

TOWN OF WELLESLEY



MASSACHUSETTS

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

TOWN HALL • 525 WASHINGTON STREET • WELLESLEY, MA 02482

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ZBA 2022-38
Petition of FR Linden Square, Inc.
161-200 Linden Street

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Pursuant to due notice, the Special Permit Granting Authority held a Public Hearing on Thursday, May 5, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. in the Juliani Meeting Room, 525 Washington Street, Wellesley, on the petition of FR Linden Square, Inc. requesting a Special Permit pursuant to the provisions of Section 22A and Section 25 of the Zoning Bylaw to supersede ZBA 2006-32 and ZBA 2010-51 and certain conditions contained therein, and for relief from restrictions capping the number of wall signs at 161-200 Linden Street, in a Business District, an Industrial District and the Linden Street Corridor Overlay District.

On April 7, 2022, the Petitioner filed a request for a hearing before this Authority, and thereafter, due notice of the hearing was given by mailing and publication.

Present at the public hearing were Michael Wallace, Esq. and Peter Tamm, Esq., Goulston & Storrs, and Mark Hebert, VP Development, Federal Realty.

Mr. Tamm said that Federal Realty was before the Board a year ago for wayfinding signage. He said that the current proposal is part of larger project to upgrade Linden Square. He said that the intention is to update the existing special permit to bring it current so that the tenants can have some type of expression while being consistent throughout the center.

Mr. Hebert said that Federal Realty made a commitment to improve Linden Square and to change the aesthetic of the property significantly. He said that building by building, the aesthetics will change Linden Square in a positive way and signs are part of this. He said that particularly at 180 and 190 Linden Street, ground level tenants get lost in the size of the buildings. He said that the proposed changes encourage pedestrian oriented signage as well as signage for vehicles from a distance.

Mr. Wallace said that the current petition completes the process for signage that began in late 2020 and early 2021. He discussed the review process with the Design Review Board (DRB) and the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). He said that in looking at tenant identification signage, they realized that it will

require relief from Section 22A of the Zoning Bylaw (ZBL), as well as certain conditions set forth in a signage special permit which controlled a last iteration of an update at Linden Square.

Mr. Wallace discussed the requested relief from Table 22A to allow for two signs per business establishment entrance. He said that one of the signs will be projecting or blade sign and the other will be a wall sign or an awning sign. He said that there is only one establishment that he is aware of that has two entrances.

Mr. Wallace said that a second request is to supersede certain conditions in ZBA 2010-51 to allow for the DRB approved design to be permitted. He discussed five conditions in ZBA 2010-51 that are at issue. He said that there are certain design limitations on projecting or blade signage, namely regulating against logos or trademarks. He said the existing conditions disfavor awning signage.

Mr. Wallace discussed compliance with Section 22A criteria as set forth in the special permit application. He said that the tenant signage guidelines that were put forward in 2021 were approved by the DRB and comply with the Wellesley ZBL. He said that signs that do not otherwise comply have to go through the special permit process.

Mr. Wallace said that the projecting signs were designed for pedestrian scale and are very reasonable, given that is an 18 acre retail site that is unique in the Town of Wellesley. He said that the signs were designed together with façade and landscaping improvements. He said that there is continuity of the signs across the mounting locations, height, proportions and materials. He said that the tenant signage guidelines provide for tenant expression of identity within certain conditions and criteria. He said that the DRB unanimously approved the tenant signage guidelines in early 2021 and that recommendation was attached to the application to the ZBA.

Mr. Wallace said that the projecting signage is designed to enhance pedestrian wayfinding and safe navigation on the site. He said that the awning and wall signage is more oriented towards interior vehicular circulation.

Mr. Wallace submitted Proposed Conditions to Special Permit.

The Chairman commended Federal Realty for trying to renew the property to adapt to the marketplace.

A Board member asked how the new guidelines will apply to existing signs. He asked if there will be a requirement that the tenants institute a new signage system. Mr. Hebert said that it will be strongly encouraged and has been. He said that slowly but surely there will be a cooperation effort to turn the old faded green signs over.

