of the property for a while. The actual sign will be 4' x 6' with the top being back-lit and static, the bottom 2' x 5' will be changeable.

Councilor Trudel asked about their timeline. Mr. Manning said it is dependent on the approval, they were hoping for spring. Member Clark asked for clarification on exactly which sign in the

packet is what they are looking at and what the color would be for the internal lighting as she felt it just didn't meet the regulations or colors of the historic district. Mr. Manning showed her which sign and said the lighting would be white with an orange hue. He also gave details of exactly where they are looking to put the sign.

5:55 p.m. Councilor Trudel, Councilor Webb excused themselves to get to the 6:00 City Council Meeting.

Director Creighton gave an overview of the distance from the property line and the need for a variance from the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Director Creighton said the sign is 200' from the sidewalk on Central Street, further than the optimal viewing distance. He also gave an example of the only sign in the City that is like this because they are no longer permitted and that is the last one that is grandfathered. Director Creighton then excused himself for the City Council Meeting.

Mr. Manning read the Heritage Commission statement of purpose from the City Charter as he felt that electricity is part of history and should be considered. Chairman Feener explained the purpose of staying within the historical look of the downtown and that he felt this just did not meet the established guidelines.

The Board asked several more questions regarding the details of height, lighting and how committed to the design they are. Mr. Manning said he was not opposed to looking at other designs as it didn't sound to him like this design would be allowed.

Chairman Feener opened he application to public comments but with nobody from the public present, it was closed and brought back to the Board. Member Lucas made a motion to deny:

"I move that the Franklin Heritage Commission deny the proposed freestanding LED changeable electronic message sign at 26 Peabody Place, Map-Lot 117-139, as presented because of the following:

- 1) The sign type is prohibited by A) Zoning Ordinance 305-24.F "Prohibited sigs" and Heritage Commission Regulations Section V.3, which states, "No neon, electronic or internally illuminated signs are allowed."
- 2) The property is in the Historical District; the sign does not complement the historical components of the downtown area (as required by the general purpose statements Heritage Commission Section V.3." Member Clark seconded the motion. **Motion carried 4-0-0.**

As there was not a representative from Archways present to address Z23-02, Chairman Feener opted to address Z23-03 next.

H 23-03: Kettlehead Brewing Company, tenant, is applying for approval for a new blade sign. The property is located at 40 Canal Street, Map/lot number 117-365-00.

Bill Coulter from Kettlehead spoke to the application. He explained that Sam Morrisette (applicant) was away on vacation so he was present to answer questions. Member Clark asked if the colors would be as presented. Mr. Coulter confirmed it is a black sign with white lettering. Member Lucas clarified if the lettering was painted or cut-out. Mr. Coulter confirmed it is painted. Member Stangroom asked if it would be lighted in any way and who is installing it. Mr. Coulter explained that he was not aware of any lighting but if there is, it would need to be

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approved by Chinburg Builders. It is being installed by Sign-o-Rama out of Concord.

Administrative Assistant Bibbins explained that the lighting would need to meet the Federal Historic Standards due to Federal Preservation funding for the overall project at the mill.

Chairman Feener opened the application to public comments but with nobody from the public present, it was closed and brought back to the Board. Member Lucas made a motion to approve:

"I move that the Franklin Heritage Commission approve the proposed blade sign for Kettlehead Brewing at 40 Canal St, Map-Lot 117-365, as presented and/or amended with the following conditions:

1) The sign is to be constructed as proposed.

2) The property owner is encouraged to develop a master plan for all signage on the property."

Motion was seconded by Member Stangroom **Motion carried 4-0-0.**

H 23-02: Archways (f.k.a Greater Tilton Resource Center) is applying for approval to replace an existing blade sign with a new blade sign. The property is located at 175 Central Street, Map/lot number 117-266-00.

Member Stangroom recused himself from this application due to a conflict with his employment. With no representative present to speak to the application, Chairman Feener made a motion to postpone it to the next regular meeting of the Heritage Commission, March 13, 2023. Motion was seconded by Member Clark. **Motion carried 3-0-0.**

- **Adjournment:** Member Lucas made a motion to adjourn, seconded by member Clark. Motion carried 4-0-0. Meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Bibbins

Planning & Zoning Administrative Assistant