

TOWN OF WELLESLEY



MASSACHUSETTS

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

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ZBA 2025-02
Petition of Babson College
231 Forest Street (Tomasso Hall)

Pursuant to due notice, the Special Permit Granting Authority held a Remote Public Hearing on Thursday, January 9, 2025, at 7:30 pm, on the petition of Babson College requesting a Special Permit pursuant to the provisions of Section 5.18 and Section 6.3 of the Zoning Bylaw for installation of three temporary signs that will exceed the number, height, area and time period permitted at 231 Forest Street (Tomasso Hall), in an Educational A District.

On December 9, 2024, 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 Cheryl Robock and Kathryn Deeb, representing Babson College, the Petitioner.

Ms. Robock said that the request is for a special permit to hang temporary banners on Tomasso Hall, which faces the corner of Wellesley Avenue and Forest Street. She said that three banners are proposed, similar to the banners that were installed for the Centennial Year in 2019. She said that the College recently received the #2 Best College in America ranking by the Wall Street Journal. She said that the College is hoping to celebrate that with the banners.

Ms. Robock said the request is to keep the banners up for the duration of the year. She said that the rankings come out in the fall. She said that they are asking to keep them up through December because it's easier for the facilities team to remove the banners during winter break when the students are gone. She said that Babson was allowed to have the previous temporary banners for all of 2019.

Ms. Robock said the Design Review Board recommendations were incorporated in the designs.

No member of the public wished to speak to the petition.

Statement of Facts

The subject property is located at 231 Forest Street (Tomasso Hall), in an Educational A District.

The Petitioner is requesting a Special Permit pursuant to the provisions of Section 5.18 and Section 6.3 of the Zoning Bylaw for installation of three temporary signs that will exceed the number, height, area and time period permitted in an Educational A District.

Sign Information, Aerial View of Babson College Campus, 2019 Approved Banners, 2024 Proposed Updated Banner Markup, 2024 Banner Design, Measurements, and Colors, Building Measurements, & Justification were submitted.

On October 31, 2024, the Design Review Board voted unanimously to accept the application as presented, subject to recommendations.

On January 7, 2025, the Planning Department Staff reviewed the petition and recommended 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 installation of three temporary signs that will exceed the number, height, area and time period permitted in an Educational A District will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of Section 5.18 of the Zoning Bylaw, as the sign scales 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 designs 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 three temporary signs that will exceed the number, height, area and time period permitted in an Educational A District, in accordance with the submitted plans.

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.

Robert W. Levy (Lm.)
Robert W. Levy, Acting Chairman

Walter B. Adams (Lm.)
Walter B. Adams

Derek B. Redgate (Lm.)
Derek B. Redgate

ZBA 2025-02
Applicant Babson College
Address 231 Forest Street (Tomasso Hall)

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

2024 Proposed Updated Banner Mockup

