



ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

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ZBA 2016-43
 Petition of John Hancock Life Insurance Company
 80 William Street

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Pursuant to due notice, the Special Permit Granting Authority held a Public Hearing on Thursday, June 2, 2016, at 7:30 p.m. in the Juliani Meeting Room, 525 Washington Street, Wellesley, on the petition of John Hancock Life Insurance Company requesting a Special Permit pursuant to the provisions of Section IX and Section XXIIA of the Zoning Bylaw for installation of a 32.5 square foot halo lit wall sign, mounted at 47 feet above grade, with a maximum letter height of 20 inches, that will exceed the maximum mounting height and letter height allowed for signs in Commercial Districts other than those fronting Worcester Street, at 80 William Street, in an Administrative and Professional District.

On May 16, 2016, 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 Jason Florio, Director of Support Operations, Gulf Oil and Jim Treacy, SignWorks Group, Inc.

Mr. Florio said that the request is for relief for a sign that will be mounted at a height above 20 feet and will have letters greater than 14 inches.

Mr. Florio said that 80 William Street is their new corporate office and they are excited to be part of the community. He said that there are approximately 120 employees. He said that they have renovated the top two floors of the building. He said that the building is still decorated with the F-Squared logo. He said that Gulf Oil moved to the building in May and they are looking to replace the existing sign with a Gulf Sign.

Mr. Treacy said that they proportioned out the Gulf logo to be 60 inches high. He said that the G will be 20 inches, the U will be 12 inches and the L and the F will be 18 inches. He said that the existing F-Squared sign has 18 inch letters on the capitals. He said that the proposed sign will be the same materials with stainless steel raised graphics. He said that Drawing 1.2 shows a section view with individual stainless sections mounted on a one inch deep aluminum pan. He said that the typical Gulf logo has a white cloud or bubble with orange and blue. He said that this will carry all stainless on the white cloud or bubble. The Board said that the pan behind helps to create the halo effect. Mr. Treacy said that it makes it a smoother surface than the brick and the white helps to give it an equal glow. He said that there will be LED silhouette letters, similar to the F-Squared letters.

A Board member asked about interactions with the public at the corporate offices. He asked why they want to put a Gulf sign on a building in the middle of Wellesley Office Park. He asked about the target market for that message. Mr. Florio said that they have three stations in the community. He said that they feel like they are part of the community. He said that Gulf Oil has over thirty years of history in Massachusetts. He said that the employees live in the communities. He said that Gulf support programs such as the American Cancer Walk for Boston. He said that they feel that it is important to show that they are part of the community.

The Board asked about pedestrians coming to the office other than employees. Mr. Florio said that they have typical business interactions as far as standard transactions that occur on a day to day basis for a business. He said that it is their corporate office. He said that it shows that they are part of the community and assists them in telling Route 128 traffic that they are located there as a Boston based company with their headquarters in Massachusetts.

Mr. Florio said that Gulf Oil is the major tenant in the building.

Mr. Florio said that the sign will be mounted askew. He said that they did look initially at it straight across with the full logo. He said that would bring the lettering down and cause the overall image to be very small.

A Board member asked if the letters can be read from the highway. He said that people will recognize the Gulf logo and color. Mr. Florio said that the size of the letters and the tone is similar to the existing sign. He said that they feel that it will be visible from Route 128.

Mr. Treacy said that the context photo comp that is shown on Drawing 1.1 was scaled from Route 128. He said that is why they felt that reducing the 20 inch G would impact the rest of the letters proportionately. He said that the area of the sign will be 32.5 square feet.

The Board discussed the conditions of the previously granted special permit for the F-Squared sign.

A Board member said that the Company letter discussed a standing sign at the northeast corner of the entry lawn. He said that he had not seen any plans for that. Mr. Florio said that there is a very small sign in front of the building. Mr. Treacy said that DRB approved the sign. He said that it is almost a boiler plate type of sign in the park. He said that they are 13 inches high by 41 inches across with a dark background. He said that DRB called it a by-right sign that once the ZBA approves the wall sign, the graphics on the standing sign will be similar.

