

FRANKLIN HERITAGE COMMISSION MINUTES

MONDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2021 at 6:00 P.M.

- ❑ **Call to Order – 6:00 p.m.**
- ❑ **Salute to the Flag** – led by Paul Trudel
- ❑ **Roll Call:** Chairman Glen Feener, Councilor Paul Trudel, Robert Lucas, Director Creighton. Absent: Tim Stangroom, Colby Morrill, Alternates James DeBernardo, Sam McLaughlin
- ❑ **Approval of Minutes of the November 10, 2021 Public Hearing Meeting of the Board.**
Member Lucas made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; seconded by Councilor Trudel. **Motion carried 3-0-0.**
- ❑ **New Business:**

H 21-06: “Wendi’s Cleaning Service,” tenant, at 355 Central St is applying for a new wall sign. The property is owned by PermaCity Life and is located at Map/Lot 117-054-T1 in the B2 [High-density Business & Commercial]

Janelle Ward, tenant, presented the application. She is the owner of Wendi’s Cleaning Service and they have been in business for 49 years. She explained that she is there to discuss the sign she installed at 355 Central Street, which exceeds the size limits so she is asking to discuss some options.

Councilor Trudel asked for clarification on the size of the sign. Ms. Ward explained that it is 3’ x 15’ (45 sq. ft) and the zoning allows only 18 sq ft. She also elaborated that her use of the space is mostly for advertising to the traffic driving by. She will use it as office space and eventually expand it to use as a second location. Councilor Trudel asked how she is looking to modify the existing sign. Ms. Ward said she could remove the white part of the sign, shrink the entire sign or put the lettering on a black background to blend in better with the façade of the building. She recognizes that the colors may be an issue, but that is her logo with those colors.

Member Lucas commented that he would certainly want to see the sign smaller but understands that the colors are part of her logo. Ms. Ward explained that she is in a lease until October 2022 and then plans to purchase the building and will be able to make other changes to the façade and sign so this one is temporary.

Chairman Feener asked if the property owner had informed her about the sign/historic regulations of the property. Ms. Ward responded that he had mentioned it briefly but not in detail. She shared pictures she had found of prior signs in the space that were similar in size so she had assumed it was okay.

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Director Creighton explained that he had “flagged” the sign as violating the ordinance and reached out to Ms. Ward. His office does not have those pictures so he was unaware of prior signs in the space but an administrative decision could be made to work with the current format to find a solution that works for everyone. He suggested painting the façade of the previous sign area black, or making it a slightly smaller version and/or add a frame around it for contrast. Ms. Ward asked if the background of the sign was black would that blend better. Director Creighton confirmed that it would and he could get creative with measuring only the lettering to help it be more conforming.

Member Lucas asked if the black background would give the contrast needed to help the sign be visible to traffic. Ms. Ward felt that it would be.

Director Creighton suggested they work together to come up with options. Councilor Trudel agreed that working with Director Creighton would be a good idea to explore the possibilities. Chairman Feener asked Director Creighton if tabling the application until February would give them enough time to come up with ideas. Director Creighton and Ms. Ward agreed that should be sufficient time.

With no other questions from the Commission, Chairman Feener opened it to public comment. Since no one from the public was in attendance, the public comment was closed and brought back to the Commission.

Councilor Trudel made a motion to table the application until the February meeting of the Heritage Commission, seconded by Member Lucas. **Motion passed 3-0-0.**

Ms. Ward asked if she could still operate in the meantime. Member Lucas confirmed that she could and that Franklin is very business friendly and they want to work with her.

- ❑ **Other Business:** Director Creighton shared that his office has been working on getting a communication out to commercial property owners, particularly in the Historic District about what is expected to be communicated to new tenants. Member Morrill (not in attendance) had sent an email earlier to the Planning Department stating that the Commission had been looking into a “Welcome to Franklin” packet for new businesses prior to Covid and asked if the office could look into resurrecting that idea. Director Creighton agreed. Councilor Trudel suggested speaking to the City Manager or the Mayor as that had been part of their “LEAN” training not too long ago and they may have something to use as a framework.

- ❑ **Public Comment:** None

- ❑ **Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn made by Councilor Trudel; seconded by Member Lucas.

Motion carried 3-0-0. Meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Bibbins
Planning & Zoning Administrative Assistant