

TOWN OF WELLESLEY



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ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

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ZBA 2001-67

Petition of Watson Wyatt & Company  
80 William Street

Pursuant to due notice, the Special Permit Granting Authority held a Public Hearing on Thursday, September 13, 2001 at 7:30 p.m. in the Great Hall at the Town Hall, 525 Washington Street, Wellesley, on the petition of WATSON WYATT & COMPANY requesting a Special Permit for the installation of an externally illuminated, halo-lit 27 inch by 204 inch (66.58 square feet) wall sign at a height of 46 feet 7 inches, on the southern façade of 80 WILLIAM STREET, in an Administrative and Professional District, which will exceed the allowed area of 15 square feet and the allowed height of 15 feet. Said sign will be composed of individual letters identifying the sole building tenant as Watson Wyatt Worldwide.

Prior to the presentation of the case, Mr. Seegel disclosed that he is a tenant at 60 William Street, and asked if the petitioner wanted him to recuse himself.

Presenting the case at the hearing was Leslie Shea, attorney representing the petitioner. Mr. Shea said there was no problem with Mr. Seegel remaining on the Board to hear the petition.

Mr. Shea said recently there was a merger of the Watson Company and the building tenant, the Wyatt Company. The new sign is necessary to identify the new company. In 1991, the Wyatt Company appeared before the Board to update its then existing sign.

Mr. Shea explained that they have met with the Design Review Board several times. In the original drawings, the sign contained the name "Watson Wyatt" on one line and "Worldwide" beneath it. The Design Review Board preferred the drawings, which included the logo of a slashed "W". The individual letters would be 14 inches. The sign, at a height of 46 feet 7 inches, is only visible from Route 128 heading north. The height of the sign is approximately the same as that of the new "Accenture" sign, at 100 William Street, which the Board recently approved.

Mr. Shea said that the area of the sign is about 66 square feet. The Zoning Bylaw allows a sign with an area of up to 75 feet in an Administrative and Professional District, by Special Permit. He added that the sign would have halo lighting, a light glow coming from behind the letters, rather than internal illumination.

The Board was of the opinion that the sign was overly massive. Regardless of the fact that a Special Permit could be granted for up to 75 square feet, the Board stated that the by-right provisions in the Zoning Bylaw for an Administrative & Professional District, are for signage no higher than 15 feet and no larger than 15 square feet, with letters no larger than 14 inches. The "Accenture" sign was between 22 and 26 square feet.

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The Board objected to the sign being illuminated by any means. The sign is represented as necessary to identify the location of the business. The proposed sign appears to be an advertising device more than an identification sign. The prior "Watson" sign had no illumination. Furthermore, the building is not even visible from the highway until one has gone past it.

Mr. Shea asked for a recess to confer with the applicant. At the conclusion of the hearing on the next petition on the agenda, Mr. Shea returned and submitted a revised plan, which depicted a two line wall sign with "Watson Wyatt" in 14 inch letters on the first line and "Worldwide" in 8 7/8 inch letters on the second line. The individual letters would be composed of polished titanium. The revised sign would be 10.67 feet by 25 inches, or 22.23 square feet at a height of 46 feet 7 inches. The sign would have no illumination.

The Board was satisfied with the revised plan. The Board stated that the Special Permit would be granted to the property owner, Equity Office Park, rather than the petitioner, and that the decision would contain the same conditions as are in effect regarding the existing "Wyatt" sign, as well as the requirement that a copy of the revised plan be submitted to the office of the Board of Appeals prior to the issuance of any sign permit by the Building Department.

No other person present had any comment on the petition.

#### Statement of Facts

The subject property is located at 80 William Street, in an Administrative and Professional District, and is owned by Equity Office Park. Watson Wyatt & Company leases the entire building, which is located in the Wellesley Office Park.

In 1991, the Wyatt Company requested and was granted a Special Permit (ZBA 91-43) to install a non-illuminated wall sign composed of individual brass letters, approximately 6 feet by 2 feet 3 inches (13.5 square feet) at a height of 47 feet on the southern façade of the building. The sign exceeded the allowed height of 15 feet, but had less than 15 square feet in area.

Due to the recent merger with the Watson Company, the petitioner is requesting a Special Permit for a new sign to identify its premises as "Watson Wyatt Worldwide". The sign would be a halo-lit 47 inch by 204 inch (66.58 square feet) wall sign at a height of 46 feet 7 inches on the southern façade of its premises, which would exceed the allowed height of 15 feet and the allowed area of 15 square feet in an Administrative and Professional District.

As described above, during the Public Hearing on the petition, the petitioner, through its attorney, submitted a revised drawing showing a non-illuminated two line wall sign with "Watson Wyatt" on the first line in 14 inch letters and "Worldwide" on the second line in 8 7/8 inch letters. The sign would be 10.67 feet by 25 inches, or 22.23 square feet, at a height of 46 feet 7 inches.