The Chairman said that there are some logo signs that do not have any text on them and the new proposal cuts those signs out. He asked about the concern about logos without text. Mr. Hebert said that Federal Realty agrees that logos do not tell the entire story and from a pedestrian access standpoint, they want to have the tenants labeled appropriately. He said that they are comfortable with the recommendation of the Planning Board or the language that Goulston & Storrs submitted. The Board discussed Condition 9 of the Proposed Conditions to Special Permit. Mr. Tamm said that if there is a tenant who wants to have a logo only, they will have to seek a modification of this special permit.

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

Statement of Facts

The subject property is located at 161-200 Linden Street, in a Business District, an Industrial District and the Linden Street Corridor Overlay District.

The Petitioner is requesting a Special Permit pursuant to the provisions of Section 22A and Section 25 of the Zoning Bylaw to supersede ZBA 2006-32 and ZBA 2010-51 and certain conditions contained therein, and for relief from restrictions capping the number of wall signs at 161-200 Linden Street, in a Business District, an Industrial District and the Linden Street Corridor Overlay District.

Letter to Zoning Board of Appeals, dated 3/29/22, from Michael Wallace, Esq., Sign Information, Memorandum in Support of Petition regarding Signage Special Permit Application for 161-200 Linden Street, dated 3/29/22, Tenant Signage Guidelines, TIB Tenant Bracket Signs Improvement, TIC Tenant Canopy Signs Improvement, dated 12/16/20, Design Scenarios for Expressive Tenant Project Signage & Landlord-Selected Default Tenant Projecting Signage, Sign Plan & Photo Key, Sign Photo Survey for Building 161, Building 162 (The Linden Store), Building 165, Building 180, Building 184, Building 185, Building 188 (CVS), Building 190 & Building 200, dated 3/29/22, prepared by Omloop, and Design Review Board Recommendation, dated 1/21/21, and Proposed Conditions to Special Permit were submitted.

On May 4, 2022, the Planning Board staff reviewed the petition and recommended to the Zoning Board that a special permit be approved.

Decision

This Authority has made a careful study of the materials submitted and the information presented at the hearing.

It is the opinion of this Authority that superseding ZBA 2006-32 and ZBA 2010-51 and certain conditions contained therein, and granting relief from restrictions capping the number of wall signs at 161-200 Linden Street, in a Business District, an Industrial District and the Linden Street Corridor Overlay District will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of Section 22A of the Zoning Bylaw, as the sign scale will be 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 to supersede ZBA 2006-32 and ZBA 2010-51 and certain conditions contained therein, and for relief from restrictions capping the number of wall signs at 161-200 Linden

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Street, in a Business District, an Industrial District and the Linden Street Corridor Overlay District, in subject to the following conditions:


1. There shall be no more than two permanent signs per business establishment, per entrance (one projecting sign, and one wall or awning sign).
2. All signage permit applications shall first be reviewed by the Design Review Board.
3. Projecting signs shall:
 - i. be at a uniform height, at least 9 feet above ground level;
 - ii. be near each business establishment entrance;
 - iii. be a maximum area of 4 square feet (exclusive of mounting bracket);
 - iv. protrude no more than 4 square feet from the building wall; and
 - v. be in accordance with Linden Square Design Criteria.
4. Projecting signs shall not be illuminated.
5. Mounting brackets for projecting signs shall be metal and painted black. Mechanical fasteners shall not be exposed to view unless integral to the sign's design.
6. All projecting signage shall be of high-quality construction, materials, details and finishes (e.g., metal, acrylic and painted or clear-coated wood).
7. Content shall be raised or engraved at a minimum of ¼ inch thickness. Paints and finishes shall be UV-protected and clear coated to resist fading.
8. The sign manufacturer's name, stamps or decals shall not be visible.
9. Logos and brands shall be permissible on projecting signs, provided such signs include tenant names.

