



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

MICHAEL F. GLAVIN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PLANNING DIVISION STAFF

GEORGE PROAKIS, *DIRECTOR OF PLANNING*
LORI MASSA, *SENIOR PLANNER*
MELISSA WOODS, *PLANNER*
DAWN PEREIRA, *ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT*

Case #: PB 2014-20
Date: March 26, 2015
Recommendation: Conditional Approval

PLANNING STAFF REPORT

Site: 337 Broadway

Applicant Name: Back Bay Sign for Carewell Urgent Care
Applicant Address: 425 Riverside Ave, Medford, MA 02155
Property Owner Name: KLT Corporation, Constanine Tsisos
Property Owner Address: 20 Red Coat Road, Framingham, MA 01701
Agent: Charles W. Cobb
Agent Address: 303 Wyman St. Suite 300, Waltham, MA 02451
Alderman: Tony Lafuente

Legal Notice: Applicant, Back Bay Sign for Carewell Urgent Care, and Owner, Corporation, seek a Special Permit under SZO §6.1.22, for new signage and awnings. CCD 45 zone. Ward 4.

Dates of Public Hearing: Planning Board – April 2, 2014

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Subject Property: The subject property is located in an existing shopping center that is on an approximately 74,983 square foot lot. Brunello's used to occupy the property that is under review. Winter Hill Bank and Walgreens are tenants in the other building on the site. There is a parking in front of, between, and at the back of the building which fronts Heath Street.
2. Proposal: The proposal is to change the signage on the building for a new tenant.
3. Green Building Practices: None listed on the application.
4. Comments:



Wiring Inspection: All signage should be (UL) listed.

Ward Alderman: Alderman LaFuente has been contacted and has not provided comments at this time.

II. FINDINGS FOR SPECIAL PERMIT:

In order to grant a special permit, the SPGA must make certain findings and determinations as outlined in §5.1.4 of the SZO. This section of the report goes through §5.1.4 in detail.

1. Information Supplied:

The Staff finds that the information provided by the Applicant conforms to the requirements of §5.1.2 of the SZO and allows for a comprehensive analysis of the project with respect to the required Special Permits.

2. Compliance with Standards: *The Applicant must comply "with such criteria or standards as may be set forth in this Ordinance which refer to the granting of the requested special permit."*

The structure is located in a CCD45 district. In accordance with SZO §6.1.22.D.5.a, alterations to an existing façade, other than one-for-one replacement of signage, require a Special Permit. The added awning and change in technology and location of the signage require a special permit.

The design guideline for signage (§6.1.22.H) in the CCD recommends, "Signage and awning design should respect buildings' context (e.g., scale, design, style, colors, materials), be oriented to pedestrians, and be subordinate to the overall building composition. Creative shapes must be carefully designed and coordinated with the overall appearance of the building. The design should also maintain an existing "signage line" and respect the character, scale, and locations of adjacent signs and awnings. Large, interior-lit or back-lit signs or awnings, neon "open" signs, vinyl or plastic materials and overly bright colors are generally discouraged. To add interest and character to the retail environment signs or awnings may convey interesting elements or logos without excessive wording. They should be limited to advertising the business name and its main goods or services, with minimal or no national brand names or logos. Type styles should enhance readability of the sign and provide information simply and legibly. Use awnings to create pleasant shaded spaces in front of a building. Signs and awnings should enhance important architectural details and not conceal or obliterate them."

In addition, OSPCD has submitted a new zoning code for adoption. In the proposed code, the each signage type is defined including the location on the building. Within limitation, most signs are by-right with the exception of larger signs like a roof sign. The following is an evaluation of the signage based on the existing and proposed regulations.

CareWell is proposing signage on the front and side elevation of the building. The existing awning, will be replaced and extended over the door with a red awning. The majority of this is a one-for-one replacement which is by-right. The red color is overly bright and discouraged but could be a perception of the rendering. Sunbrella fabric is proposed. A condition of this report is that the sunbrella fabric sample be submitted to Planning Staff for review and approval prior to installation. If the color is overly bright a darker shade or neutral color can be selected. The information on the awning is limited by the proposed code, "Information type is limited to business name, logo, and address." The Applicant shall submit a revised elevation eliminating or revising the wording on the awnings. "Open 7 days a week" and "Walk in Urgent Care" are not permitted.

There are two of the same wall signs proposed on the front and side elevation. They are internally lit channel letters. A condition of this report is that the Applicant shall submit documentation of the required dimension of the new zoning code for review and approval. Box signs and internal illumination are not permitted.

The pylon sign is a one-for-one replacement.

3. Consistency with Purposes: *The Applicant has to ensure that the project "is consistent with (1) the general purposes of this Ordinance as set forth in Article 1, and (2) the purposes, provisions, and specific objectives applicable to the requested special permit which may be set forth elsewhere in this Ordinance, such as, but not limited to, those purposes at the beginning of the various Articles."*

The proposal is consistent with the general purposes of the Ordinance as set forth under §1.2, which includes, but is not limited to encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout the City.

The proposal is consistent with the purpose of the district as the signage is simple and in scale with the façade.

4. Site and Area Compatibility: *The Applicant has to ensure that the project "(i)s designed in a manner that is compatible with the characteristics of the built and unbuilt surrounding area, including land uses."*

The new signage is compatible with the design guidelines and surrounding mixed use area as explained in finding two.

III. RECOMMENDATION

Special Permit

Based on the materials submitted by the Applicant, the above findings and subject to the following conditions, the Planning Staff recommends **CONDITIONAL APPROVAL** of the requested **SPECIAL PERMIT**.

The recommendation is based upon a technical analysis by Planning Staff of the application material based upon the required findings of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, and is based only upon information submitted prior to the public hearing. This report may be revised or updated with new recommendations, findings and/or conditions based upon additional information provided to the Planning Staff during the public hearing process.

#	Condition	Timeframe for Compliance	Verified (initial)	Notes
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1	Approval is for signage for CareWell clinic. This approval is based upon the following application materials and the plans submitted by the Applicant:	BP/CO	ISD/ Plng.							
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date (Stamp Date)</th> <th>Submission</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>May 12, 2014</td> <td>Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office</td> </tr> <tr> <td>April 18, 2014</td> <td>Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (Pages 1-6 incl site photo, front and side rendering ,technical drawing, and pylon sign)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Date (Stamp Date)	Submission	May 12, 2014	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office	April 18, 2014	Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (Pages 1-6 incl site photo, front and side rendering ,technical drawing, and pylon sign)
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Any changes to the approved elevations that are not <i>de minimis</i> must receive SPGA approval.										
Signage										
2	Applicant shall submit sunbrella fabric sample to Planning Staff for review and approval prior to installation. If the color is overly bright a darker shade or neutral color shall be selected.	BP	Plng.							
3	Signage will be limited in size and location to that shown in the elevation diagrams and lighting after 10p.m. facing residential property will be turned down or off.	CO/Cont.	Plng.							
4	The Applicant shall submit a revised elevation eliminating or revising the wording on the awnings. "Open 7 days a week" and "Walk in Urgent Care" are not permitted.	BP	Plng.							
5	Applicant shall submit documentation of the required dimensions specified in the new zoning code and applicable technology for review and approval. Box signs and internal illumination are not permitted.	Elec Permit	Plng.							
Final Sign-Off										
6	The Applicant shall contact Planning Staff at least five working days in advance of a request for a final inspection by Inspectional Services to ensure the proposal was constructed in accordance with the plans and information submitted and the conditions attached to this approval.	Final sign off	Plng.							

