

**FRANKLIN HERITAGE COMMISSION
MINUTES**

MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 2021 at 6:00 P.M. VIRTUAL MEETING**

**** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and Executive Orders from the Governor, this meeting was conducted virtually via computer at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86572470491>**

- ❑ **Call to Order – Chairman Glen Feener called the meeting to order at 6:01pm**
- ❑ **Reading of the Compliance Statement by Planning Director Richard Lewis**
- ❑ **Salute to the Flag**
- ❑ **Roll Call: Present** – Chairman Glen Feener [home office, alone], Paul Trudel [home alone], Tim Stangroom [home alone], Bob Lucas [home alone], & Sam McLaughlin [home alone].
Absent – Colby Morrill and James DeBernardo. Mr. McLaughlin is seated for Member Morrill for voting purposes.
- ❑ **Approval of Minutes of the July 28, 2020 Public Hearing Meeting of the Board.** Member Lucas motioned to approve the minutes of July 28, 2020. Member Trudel seconded the motion. Member Stangroom noted an error of omission in the Conditions for H 20-01. By a vote of 5-0-0 the minutes were approved as amended.
- ❑ **New Business:**

H 21-01: The Greater Tilton Area Family Resource Center is seeking approval to install a blade-sign at 175 Central Street, Map/Lot 117-266-00, in the B-1 zoning district.

Michelle Lennon acknowledged that the Greater Tilton Area Family Resource Center receives some funding from Medicaid, therefore Member Stangroom recused himself due to his position with the NH Department of Health and Human Services. A color copy of the proposed sign for the Franklin branch of the Family Resource Center was displayed on the computer screen. The blade hanger already exists on the building. There were no questions from the commission and no one from the public chose to speak. A motion was made by Member Lucas and seconded by Member Trudel. **The motion carried by a 4-0-0 roll call vote; Member Stangroom having recused himself.**

H 21-02: BB Realty Trust [Chris Bitsas] owner and Spectrum Marketing Companies, applicant, are requesting approval for an internally illuminated awning for Its the Pizzaman at 169 Central Street, Map/Lot 117-267-00, in the B-1 zoning district.

Nick Jarvis represented Spectrum Marketing Companies, along with “Its the Pizzaman”. The burgundy awning with white lettering was previously approved by the Heritage Commission on July 28, 2020. They are now requesting an internally lighted awning 114” above the sidewalk. The design is still the shed style, built out of 1” square aluminum tubing and the awning will attach to that. Along the valance or face of the awning will be a list the foods being offered. In order to promote the business and create a safe environment for customers, they are proposing illuminating the awning from inside. Spectrum Marketing Companies is offering two configurations of the awning for consideration although ideally, they would like to receive approval for the fully illuminated awning. The awning

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material is Cooley vinyl which glows when lit from inside. Underneath there is an eggshell crate structure that offers diffused light while preventing damage from birds and vandals. The second option is partially illuminated, which only lights up the valance. Mr. Jarvis said there are other signs within the historic district that have internal illumination.

Chairman Feener asked if illuminating the valance would be acceptable for safety purposes. Mr. Jarvis stated that there would still be downlighting to illuminate the sidewalk, but that he felt full illumination would be the best option. Chairman Feener asked about the hours of illumination and Mr. Jarvis said that the light runs off a photocell and will turn on with sunset and off at sunrise, however a timer can be used to turn the lighting off when the business closes for the night. Member Lucas asked if in the partial illumination style there would be enough downward lighting for the patrons. Mr. Jarvis said that he thought it would. Member Trudel stated that he personally preferred the fully illuminated version. Both Chairman Feener and Member McLaughlin agreed. Chairman Feener said that the burgundy color would be less bright than the red color in the example. Member Lucas asked if there is a difference between an internally lit sign and an internally lit awning as far as the Historic District ordinances apply.

