

MINUTES
DESIGN REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, February 7, 2007 6:30 p.m.
Conference Room
Basement Level, Town Hall

1. **Call to Order** - Mr. Hallinan called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.
2. **Roll Call** - Members in attendance: Jay Hallinan, Andrea Boyle, and Joe Hickey. Also present: Denise Bradley, Assistant Planner

Members absent: Bruce Bockstael, Steve Hine and Tony Margiotta.

3. **Public Comments** - There was no one from the public in attendance.
4. **Minutes** - The minutes from the December 6, 2006 and January 3, 2007 Design Review Advisory Committee ("DRAC") meetings were available, but not discussed.
5. **PROJECT REVIEWS**

- 5.1 APPLICATION NO. 71-2006 - Wiggles & Giggles - Seeking review of proposed signage for property located at 1273 Silas Deane Highway. Applicant Darlene Wigglesworth presented information in response to a previous DRAC meeting in which she was asked to compare the proposed sign with those elsewhere in the plaza. Mr. Hallinan said he felt the applicant had addressed the concern expressed last time by the DRAC. Mr. Hickey made a motion to approve if the proposal is subject to Planning and Zoning Commission review following approval by the DRAC. Ms. Bradley confirmed that the proposal would be subject to review by the Commission. Mr. Hickey made a motion to approve the application, Jay Hallinan seconded, and the DRAC voted unanimously to approve the application.
- 5.2 APPLICATION NO. 72-2006 - City Fish - Seeking review of proposed signage for property located at 884 Silas Deane Highway. Brian Gondeck of Gondeck Construction represented City Fish. Mr. Gondeck said he had built for City Fish an expanded kitchen and added a dining area. He had made but not yet mounted on the expanded building two 4'x 8' signs, one each for the front and back of the building. The signs are made of concrete over foam with black lettering and the City Fish logo. Mr. Gondeck said he had previously appeared before the Zoning Board of Appeals ("ZBA") and received approval to mount the signs on the building, even though the square footage of the signs slightly exceeds the allowed amount. Mr. Gondeck presented a copy of the approval he received from ZBA, and said Mr. O'Connor of the ZBA said that the rear sign did not count toward the square footage limit because it was not viewable from a public street and therefore not considered a sign. Ms. Boyle pointed out that City Fish maybe does not need the 2 signs as it already gets a good deal of marketing from the numerous company trucks it has parked within public view. Mr. Hickey made a motion to approve the proposal because it was an overall improvement to the building. The DRAC commented that the lighting planned to go along with the signs appeared like it would not properly illuminate the signs, and may detract from the appearance of the building. These DRAC concerns were addressed when Ms. Bradley confirmed that the lighting would be subject to subsequent inspection by the Zoning Enforcement Officer. Mr. Hallinan seconded the earlier motion to approve, and the DRAC voted unanimously to approve the application. Mr. Gondeck asked if that meant he could put up the signs. Ms. Bradley replied yes, and that a building permit should be obtained first.
- 5.3 APPLICATION NO. 73-2007 - Koto Steakhouse - Seeking review of proposed signage for property located at 2138 Berlin Turnpike. Jason Xiao was present on behalf of Koto, which is a hibachi restaurant and sushi bar replacing the Grand Buffet. The free standing sign next to the Berlin Turnpike is in the Town of Newington, so Wethersfield will not regulate this sign. However, the having a freestanding sign will detract from the overall wall signage permitted. Two signs are proposed for the building, which is located in Wethersfield. One 3' x 16' sign will face west toward the Turnpike. One 3'

x 8' sign is shown in the application on the south side of the building. Mr. Xiao said the diagram was in error, and that Koto wanted to place the 3' x 8' sign on the north side of the building. Mr. Xiao said Koto felt a sign on the north side it would be more visible to traffic traveling south along the Berlin Turnpike. The DRAC commented for the benefit of Koto that they felt a sign on the north side of the building would be less visible to traffic than one on the south side, and that future development adjacent to the north may block a sign on the north side. Mr. Xiao said Koto would still prefer the smaller sign on the north side. Ms. Bradley said she would check with the Town building official about how to allow the sign on the north side with the error in the diagram. Mr. Xiao asked if it was OK to proceed with construction of the main sign. Mr. Hickey made a motion to approve construction of the main sign. Mr. Hallinan seconded the motion, and the DRAC voted unanimously to approve the application.

5.4 APPLICATION NO. 74-2007 - Rocky's Ace Hardware - Seeking review of proposed signage for property located at 200 Silas Deane Highway. Lauren Rosen of ArtFX represented the applicant. Mr. Rosen said that Rocky's is a chain of 40 hardware stores based in Massachusetts. The store would fill the last vacancy in the "Price Rite plaza". The proposal met the signage review criteria. Ms. Boyle made a motion to approve with a condition that any building damage from the previous sign be repaired as part of putting up the new sign. Mr. Hickey seconded, and the DRAC voted unanimously to approve. Mr. Rosen said that his company always repairs damage from previous signs, and that he was aware that he would need to get a building permit before putting up the new sign.

5.5 APPLICATION NO. 75-2007 - Saraci Insurance, LLC - Seeking review of proposed site improvements for property located at 312 Silas Deane Highway. Mr. Saraci was representing his company. Ms. Bradley explained that this address is also the site of the proposed Bosnian Cultural Center. No outdoor renovation or signage is planned, just handicap ramp and parking improvements. Town landscaping requirements apply. Mr. Hallinan mentioned to Mr. Saraci that loan money is available for certain building improvements. Ms. Bradley explained that Wetlands Commission review is needed for the erosion and sedimentation control plan. Mr. Hickey asked if a sign could be approved at a later date if Mr. Saraci changes his mind. Ms. Bradley confirmed that signage can be approved at a later date. Mr. Hickey made a motion to approve with the condition that the landscaping plan be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission. Mr. Hallinan seconded and the DRAC voted unanimously to approve the application.

6. **Other Business** - Ms. Bradley noted that the application for the Bosnian Cultural Center on Goodwin Ave. had been withdrawn. Future re-application is anticipated. Religious institutions are permissible in residential areas.

7. **Adjournment** - Mr. Hallinan adjourned the meeting at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin T. Sullivan
Committee Recording Secretary