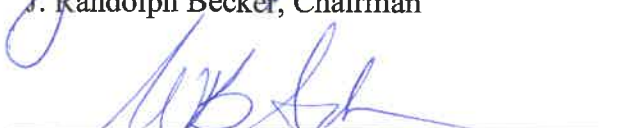
The Inspector of Buildings is hereby authorized to issue a permit for the sign upon receipt and approval of a sign application and any other materials he may require. No sign shall be installed until said permit has been issued.


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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, Chairman


Walter B. Adams


Derek B. Redgate

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ZBA 2022-38
Applicant FR Linden Square, Inc.
Address 161-200 Linden Street

NOT VALID FOR RECORDING UNTIL CERTIFIED BY TOWN CLERK

In accordance with Section 11 of Chapter 40A of the Massachusetts General Laws, I hereby certify that twenty (20) days have elapsed after the within decision was filed in the office of the Town Clerk for the Town of Wellesley, and that no appeal has been filed, or that if such appeal has been filed, that it has been dismissed or denied.

Date:

Attest:

Cathryn Jane Kato
Town Clerk

cc: Planning Board
Inspector of Buildings
lrm

LINDEN SQUARE

Tenant Projecting Signage Scenarios

Special Permit Application

March 29, 2022

NOTES

1. The three sample projecting signs depicted are also included in the DRB-recommended Tenant Signage Guidelines included in the special permit application submission.

2. Tenant projecting signage to be installed at uniform heights near each business establishment entrance, as reviewed and approved by Landlord, pursuant to its Linden Square Design Criteria, and the DRB.

3. Petitioner encourages a wide color palette for projecting signage to emphasize tenant identity and engage pedestrian visitors.

DESIGN CRITERIA

Design: tenants are encouraged to create expressive and unique projecting signs, not limited by any prescribed shape or form, only that they meet certain dimensional and locational constraints.

