

TOWN OF WESTPORT ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

TUESDAY, September 27, 2022 - DRAFT MINUTES

Board Members Present: Ward French, Chairman, Vesna Herman, Jon Halper and Manuel Castedo. Staff: Donna Douglass

1. Minutes from the July 26, 2022, meeting were approved.
2. **1076 Post Road East/1060 Post Road East:** Review and comment on proposed new building on existing gas station “pad” (Parcel ID#F09/050/000) submitted by Rick Hoag, Frederick William Hoag Architect LLC for property owned by Post Plaza LLC located in the HSD zone. (Survey Map by Langan CT, New Haven, dated 8/31/22; Site Plan by Building Concepts, Westport, 8/31/22; Proposed plans and renderings by Building Concepts, Westport, 8/31/22)

Appeared: Rick Hoag, Architect

Mr. Hoag said the site is that of a former gas station in the Post Plaza parking lot adjacent to Church Street South. The plan is for a small fast-food drive through restaurant with parking for 32 vehicles. The property is accessible from the Post Road and there is a 2nd curb cut off Church Street. Mr. Hoag provided a video of the property and building.

Mr. Hoag described the building and said, although it is small, a little less than 2000 s.f., it would need a variance for square footage. He said the building is a simple, timber gable concept:

- CLT composite roof structure, a series of 3 gables decreasing in height from back to front
- Irregularly placed vertical CLT boards and butt glazed insulated glass siding
- Extended roof over an entrance area and side drive through window with butt glazed insulated glass storefront
- Rooftop equipment screened in gables

Manuel Castedo said it is an interesting form. He asked if there would be interior seating as well as the drive through. Mr. Hoag said there was a small area for seating and a service counter. It would be up to a tenant to decide how to use the space.

Vesna Herman verified that the mechanicals would be screened in the roof. Mr. Hoag said there is a dropped ceiling, leaving room for equipment under the roof gables. Ms. Herman asked if he would be using CLT throughout the building. Mr. Hoag said if he can get CLT siding to match the roof, yes, it would be a CLT shell.

Jon Halper asked about the material on roof and sidewalls. Mr. Hoag said it is aluminum that looks like wood. If I can find some that is the right color, it will be used for the roof and sidewalls. Mr. Halper said, from a use point of view, the size would be a challenge for Starbucks, who could use it? Mr. Hoag said this is a zoning exercise. You need a design to go to ZBA and the P & Z. This plan serves as proof this can be done. It could be used by some small operator.

Vesna Herman asked, regarding scale and proportions, how it relates to The Little Barn next door. Mr. Hoag said the Little Barn is bigger than this, height wise they are about the same. This sits quite far back from Church Street. It is also quite far away from the Amazon building.

Ward French said, without really knowing who will be using it, this building could work well in that location. I support it as submitted; it is a nice looking building.

Jon Halper concurred. It is an interesting design, I like it. I understand it is a “placeholder”, hopefully the overall concept can be maintained.

Manuel Castedo agreed, it is a nice concept.

Vesna Herman also liked the design.

THE DESIGN IS RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL AS PRESENTED (Unanimous)

- 3. 830 Post Road East:** Review and comment on proposed new signage (Parcel ID# F09//067/000) submitted by Larry Bourque, ABC Sign Corp, for property owned by 830 Post Road East, LLC, located in a GBD. (Plot Plan by Leonard Surveyors, LLC, 7/7/22; Sign Design, ABC Sign, Bridgeport, CT, 5/29/19)

Appeared: Larry Bourque, ABC Sign

Mr. Bourque said the sign is a 2-sided, 31.67 sq. ft. site sign and is compliant with regulations:

- Sign Face is 6’4” high x 5 ft wide with a foot high cornice at the top and white boarder at the bottom on posts
- 11 feet tall overall, 12 inches deep
- Colors are a dark green sign and posts with white and teal sign bands with black letters
- There are 3 large tenant panels and 6 smaller underneath
- A large tan oval with the street number is at the top of the sign board
- The sign is located in a landscaped garden area in front of a 4-story contemporary building

Vesna Herman clarified the colors and asked what the sign is made of. Mr. Bourque said it is aluminum with a plastic face.

Manuel Castedo said it is a lot bigger and raised off the ground than the previous sign. The setting is nice. Mr. Bourque said everyone wants to be on the sign. Additional tenants will need to be added. Mr. Castedo said, it still looks very large.

Ward French said if the size is by way of right in terms of the regulations, we won’t debate the size.

