

TOWN OF WELLESLEY



MASSACHUSETTS

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

888 WORCESTER STREET • SUITE 160 • WELLESLEY, MA 02482

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TELEPHONE
(781) 489-7450

WALTER B. ADAMS
DEREK B. REDGATE
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ZBA 2025-26

Petition of Unitarian Universalist Society of Wellesley Hills
309 Washington Street

Pursuant to due notice, the Special Permit Granting Authority held a Remote Public Hearing on Thursday, May 8, 2025, at 7:30 pm, on the petition of Unitarian Universalist Society Of Wellesley Hills requesting a Special Permit pursuant to the provisions of Section 5.18 and Section 6.3 of the Zoning Bylaw for installation of a wall sign and a standing sign that will exceed the number and maximum area allowed by right, and the maximum height of the wall sign allowed by right in a General Residence District, at 309 Washington Street.

On April 7, 2025, 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 was Rick North, Chair of Sign Committee, Unitarian Universalist Society of Wellesley Hills, who said that the proposed signage would give the Church more visibility to get the word out about who they are and what they do.

Board members discussed concerns about the size of the proposed wall sign.

The Board voted unanimously to continue the matter to June 5, 2025.

June 5, 2025

At the request of the Applicant, the Board voted unanimously to continue the matter to August 7, 2025.

August 7, 2025

Present at the public hearing were David Himmelberger, Esq. and Rick North.

The Chairman said that the petition would be heard de novo.

Mr. Himmelberger said that the request is for zoning relief for the installation of two signs, one to be mounted on the wall of the church and one to be mounted on the church lawn. He said that the wall sign

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will replace an existing sign and the standing lawn sign will be new. He said that relief is sought for the number of signs, for maximum area and height of the standing sign, and maximum height and area for the wall sign.

Mr. Himmelberger said that the Applicant revised the plans in response to concerns that the Board raised at the May 8, 2025 Public Hearing. He said that the size of the originally proposed wall sign was reduced to 10 by 10, 10 feet off the ground, and centered on 20 percent of the façade of the church. He said that one line was eliminated and the lettering was reduced so that the largest letters are now 9.56 inches, the medium letters are 6.54 inches, and the small letters are 3.25 inches. He said that the wall sign will be a grommited vinyl banner affixed to the building.

Mr. Himmelberger said that standing sign is 8 by 4 and has been modified to have a brown painted frame, in accordance with the Design Review Board's (DRB) recommendation. He said that the sign was moved to the right so that it will sit 25 feet from Washington Street, 27 feet to the left of the driveway, and 51 feet from the right side property line. He said that four different sign contents, as shown in Exhibit 3, will be rotated throughout the year.

Mr. Himmelberger said that the Church currently has two other permanent signs, a standing sign between two granite posts that was permitted by the Board, ZBA 2007-09, and a standing blade sign that was permitted by the Board, ZBA 2023-58.

The Chairman read an excerpt from Section 5.18 of Zoning Bylaw regarding Temporary Signs. He said that there is a time limitation of 30 days with the right to extend the permit for three 30 day periods. He said that the bylaw defines a temporary sign as not permanently mounted.

Mr. Himmelberger said that the wall sign is intended to be up for an extended period of time. He said that the grommited sign will be screwed into the wall and permanently affixed, similar to a rigid sign.

The Chairman said that, theoretically, a temporary sign is not built as sturdily and will not last as long as a sign that is designed to be permanent. He discussed including a condition that the wall sign be maintained so as not to deteriorate or otherwise come loose from the building. Mr. Himmelberger said that the existing vinyl wall sign has been up for 4 or 5 years, which speaks to the durability of the material.

The Chairman said that the proposed standing sign will consist of a base where interchangeable signs are inserted on a rotation. He said that the frame is not a sign but is a device to hold writing to communicate information to the public. He confirmed that the rotating signs will be limited to the 4 signs shown in Exhibit 3.

The Board discussed the temporary versus permanent nature of the proposed standing sign. Mr. Himmelberger said that, given that the signs will be rotated quarterly, they would be permissible within the bylaw as temporary signs.

Mr. North said that the wall sign is intended to be more permanent. He said that the purpose of the lawn signs is to get the message out to the public about what the Church stands for and what they're all about. He said that the messages are refreshed every 90 days because the Church stands for more than one thing.