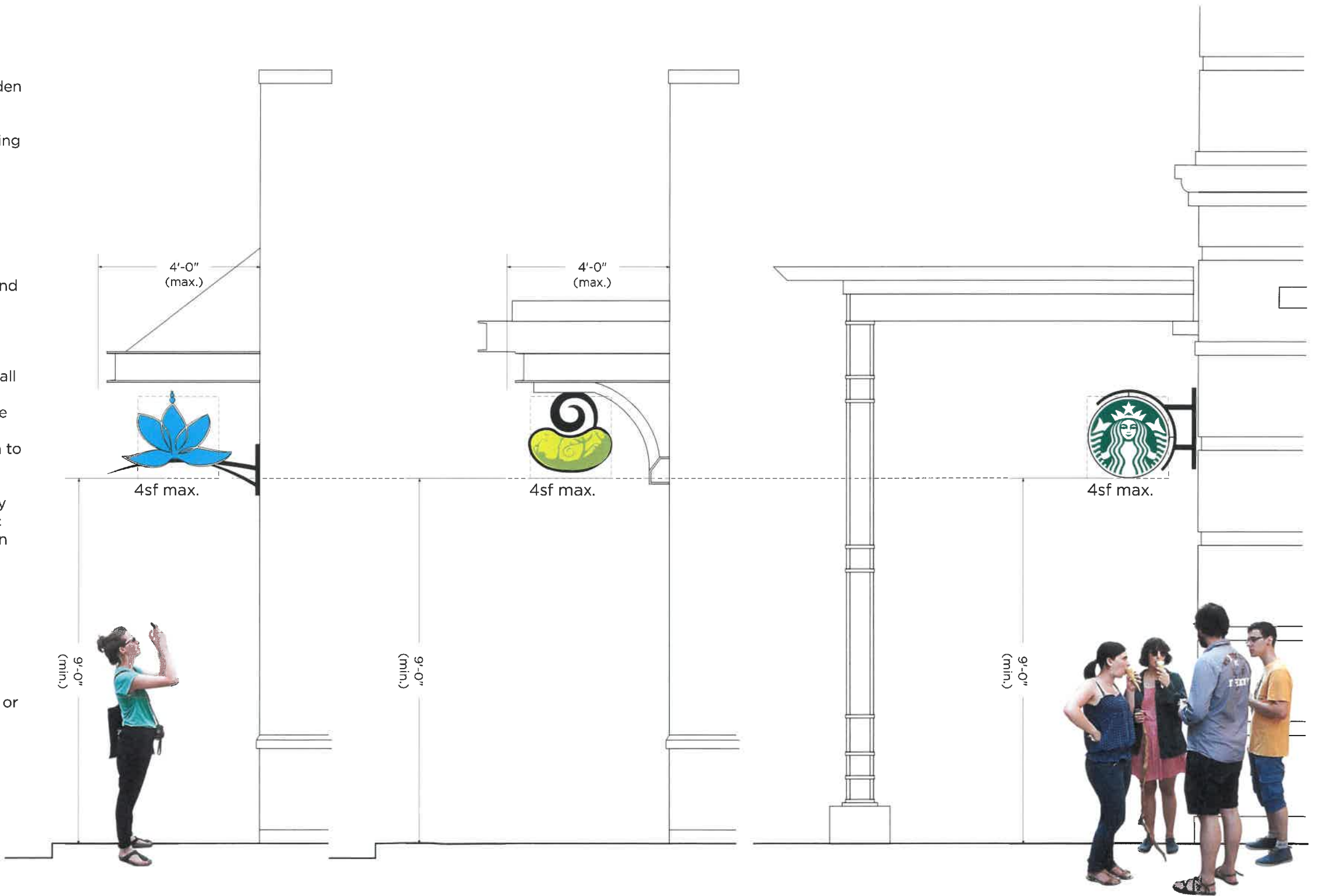
Lighting: signs are non-illuminated

Mounting: brackets are to be considered part of the overall sign design and of a decorative or architectural nature. Brackets should be metal and painted black to coordinate with Linden Square architectural and signage metal treatment. Non-ornamental hardware used to attach sign to storefront shall not be exposed to view.

Materials and Quality: All signage must be of high quality construction, materials, details and finishes. Metal, acrylic and painted or clear-coated wood are acceptable. All sign panels and content (letters, logos) must be dimensional, at a minimum of 1/4" in thickness, or engraved to a similar depth. Paints and finishes shall be UV-protected and clear coated to resist fading. Mechanical fasteners shall be concealed, unless integral to the design, and are encouraged over tape and other adhesives.