Drawings of the original proposed sign and the halo lighting apparatus dated 7/23/01, drawn by H.M. Witt & Co.; photographs; and a Justification Statement were submitted.

On July 19, 2001, the Design Review Board reviewed the application and approved the proposed sign, for which the petitioner requested a Special Permit from the Board of Appeals.

On September 4, 2001, the Planning Board reviewed the petition and recommended that the requested sign not be approved, and that any sign granted should be consistent with previously approved signs in Wellesley Office Park. The Board understood that the requested sign far exceeds the size limitations imposed on other signs in the area.

Decision

This Authority has made a careful study of the materials submitted and the information presented at the hearing. The decision of this Authority concerns only the revised signage plan submitted at the Public Hearing, and is no way to be construed as approval of the materials submitted on August 27, 2001. The revised sign does not conform to the current Zoning Bylaw, as noted in the foregoing Statement of Facts.

It is the opinion of this Authority that the area of the revised sign, the height of the revised sign and the height of the letters shown in the revised sign are necessary for identification of the petitioner at 80 William Street. This Authority is of the further opinion that the proposed revised wall sign is in harmony with the general intent and purpose of Section XXIIA of the Zoning Bylaw.

Therefore, a Special Permit is granted, as voted unanimously by this Authority at the Public Hearing, for a non-illuminated 10.67 feet by 2.083 feet (22.23 square feet) wall sign at a height of 46 feet 7 inches. The individual polished titanium letters shall be no larger than 14 inches on the top line and no larger than 8 7/8 inches on the second line. The Special Permit is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. A revised, dated, signed drawing of the proposed sign, for which this Special Permit is granted, shall be submitted to the office of the Board of Appeals prior to the issuance of any sign permit by the Building Department.
2. If Watson Wyatt & Company should ever vacate the premises at 80 William Street, or take a lesser occupancy than the entire building, it shall remove the allowed sign immediately.

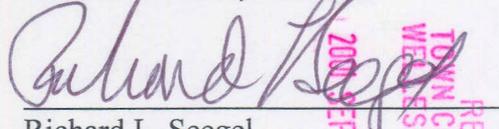
The Inspector of Buildings is hereby authorized to issue a sign permit, subsequent to the petitioner's compliance with Condition #1, upon receipt and approval of a sign application. No sign shall be installed at 80 William Street without a sign permit.

APPEALS FROM THIS PETITION,  
IF ANY, SHALL BE MADE PURSUANT  
TO GENERAL LAWS, CHAPTER 40A,  
SECTION 17, AND SHALL BE FILED  
WITHIN 20 DAYS AFTER THE DATE  
OF FILING OF THIS DECISION IN  
THE OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK.

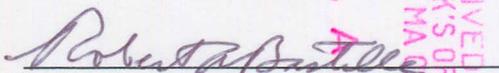
Cc: Planning Board  
Inspector of Buildings  
edg