There was no one present at the public hearing who wished to speak to the petition.

Statement of Facts

The Petitioner is requesting a Special Permit pursuant to the provisions of Section IX and Section XXIIA of the Zoning Bylaw for installation of a 32.5 square foot halo lit wall sign, mounted at 47 feet above grade, with a maximum letter height of 20 inches, that will exceed the maximum mounting height and letter height allowed for signs in Commercial Districts other than those fronting Worcester Street, at 80 William Street, in an Administrative and Professional District.

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WINTERBURN'S OFFICE
TEL: 617-552-4822

Letter of Authorization, dated 4/25/16, signed by Paul Crowley, Vice President & Senior Managing Director, John Hancock Real Estate, Sign Information, Justification of Special Permit for Signs, dated 4/13/16, signed by Ron Sabia, Chief Strategy Officer, Gulf Oil Limited Partnership, Building Signage 1.1, dated 1/21/16, Section Detail 1.2, dated 1/21/15 & Site Plan, dated 2/10/16, prepared by SignWorks Group were submitted.

On March 1, 2016, the Design Review Board reviewed the application and voted unanimously to recommend approval of the wall sign.

On May 31, 2016, the Planning Board reviewed the petition and recommended that the Special Permit be granted.

Decision

This Authority has made a careful study of the materials submitted and the information presented at the hearing. The subject sign is a 32.5 square foot halo lit wall sign, mounted at 47 feet above grade, with a maximum letter height of 20 inches, that will exceed the maximum mounting height and letter height allowed for signs in Commercial Districts other than those fronting Worcester Street.

It is the opinion of this Authority that installation of a 32.5 square foot halo lit wall sign, mounted at 47 feet above grade, with a maximum letter height of 20 inches will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of Section XXIIA of the Zoning Bylaw, as the sign scale will be will in reasonable relation to development scale, viewer distance and travel speed, and sign sizes on nearby structures; sign size, shape, and placement will serve to define or enhance architectural elements of the building and will not unreasonably interrupt, obscure or hide them; sign design will be in reasonable continuity with the mounting location, height, proportions and materials of other signage on the same or adjacent structures; sign materials, colors, lettering style, illumination and form are reasonably compatible with building design, neighborhood context and use; and sign size, location design and illumination are not judged to present a safety hazard to vehicular or pedestrian traffic.

Therefore, a Special Permit is granted for installation of a 32.5 square foot halo lit wall sign, mounted at 47 feet above grade, with a maximum letter height of 20 inches, that will exceed the maximum mounting height and letter height allowed for signs in Commercial Districts other than those fronting Worcester Street, subject to the following conditions:

1. Illumination shall be shut off at 7 pm.
2. A rheostat shall be installed to control the level of illumination.
3. Gulf Oil shall be the major tenant in the building.
4. The maximum letter height shall be 20 inches.
5. There shall be no other wall signs on the building.

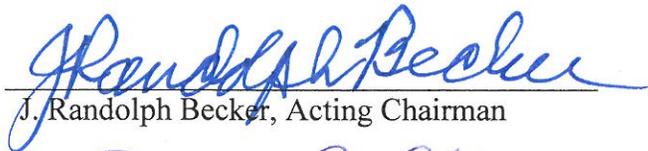
The Inspector of Buildings is hereby authorized to issue a permit for the sign upon receipt and approval of a sign application and any other materials he may require. No sign shall be installed until said permit has been issued.

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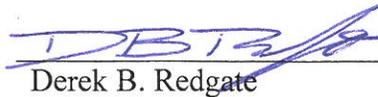
APPEALS FROM THIS DECISION,
IF ANY, SHALL BE MADE PURSUANT
TO GENERAL LAWS, CHAPTER 40A,
SECTION 17, AND SHALL BE FILED
WITHIN 20 DAYS AFTER THE DATE
OF FILING OF THIS DECISION IN THE
OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK.



J. Randolph Becker, Acting Chairman



David G. Sheffield



Derek B. Redgate

cc: Planning Board
Inspector of Buildings
lrm