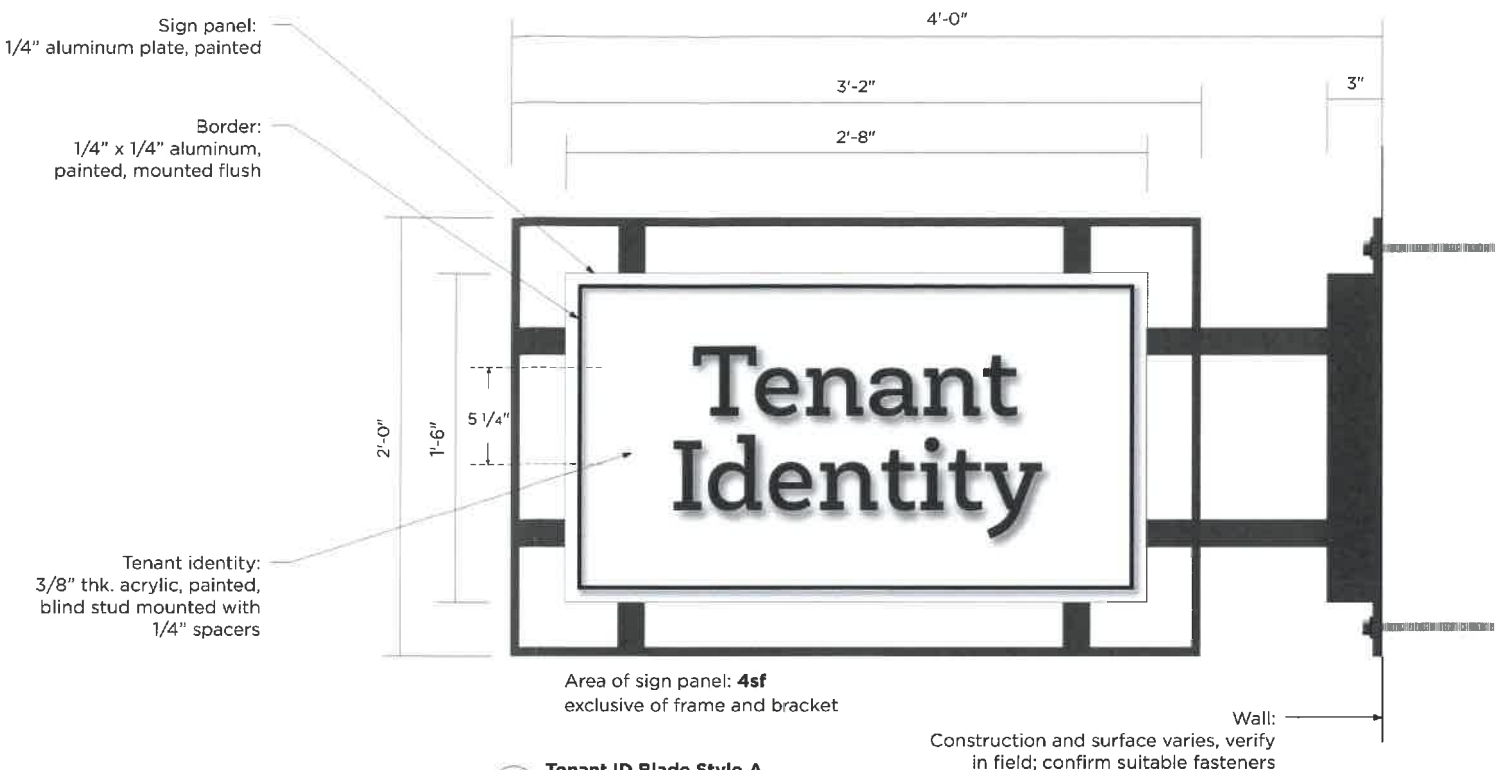
Colors and Graphics: The image on the sign is limited to the tenant's trade name and/or logo only. Name, stamps, or decals of the sign manufacturer cannot be displayed on any portion of any sign. Color choices are not limited.

Design Scenarios for Expressive Tenant Projecting Signage



Design Scenarios for Landlord-Selected Default Tenant Projecting Signage

Tenants who choose not to incorporate Expressive Tenant Projecting Signage will have the option of these two default design styles.



OVERALL COLORS:
Sign structure:
MP 00547 Mudstone
Mesh area outer frame:
MP 00547 Mudstone
Mesh and inner frame:
MP 25595 Black Mamba
Tenant Panel
per tenant branding



Note for 2022 ZBA Sign Special Permit Petition:

These are relevant excerpts from the Tenant Signage Guidelines submitted for DRB review on 12/16/2020 and which received its unanimous written recommendation, subject to conditions, on 1/21/2021.

Tenant Signage Guidelines

General Notes:

1. The intent of the Tenant Signage Guidelines is to provide the Design Review Board with several scenarios for future tenant sign packages. Each individual tenant shall be responsible for obtaining approvals from the Design Review Board for its specific sign package. Landlord review and approval, which shall be conditioned on the sign package's consistency with these guidelines, shall be obtained prior to submittal to the Design Review Board.
2. All tenant signage as reflected in these Guidelines shall be in conformance with the Town of Wellesley Zoning By-Laws.
3. Final disposition of tenant size, configuration and location will vary throughout the life of the development. However, sign locations shall be limited to options as shown on these plans, as approved by the Landlord and the Town of Wellesley.

