

Village of Canton

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

August 25, 2022

Boardroom, Canton Municipal Building

4:30 pm

Members Present

Chairperson Barry Walch; Charles Rouse; Chris Rotramel; Kara McLuckie; Jennifer Girard
Recording Secretary Jeni Reed

Members Absent

None

Others Present

Brooks Washburn, Architect

Call to Order

The meeting of the Village Planning Board was called to order at 4:35 pm by chairperson Barry Walch.

Approval of Minutes

Chris Rotramel made a motion to accept the minutes from February 9, 2022; the motion was seconded by Kara McLuckie. All in favor; motion carried.

Agenda Items

1. Discussion of Sign Variance Request for 4 Commerce Lane, Canton

Architect Brooks Washburn presented the plan for the proposed sign, at the Community Health Center at the corner of Route 11 and Commerce Lane. He noted that several things were in play, including a new sign code and new zoning for the location. The project (which in addition to the new sign included the renovation of the entrance and waiting area) has been in the works for four years, and the sign is the last piece of the puzzle. The proposed sign does not match the new code; however he noted that this is an existing building with an existing sign that is just being repositioned, and therefore feels the variance would be justified.

- The existing building is 170 feet long, and had an old sign in the gabled end of the building which has been taken down so a new sign can be placed over the newly completed entrance to the building.
- The new zoning for the location is General Mixed Use (GMU), which allows for a sign of 60 square feet maximum, including the entire sign with the background. The proposed sign would be 87 square feet.
- It was noted that the code does not allow a wall sign that extends above any second story windowsills, which is not an issue in this case.
- The case was made that this is a two story office building, outside the Village downtown. There are no issues with blocking any other buildings. It was also indicated that it is important to maintain sign

visibility for individuals with disabilities; thus a sign with 10 inch letters was designed, and the overall sign is sized proportionately. For such a large building, the sign should be in proportion. The sign is also not utilized for advertising purposes; solely for informational purposes.

- The proposed sign would be a traditional sign with downlights, in a “tasteful” design.
- The existing freestanding sign located by the road would also remain.

Several questions and notes were posed by the Board:

- Chairperson Walch indicated that for “second row” buildings or those set back from the road, it is considered to be at a disadvantage for signage and will often be granted a 10% boost in size; this is not in the code but is a variance justification option to allow for improved visual competition.
- It was noted that the distance from the road to the building is substantial.
- The existing freestanding sign located by the road does currently meet the code’s requirements.
- Entrance and Exit signs will also be needed due to the location of the doors by the entrance.

The Board discussed its options:

- Reasons to deny the request:
 - To adhere to the letter of the code.
 - To avoid setting any potential precedents.
- Reasons to approve the request:
 - To improve the visibility of the sign.
 - To allow the sign to be proportionate to the size and location of the building.
 - To acknowledge the attempts of the project to maintain a “classy” look to their sign and building.
 - To acknowledge the absence of competing businesses in the area.

There were no objections from the Board regarding the request.

A motion was made by Chris Rotramel to approve the sign as proposed, allowing for a maximum size of 90 square feet plus the enter and exit signs; the motion was seconded by Kara McLuckie. All in favor; motion carried.

Other Items

It was noted by Chairperson Walch that a sign variance request will be coming before the board related to a signage project at St. Lawrence University, as several of their proposed signs will be located off campus property in a residential multi-family zoned area.

Adjournment

Chris Rotramel made a motion to adjourn the meeting; the motion was seconded by Kara McLuckie. All in favor; motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 5:09pm

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Village Planning Board will be held at a date to be determined.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeni Reed

October 6, 2022