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

Statement of Facts

The subject property is located at 309 Washington Street, in a General Residence 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 a wall sign and a standing sign that will exceed the number and maximum area allowed by right, and the maximum height of the wall sign allowed by right.

Sign Information, Wellesley Unitarian Universalist Society Application to Zoning Board of Appeals Notes, a Plot Plan, 7/10/23, prepared by DGT Associates, Vinyl Banner Hemmed with Grommets & Wind Slits, dated 2/24/25, prepared by Alltype Digital Graphics, renderings of wall sign and standing sign, and Letter to Zoning Board of Appeals, dated 7/22/25, from David J. Himmelberger, Esq., with 11 Exhibits including, 10 x 10 Printed Vinyl Banner and 8 x 4 Vinyl Banner, Order Date 6/10/25, prepared by Alltype Digital Graphics, Summary of Revisions and Additional Information, Revised Sign Information and photographs, were submitted.

On March 13, 2025, the Design Review Board voted unanimously to accept the application as presented, subject to recommendations.

On April 24, 2025, the Planning Board 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 a wall sign affixed to the face of the church, and a temporary lawn sign with the intention of rotating the panels over a period of time, that will exceed the number and maximum area allowed by right, and the maximum height of the wall sign allowed by right in a General Residence 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 a wall sign affixed to the face of the church, and a temporary lawn sign with the intention of rotating the panels over a period of time, that will exceed the number and maximum area allowed by right, and the maximum height of the wall sign allowed by right, subject to the following conditions:

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1. Any changes will require coming back before the Board.
2. The wall sign shall be maintained so as not to deteriorate or otherwise come loose from 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.

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

David G. Sheffield (Am)
David G. Sheffield

Peter Covo (Am)
Peter Covo

ZBA 2025-26
Applicant Unitarian Universalist Society of Wellesley Hills
Address 309 Washington Street

NOT VALID FOR RECORDING UNTIL CERTIFIED BY TOWN CLERK

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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



505 Worcester Road, Framingham, MA 01701
 alltype.com sales@alltype.com
 TEL: 508.620.0202 FAX: 508.620.0885

Order Date 6-10-25	Due Date	Shipped/Deliver PICK UP
Designer Peter		Email hmnorth@hevanet.com
Company Unitarian Universalists of Wellesley		Phone 503-706-0352
Contact Rick North		PRODUCTION CHECK <input type="checkbox"/>
Address 309 Washington St, Wellesley, MA 02481		

Prices reflect a 3% discount for non credit card payment

- | Qty: | Size: | Description: |
|------|-----------|---|
| 1 | 10' x 10' | printed 13 oz vinyl banner hemmed w/ grommets @ 350.00
- Banner will be folded w/ creases |
| 1 | 10' x 10' | printed 13 oz vinyl banner hemmed w/ 2" webbing,
& heavy duty grommets @ 600.00
- Banner will be supplied on a 10' roll, no folds or creases |
| 1 | | installation directly onto building @ 675.00 |

Exhibit 1

9.56" CAP

LOVE IS LOVE

6.54" CAP

BLACK LIVES MATTER

6.54" CAP

CLIMATE CRISIS IS NOW

6.54" CAP

NO PERSON IS ILLEGAL

3.25 CAP

WOMEN'S RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS

6.54" CAP

ALL GENDERS ARE HOLY



UU Wellesley Hills

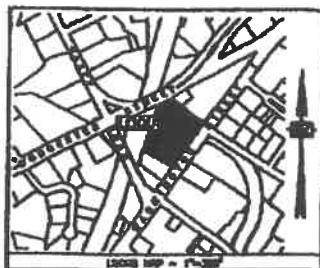


Sub Total _____
 Tax _____
 File set up _____
 Total _____
 Deposit -50.00 3/19

**PLEASE
CHECK
PROOF!**

Please READ THIS WORK ORDER!
 Make Sure All Wording, Spelling,
 Art, Material And Sizes Are
 Correct Before Approving.

