

MINUTES
DESIGN REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, February 6, 2008, 6:30 p.m.
Conference Room
Basement Level, Town Hall

- 1) **Call to Order** – Mr. Bockstael called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.
- 2) **Roll Call** - Members in attendance: Bruce Bockstael, Andrea Boyle, Jay Hallinan, Joe Hickey, and Steve Hine. Also present: Denise Bradley, Assistant Planner

Members absent: Tony Margiotta.
- 3) **Public Comments** - There was no one from the public in attendance.
- 4) **Minutes** – December 12, 2007 meeting - Mr. Bockstael asked if the minutes needed correction. None were requested. Mr. Hallinan made a motion to approve the minutes as drafted. Ms. Boyle seconded the motion, and the vote showed all in favor.

5) **PROJECT REVIEWS**

- 5.1 **APPLICATION NO. 103-2007** – 1151 Silas Deane Highway – Humphries Grille & Bar – Seeking review of proposed site improvements and signage. Samuel Gardner, architect, was present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Gardner said that most of the site improvements are for the inside of the building, with a motif similar to Humphries’ other four restaurants.

The improvements proposed for the outside of the building include lighter color paint over the existing stucco surface, different color awnings, and a redesigned roofline and exterior for the existing glass-encased addition facing the Silas Deane Highway. The redesigned addition will have the same footprint, but the exterior design will change from a sloped roof to a flat roof, and the exterior materials will match those of the main building. The main entrance will still be the one on the south side of the building facing the parking lot. There are no changes planned for the exterior lighting or HVAC system.

Mr. Gardner said that Humphries plans to the outdoor patio approved for the previous owner. He is in the process of checking with Liquor Control about the required height and design of the fence around the patio. Humphries will follow the conditions of the approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission for the patio, including: installation of bollards outside the patio fence as a safeguard against vehicle traffic, and no use of vendor logos on patio umbrellas or similar advertisement (use of the restaurant logo on the umbrellas, etc. is permitted). An emergency exit gate will be built into the patio fence.

Mr. Gardner said that he has met with the Building Department and the Fire Marshall, and the proposal meets all of their requirements, with one exception: the capacity for the restaurant and parking lot must be set. The Town has no record of

such capacities being set for this restaurant, including previous owners such as Abdow's. Ms. Bradley said that parking will be shared with the office building across the parking lot. Capacity in the lot should not be a problem because the peak use of the office will not overlap with the peak use of the restaurant.

Ms. Bradley said that the only other unresolved issue is signage. Mr. Gardner said that signage will be the same as those at the Humphries other restaurants. The main sign will be on the south side of the building with the main entrance. A second sign may be proposed in the future for the side of the building facing Mill Street. There are no plans for a sign facing the Silas Deane Highway. The landscaping plan is the same as the one from the previous owner, including tree plantings to mask some utility meters on the outside of the building along Mill St.

Ms. Bradley said that she would check with Town officials on the remaining issues of indoor and parking lot capacity, and what is needed for bollards around the patio, then run it past the Design Review Advisory Committee. The consensus of the Committee members was that the design presented is complete and acceptable.

5.2 APPLICATION NO. 104-2007 – 1088 Silas Deane Highway – AT&T (formerly Cingular) – Seeking review of proposed signage rebranding. No one was present to represent the applicant, so this application was tabled for discussion after application listed as 5.3. When discussion returned to this application in 5.2, Ms. Bradley said that the proposal reflect a change in ownership from Cingular to AT&T. Mr. Bockstael said that the proposed change to the entrance doorway is not clear. He also said that the proposed signage is visually “busy” and confusing, and said that the wording should be reduced by removing “AT&T Authorized Dealer”. Ms. Bradley said that the lineal footage of the current sign was approved under previous zoning requirements, and is over the current 21 lineal feet allowed under the current requirements. The consensus of the group discussion was to review the proposed signage according to the current requirements. Mr. Hine made a motion for the applicant to appear before the Committee unless the applicant accepts the following conditions as part of the Committee’s approval: that the lineal footage of the signage not exceed 21 feet, and that the words “AT&T Authorized Dealer” be removed from the sign. Mr. Hickey seconded the motion, and the vote showed all in favor.

5.3 APPLICATION NO. 105-2007 – 31 Town Line Road – KFC – Seeking review of proposed modifications to landscaping, signage and the addition of a vestibule. Gwen Ashbaugh, engineer-project manager, was present on behalf of the applicant. Ms. Ashbaugh said that the changes proposed are within the Town’s requirements. The changes include removal of some of the drive-thru directional signage, slightly larger shed, flowering cherry trees instead of large-leaf deciduous trees, addition of a glass vestibule over the street entrance, and a different sign over the vestibule. The sign would be similar to the previous “face of Colonel Sanders” sign, but without the words “Kentucky Fried Chicken”.

Mr. Hallinan said that the added horizontal design features are an improvement. Ms. Boyle said that the roof downspouts should be relocated because they are planned to

discharge to the sidewalk entranceway. Mr. Hickey made a motion to approve the changes proposed, with the condition that the downspouts be moved away from the sidewalk. Mr. Hine seconded the motion, and the vote showed all in favor.

- 6) **Other Business** – Discussion ensued about the status of various applications and other activities of interest to the Committee. Ms. Bradley said that the Wild Rover restaurant will be coming in to present changes to their exterior design. She said that she expects Soundbridge to submit an application for an addition to its building. Ms. Bradley also said that the Hartford Hospital expansion on Silas Deane Highway is on hold pending a decision on wetlands impact by the Army Corps of Engineers.

Mr. Bockstael said that the Silas Deane Highway Overlay Zone Subcommittee is moving toward requirements allowing mixed use zoning. That is, for example, retail development that would support residential use, such as markets. He said that the Subcommittee is looking at examples of redevelopment in other “linear towns” such as Westport, which has Route 1 running through it. Ms. Bradley said that Peter Gillespie has requested funding in the next budget year to adopt the new requirements.

Ms. Bradley said that she expects Paul Randazzo to submit an application soon to include redevelopment of several Silas Deane Highway properties including Abbate’s Florist. She said that the former Porter and Chester building on Silas Deane Highway is slated for demolition, and that design options are being considered. She also said that there has been no interest recently in the former Northeast Utilities building on Wolcott Hill Road.

- 7) **Next Meeting Date:** February 20, 2008 (regularly scheduled date).

- 8) **Adjournment** – Mr. Hickey made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 p.m. Mr. Hallinan seconded, and the vote showed all in favor of adjournment..

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin T. Sullivan
Committee Recording Secretary