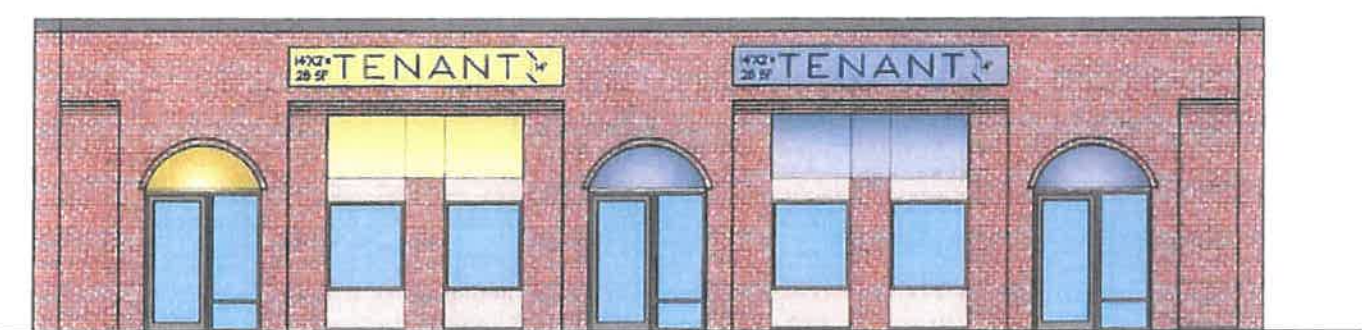
Note for 2022 ZBA Sign Special Permit Petition: The Tenant Sign Guidelines concept sketches below were submitted as part of the special permit application resulting in the issuance of ZBA 2010-51.

