

**ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

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ZBA 2009-79

Petition of Sun Life Financial

One Sun Life Executive Park (96 & 100 Worcester Street)

Pursuant to due notice, the Special Permit Granting Authority held a Public Hearing on Thursday, November 5, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. in the Juliani Meeting Room, 525 Washington Street, Wellesley, on the petition of SUN LIFE OF CANADA requesting a Special Permit pursuant to the provisions of Section XXIIA and Section XXV of the Zoning Bylaw for installation of a 42 inch by 17 foot internally illuminated wall sign with 27 inch letters and a 42 inch logo, with a total area of 59.5 square feet, set 39.5 feet above the ground, at ONE SUN LIFE EXECUTIVE PARK (96 & 100 WORCESTER STREET), in a Limited Business District.

On October 20, 2009 the Petitioner filed a request for a hearing before this Authority, and thereafter, due notice of the hearing was given by mailing and publication.

Presenting the case at the hearing were John Mulvihill, Managing Director, Sun Life Financial (the "Petitioner") and Raymond Yu, Creative Director, Pandemonium Design.

Mr. Mulvihill said that they are looking to replace an existing sign that was installed through a Special Permit in 1985. He said that Sun Life has a new logo, brand and advertising campaign that all tie together. He said that the sign is on the side of the building that faces Route 128. He said that the replacement sign will be smaller than the existing sign.

Mr. Yu said that the proposed logo and lettering will be 14 square feet less than the existing lettering. He said that the proposed LED lighting will consume less energy than fluorescent lighting. He said that the letter height is taller than what is allowable. He said that based on the size of the building, the lettering is small.

The Board confirmed that the letters will be internally illuminated. Mr. Yu said that the existing sign is halo lit. He said that there will be less illumination with the new sign. He said that the symbol will also be internally illuminated.

The Board said that there is a wall sign above the entryway and there are also banner signs on the property. The Board said that there are limitations in the bylaw as to the number of signs. Mr. Yu said that he was not involved in that but believes that the banners are temporary. Mr. Mulvihill said that the banners have been up for about a week. The Board said that there is a 30 day limitation for temporary signs.

The Board said that signs should be for identification purposes and not for advertising. The proposed sign will be on the side of the building where there are no entrances. The Board said that the sign is really speaking to Route 128. The Board said that similar cases had come up with the Harvard Pilgrim building which is across the street and the Wellesley Office Park on the opposite side of Route 128. The Board said that the Harvard Pilgrim sign was substantially reduced in size by the Board and is not illuminated. The Harvard Pilgrim sign serves as an identifier for cars on Route 128 during the day.

The Board read a portion of Section XXIIA of the Zoning Bylaw, stating that the maximum letter height allowed by right for this type of sign would be 20 inches. The Board said that it was also concerned about the number of signs.

Mr. Mulvihill said that the front wall signs on the granite walls and the entire sign package for the campus was handled with a Special Permit from the PSI process.

The Board said that a condition of the decision will be that the temporary signs be removed in 30 days.

The Board said that the bylaw discusses appropriateness to location and fit with design of the building. The Board said that the proposed sign fits better with the building but the proposed logo is too large. The Board said that 12 inch letters would not be appropriate here. Using the proposed proportions, the logo could be 24 inches and the letters could be 20 inches, which would keep the brand logo intact. The sign will be smaller but not so small as to look ridiculous on the building. The Board said that, consistent with the Harvard Pilgrim decision, the logo and the lettering should be no higher than 24 inches.

The Board said that the Harvard Pilgrim sign is visible from Route 128. The Board said that logo is 24 inches high and the lettering is 12 inches high. The proposed logo for Sun Life is 42 inches and the lettering is 27 inches.

The Board said that there is a typographical error on Plan 1 of 6. The Board said that the dimension should read 17 feet, not 17 inches.

The Board said that it preferred that the sign not be illuminated. Mr. Mulvihill said that there are signs at Wellesley Office Park that are on the smaller side but are illuminated at night.

The Board said that back lighting is less obtrusive. The Board said that illumination should cease at the end of the business days and not be on during the weekends, consistent with Townwide policy.

Mr. Mulvihill said that they have call people who are in the building until later in the evening. He said that they could provide information as to the time that they work until. The Board said that the hours of illumination can extend to 9:00 p.m.

The Board said that the existing sign was approved a long time ago. The Board said that its proposed compromise will be closer to the intent of the bylaw.

There was no one present at the Public Hearing who wished to speak to the petition.

The subject property is located at One Sun Life Executive Park (96 & 100 Worcester Street), in a Limited Business District.

The Petitioner is requesting a Special Permit for installation of a 42 inch by 17 foot internally illuminated wall sign with 27 inch letters and a 42 inch logo, with a total area of 59.5 square feet, set 39.5 feet above the ground.

Existing and Proposed Exterior Illuminated Signage Plans, dated 9/29/09, prepared by Pandemonium Design, Photosimulations, and photographs were submitted.

On September 9, 2009, the Design Review Board voted unanimously to

Recommend the Zoning Board of Appeals approve the proposed wall sign to be located at 96 Worcester Street/One Sun Life Executive Park to read "Sun Life" with the Sun Life logo, as presented.

On October 29, 2009, the Planning Department Staff recommended that the petition be approved with conditions.

### Decision

This Authority has made a careful study of the materials submitted and the information presented at the hearing. The subject awning sign will exceed the letter height requirements for Industrial A.

It is the opinion of this Authority that installation of a 24 inch by 17 foot internally illuminated wall sign with up to 24 inch letters and up to a 24 inch logo, set 39.5 feet above the ground will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of Section XXIIA of the Zoning Bylaw.

Therefore, a Special Permit is granted for installation of a 24 inch by 17 foot internally illuminated wall sign with up to 24 inch letters and up to a 24 inch logo, set 39.5 feet above the ground, subject to the following conditions:

1. The height of the lettering and the logo shall be no greater than 24 inches.
2. Illumination shall be channel or back lighting.
3. All illumination shall cease at the end of the business day at 9:00 p.m.
4. There shall be no illumination on weekends.
5. The temporary banners shall be removed within 30 days of installation.

The Inspector of Buildings is hereby authorized to issue a permit for the sign upon receipt and approval of a sign application and any other materials he may require. No sign shall be installed until said permit has been issued.

APPEALS FROM THIS DECISION,  
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.

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Cynthia S. Hibbard, Acting Chairman

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Robert W. Levy

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David L. Grissino

cc: Planning Board  
Inspector of Buildings  
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