**Production will not
begin until approval
is emailed back
stating "APPROVED"**

[illegible]

Pollock
FORMER, LEO GARRON

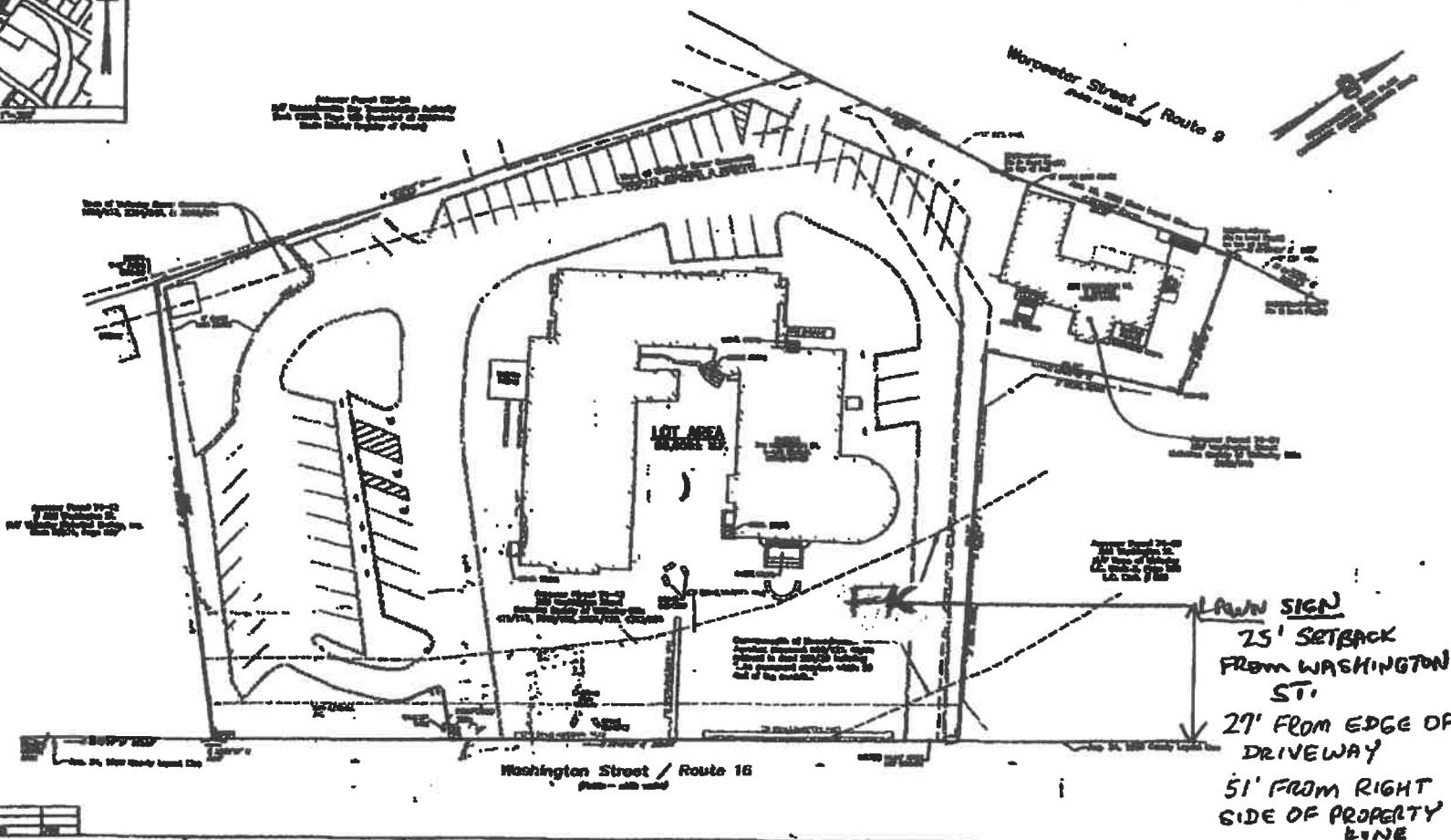
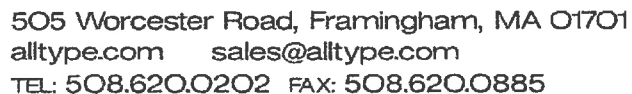
[illegible]