Kendall P. Bates, Chairman



Richard L. Seegel



Robert A. Bastille

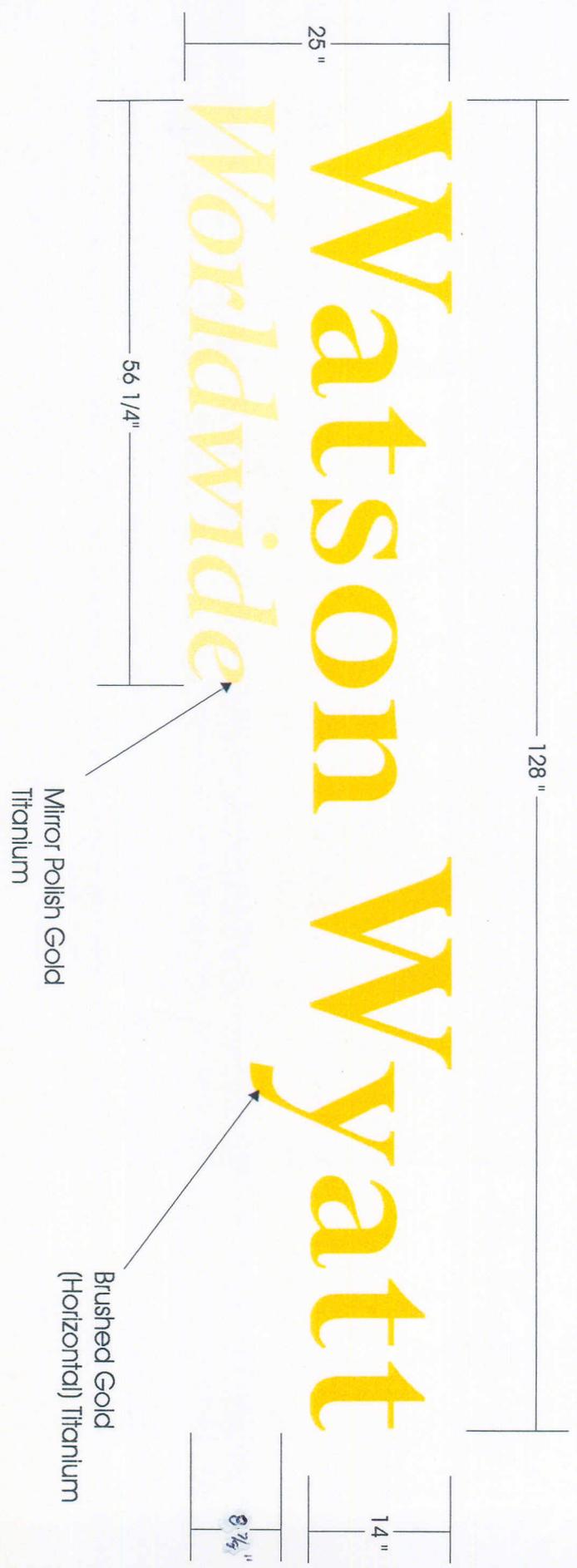
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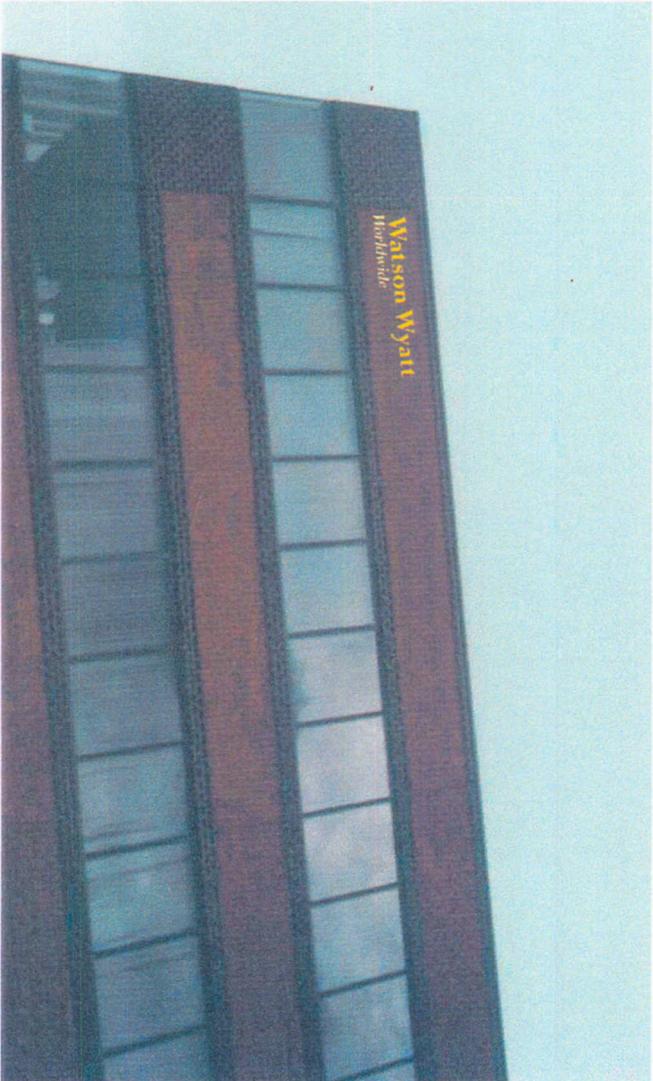
**H.M. WITT & CO.**  
EST. 1938  
**Signs**  
 676 S. Clark St., Chicago, IL 60605-1711  
 Phone 312.427.0703 Fax 312.427.8950

Watson Wyatt  
 Worldwide  
 Wellesley Hills, MA

10.09.01  
 FILENAME:  
 WATSON/watsboss9b  
 SCALE: 3/4" = 1' - 0"  
 MW/RO

NOTES: All letters 2" Depth  
 Concealed pin mounting into masonry





Watson Wyatt  
Worldwide  
Wellesley Hills, MA

10.09.01  
FILENAME:  
WATSON/watsboss9b  
SCALE: 3/4" = 1' - 0"  
MW/RO

NOTES: Non-Illuminated building signage  
for south side of 80 William Street

**H. M. WITT & CO.**  
EST. 1934  
**Signs**  
626 S. Clark St., Chicago, IL 60605-1711  
Phone 312-427-0703 Fax 312-427-8950