Jon Halper asked if other designs had been considered that might relate more to the “modern” glass building. Mr. Bourque said the chief designer went through 3-4 proposals with the clients and this is what they selected. Mr. Halper said he wasn’t in love with it, but it’s not egregious provided it meets the regulations. He’d prefer a nod to the building but if the client picked it, so be it.

Vesna Herman agreed, it’s not the visually most pleasing with the different fonts, lettering, shapes and colors. It could be better, simpler. It looks too big, too complex.

Manuel Castedo said he would like to see something more minimalist. Perhaps remove that big cornice.

Ward French said we don’t seem to have a consensus. Perhaps harmonization of the design, something more simple, related more to the building it represents would work better. Mr. Bourque objected to the criticism of the size since it complies with regulations. Mr. French said he didn’t say it was too big. Lose the cornice and make it look less large. Mr. Bourque said without the cornice it will look pretty bland. Mr. French said it doesn’t relate to the building. Mr. Bourque said he would go back and look at the building for ideas.

Jon Halper said he wanted to temper the idea of the building as a reference, we don’t need a sign as unattractive as the building. This is a traditional sign, the base and cornice feel Colonial, traditional, it’s not compatible with what the building is. A more neutral color scheme would help.

Vesna Herman agreed. The street number is in an elliptical shape that doesn’t fit with all the rectangles. She suggested moving it to the bottom board. Mr. Bourque said he could lose the oval but would hate to move the number to the bottom of the sign. Jon Halper said 830 at the top without the oval is fine. Ward French said the height is a big issue.

Board members agreed to ask the applicant to return after taking into consideration its comments.

APPLICANT IS ASKED TO RETURN AFTER TAKING THE BOARD’S COMMENTS INTO CONSIDERATION (Unanimous)

4. **1076 Post Road East:** Proposed new signage (Parcel ID #F09//050/000) submitted by Gary Potts, Professional Permits, for property owned by Post Plaza LLC c/o Alix Field located in the HSD zone. (Map location plan by Atlas, dated 9/7/22; Site plan by Atlas, dated 9/7/22; updated sign design, Atlas dated 9/7/22).

Appeared: Gary Potts

Mr. Potts said he was back for a small change to the Amazon Fresh sign, previously approved by the ARB. It is the addition of 18-inch-high white, wall mounted channel lit letters underneath the word “fresh” that match the rest of the sign.

Board members had no questions and agreed that the design was fine.

APPLICATION IS RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL AS PRESENTED (Unanimous)

5. **606 Post Road East:** Proposed new signage (Parcel ID# F09//067/000) submitted by Jeff Kaufman, JMKA Architects for property owned by Equity One Westport Center, LLC located in a GBD/A. (Site plan, JMKA/architects dated 3/4/22; Sign design not dated)

Appeared: Jeff Kaufman, Architect; Molly Henry

Mr. Kaufman said the site is the newly renovated shopping center across from Fresh Market. The business, Hammer & Nails, is a grooming establishment for men. Signs are proposed for the front and rear elevations.

Front elevation: Hammer & Nails, 2 ft high aluminum and acrylic illuminated letters with Grooming Shop for Guys in small caps below

Rear elevation: 4 ft x 2 ft tall at center yellow vinyl sign board with black letters and trim, unlit
Ward French verified that they are about the same size letters as the rest of the signs in the strip.

Vesna Herman and Jon Halper had no questions.

Manuel Castedo felt the scale looked larger than 12 inches.

Molly Henry said the image of signage in place is not to scale, it is a quick mock up provided by the landlord. She said the letters are 2 ft total height.

Board members had no further questions and agreed the sign designs were fine.

SIGN DESIGNS ARE RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL AS PRESENTED
(Unanimous)

6. **1439 Post Road East:** Proposed new signage (Parcel ID# H09//022/000) submitted by Tracy Becker, Sign Pro, for property owned by Rodd Corporation, c/o Reynolds & Rowella, LLP in a GBD/A. (No site map, Sign design by Sign Pro, last revision dated 9/6/22)

Appeared: Tracy Becker, Sign Pro

Mr. Becker described the sign:

- Double sided sit sign for 2 tenants
- LED sign box 5 ft. 2 inches wide by 5 ft 4 inches high in an existing steel frame incorporating 2 signs
- Top sign is maroon letters on white for Castle Wine & Spirits
- Bottom sign is white Metro Mattress letters on red background
- Attached at the top of the sign frame is a 6-inch x 12 inch white aluminum and vinyl sign with black letters depicting the street number

Jon Halper had no questions.

Vesna Herman verified that the whole sign is illuminated.

Board members thought the design was fine.

THE SIGN DESIGN IS RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL AS PRESENTED
(Unanimous)

Sally Palmer

Recording Secretary