When opened to the public, Leigh Webb stated that he also had an issue with whether this awning would constitute an internally lit sign which is opposite of what the current ordinance considers applicable. If lighting for safety purposes is a major concern, he wished to bring up the possibility of abandoning the awning and installing downward facing lights above the current sign which would illuminate that sign and the sidewalk as well. He expressed the need to be very careful about setting a precedence for internally lighted 'anything' within the historic district. Annette Andreozzi said that although safety is something we should always be concerned with, there are other options available. There is never only one solution for a problem. She believes the commission should see the building at night with the lights on inside, assuming that the inside lights would only remain on when the building is open. And if they decide that some other lighting scheme isn't possible, she would suggest that they go with the partially illuminated awning and make it very clear that this is an exception and not a precedence, that there is no other way to create a safe environment for this building. It should also be conditioned that if the business should close, all of that (the awning, signage and lighting) should be removed.

Member Jarvis said that they were originally putting the awning up to cut down on the light and heat from the sun since customers sit right up next to the windows. Gooseneck lighting wouldn't work with the awning. He feels the illuminated awning would be best for the business and the public.

Annette asked that the Commission to take into consideration that when these applications come in piecemeal, it makes it very difficult to look at the whole. If this had been proposed at the beginning with the application for the awning, another alternative might have come about. She doesn't feel it is wise for applicants to feel that if the Commission already allowed this, it should readily allow changes.

The public hearing was closed and Chairman Feener said that the interior lighting alone isn't sufficient for safety's sake. Secondly, there are times when people feel they need to come back with a change and these people have had the courtesy to come back and work with the Commission. Member McLaughlin said he feels that the signage is fitting for the City of Franklin; that it along with the IFA awning are improving the look of the City. Member Trudel pointed out to Ms. Andreozzi, that in the visual example provided by the sign company, the partial illuminated awning is also lighted with an external light. He feels that since the sign won't be on in the daytime, except in inclement weather, the fully illuminated awning will enhance the building along with the improvements that have already been done. He also feels that the awning will aid with the cooling of the building. Chairman Feener agrees that the owners have done a nice job with improvements to the building and thinks the lighted awning

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will add to the aesthetics of the building. He said he could go for either the partial or full illumination. Member Lucas said that with the burgundy color, full illumination won't be as glaring as the example. Member Stangroom asked what the difference between the illuminated sign that was on the old Elks Club and this sign and was informed by the Chairman that the Elks Club sign was installed prior to the establishment of the Heritage Commission and it along with others within the Historic District are grandfathered. Member Stangroom asked Mr. Jarvis if the material makeup of the awning would change because of the lighting. Mr. Jarvis said that the owner was very adamant that the color be burgundy and not a fire engine red. Depending on the materials being used there can be more or less translucency. Member Trudel asked about the shelf life of the awning. Mr. Jarvis said that they offer a 10-year manufacturing warranty on the sign. He added that he's seen these units last 15, 20 to 30 years. He admitted that the burgundy will fade over time, but there shouldn't be any issues for 10 years. Member Trudel asked about the snow retention on the awning. Mr. Jarvis stated that the entire structure will be anchored into the building and the holes will be filled with silicon so no water enters the building. The awnings are designed to allow the snow to slide off, however, it is up to the business owner to maintain the awning.

Member Trudel asked for the draft motion for approval. Planner Lewis presented that motion with some additional language that takes into consideration the Commission's remarks during the hearing. The first change is to insert "fully-illuminated" in the following sentence: "The work involves the installation of the proposed "fully-illuminated" awning. The other change is the addition of item C, which reads, "The commission believes that the proposed lighting is required in order to provide for public safety for customers. The existing internal lights are not adequate to properly light the front entrance area." Member Trudel then made a motion to approve the application which was seconded by Member Lucas. **The motion carried by roll call vote of 5-0-0.** Chairman Feener expressed thanks to the applicants who are willing to work with the Commission when they wish to make a change. He went on to say he was proud of the Board for willing to work with the applicant today.

- **Planners Update:** Planner Lewis said that he'd heard from Erick Chinburg Construction and that they maybe positioning themselves to come before the Commission in February for the exterior changes to Stevens Mill. The Chinburg group utilizes Federal tax credits and the work they do has to be reviewed and approved by the Park Service so there will be a lot of attention to the exterior alterations. He believes that the proposal will be fully vetted by the Park Service.
- **Public Comment:** None
- **Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made by Member Trudel and seconded by Member Stangroom. The motion carried 5-0-0 by roll call vote. The meeting adjourned at 6:57 pm.

Minutes were recorded by Cheryl Fisher, Administrative Assistant, Planning & Zoning.