TIB: Tenant Identity, Bracket Signs



from building signage submission reviewed by Design Review Board, March 2007

TIW: Tenant Identity, Wall Signs



from building signage submission reviewed by Design Review Board, March 2007



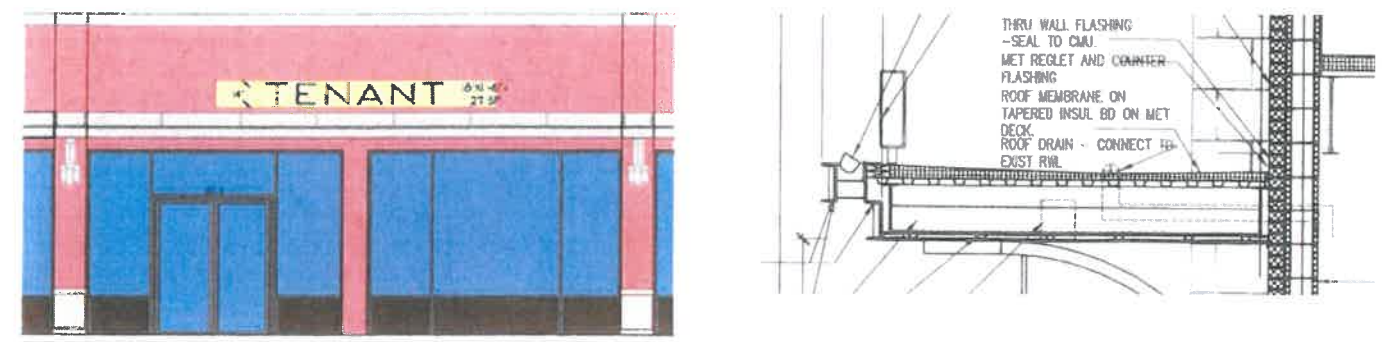
EXISTING TENANT SIGN GUIDELINES

TIB: Tenant Identity, Bracket Signs



from Special Permit for Signage, September 2010

TIC: Tenant Identity, Canopy Signs

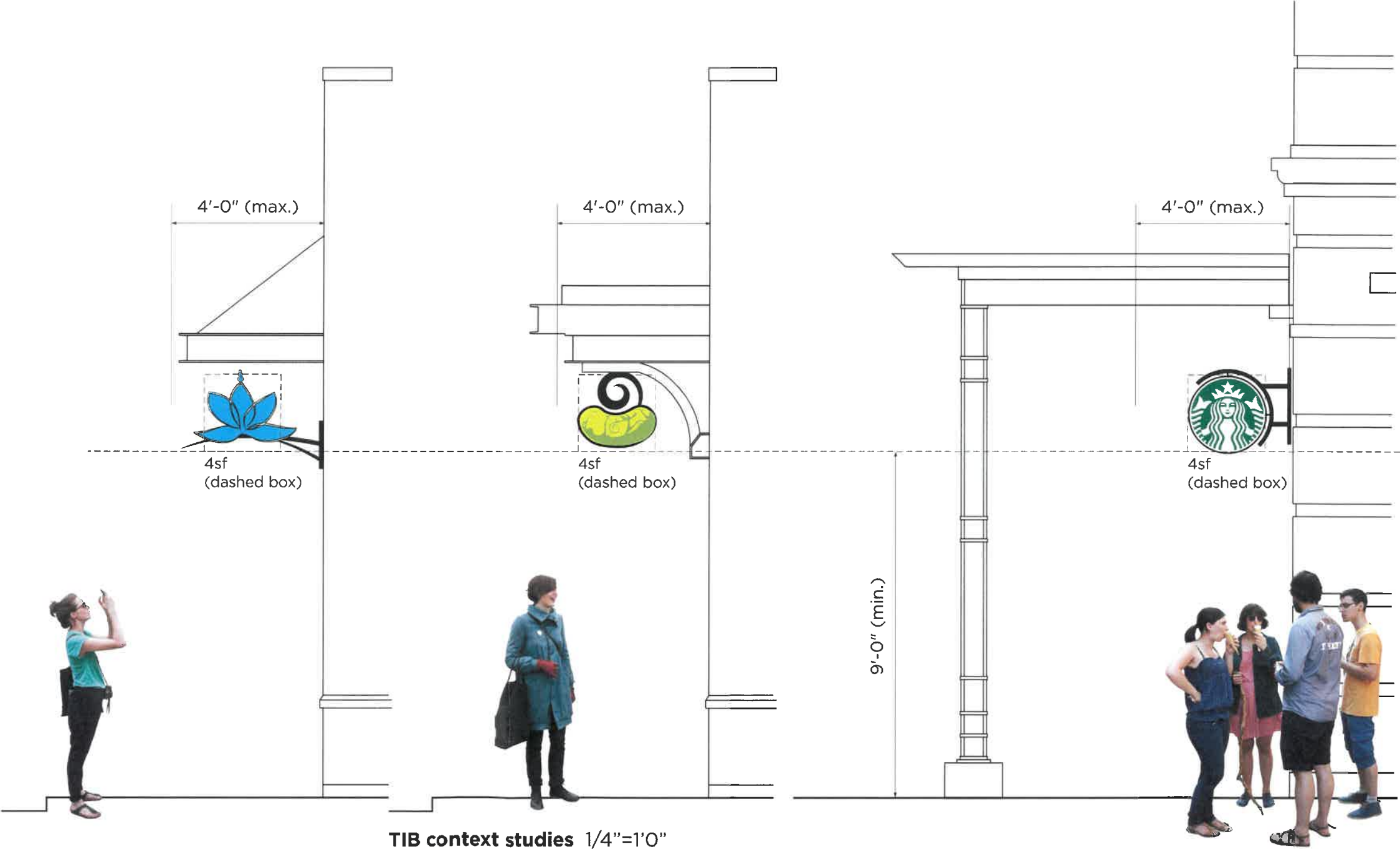


from building signage submission reviewed by Design Review Board, March 2007



TIB TENANT BRACKET SIGNS IMPROVEMENT

We recommend replacing the regimented oval signs with more **unique and expressive blade signs**, encouraging merchants **to be creative** in use of sign materials and bracket designs. Signs are non-illuminated.



BUILDING 200 EXAMPLE

TIC TENANT CANOPY SIGNS IMPROVEMENT



We are seeking to create a standard armature for canopy-mounted signs that allows for more creative solutions beyond the panel signs seen on site today. Use of cut out logos and dimensional letters will be encouraged. Small linear LED fixtures will up-light the signage.