exhibit 2

<p>CERTIFIED PLOT PLAN OF LAND IN WELLESLEY, MASSACHUSETTS NORFOLK COUNTY</p>				<p>300 WASHINGTON STREET WELLESLEY, MASSACHUSETTS</p> <p>Map of UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF WELLESLEY 300 WASHINGTON STREET WELLESLEY, MASSACHUSETTS</p>		<p>DATE: 10/1/78 BY: [Signature] CHECKED BY: [Signature] FIELD ENGINEER: [Signature]</p>		<p>DESIGNED BY: [Signature] DGT Associates Surveying & Engineering Wellesley • Framingham • Boston 1975 Worcester Street, Framingham, MA 01901 (617) 875-1234</p>		<p>SIDE OF PROPERTY LINE</p> <p>OWN: 0.00, 0.00 PROJECT NO.: 0000 JOB NO.: 0000 DATE: 10/1/78</p>	
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	---	--	--	--



Order Date 6-10-25	Due Date	Shipped/Deliver PICK UP
Designer Peter	Email hmnorth@hevanet.com	
Rick North	Phone 503-706-0352	
	PRODUCTION CHECK <input type="checkbox"/>	

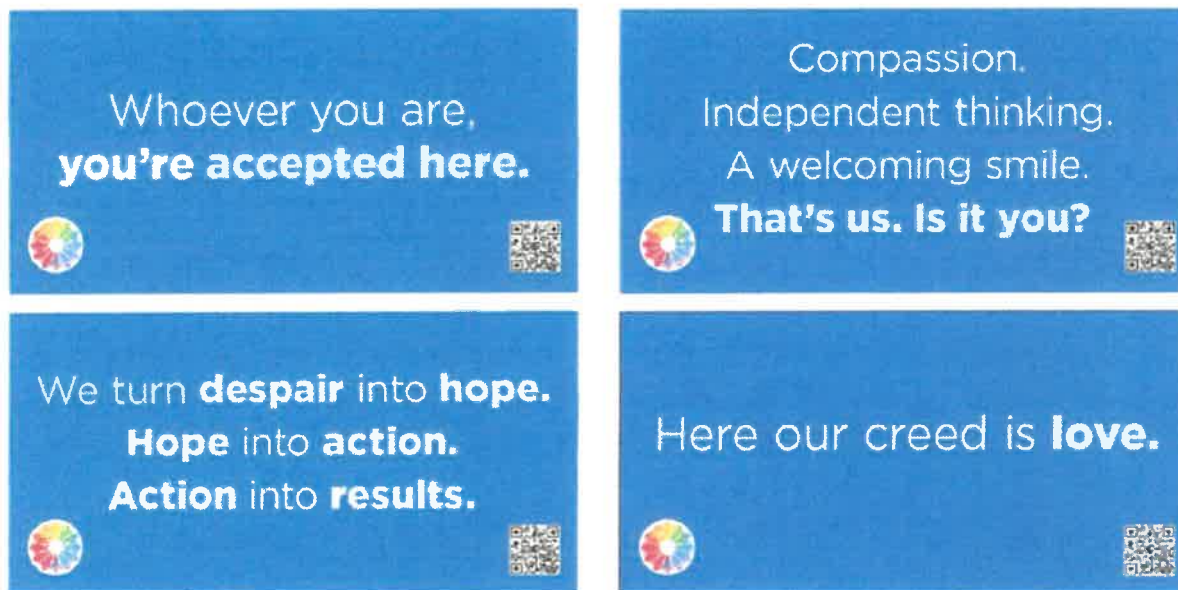
Company	Unitarian Universalists of Wellesley	Contact	Rick North
Address	309 Washington St, Wellesley, MA 02481		

Qty:	Size:	Description:
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4 8' x 4' 13 oz vinyl banner hemmed w/ grommets & wind slits @ 128.00 ea x 4 = 512.00

1 8' x 4' banner frame @ 525.00

Exhibit 3



Sub Total	1037.00
Tax	exempt
File set up	250.00
Total	1287.00
Deposit	-250.00 3/19
	payment online

**PLEASE
CHECK
PROOF!**

Please READ THIS WORK ORDER!
Make Sure All Wording, Spelling,
Art, Material And Sizes Are
Correct Before Approving.

Production will not begin until approval is emailed back stating "APPROVED"

