

The Planning and Zoning Commission of the Town of Avon held a ***GoToMeeting*** on Tuesday, February 16, 2021. Present were Thomas Armstrong, Chair, Brian Ladouceur, Jr., Vice Chair, Lisa Levin, Mary Harrop, Dean Hamilton, and Alternate Elaine Primeau (sat for meeting). Peter Mahoney, Joseph Gentile, and Alternates Drew Bloom and Raz Alexe were not in attendance. Also present was Hiram Peck, Director of Planning and Community Development.

Mr. Armstrong called the meeting to order at 7pm.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mrs. Harrop motioned to approve the minutes of the January 26, 2021, meeting, as amended by Mr. Armstrong. The motion, seconded by Mr. Hamilton, received unanimous approval.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

App. #4938 - Avon Town Center LLC, owner, Viewpoint Sign, applicant, request for Special Exception under Section VII.C.2.f.(3) of Avon Zoning Regulations to permit a wall sign larger than 75 SF, 50 Climax Road (Whole Foods), Parcel 1830050, in an AVC Zone

App. #4939 - Avon Town Center LLC, owner, Viewpoint Sign, applicant, request for Special Exception under Section VII.C.2.f.(3) of Avon Zoning Regulations to permit a second wall sign larger than 75 SF, 50 Climax Road (Whole Foods), Parcel 1830050, in an AVC Zone

Present were Attorney Robert M. Meyers, on behalf of the owner and Jeff Kwass, applicant, Viewpoint Sign.

Jeff Kwass explained that one wall sign will be LED illuminated, face-lit channel letters (131 SF) and one sign will be fabricated aluminum and circular in shape (169 SF) with the standard logo for Whole Foods Market, also LED illuminated.

Mr. Peck explained that both proposed signs would be located on the same side (south elevation) of the building. The circular wall sign (169 SF) proposed for the western side of the building is the larger of the two signs and will be seen the most clearly from Route 44. He indicated that the size of this sign is appropriate per the Regulations, taking into account the size of the building as well as its distance from Route 44. He addressed the channel letters wall sign (131 SF) proposed for the eastern side of the building will be seen primarily from Climax Road. This sign size is also appropriate per the Regulations. The total amount of signage proposed for both wall signs is the maximum permitted under the Regulations. The signs meet the requirements of Section VIII.

In response to Mrs. Harrop, Mr. Kwass confirmed that the wall signs would only be illuminated/lit at night; the signs would not be on all the time. The signs would not be on an automatic sensor – someone would have to turn them on and off manually.

In response to Ms. Levin, Mr. Peck commented that the channel letters proposed for this wall sign would be very similar to the existing channel letter sign for “Fresh Market”, at 315 West Main Street. He also noted that the circular sign for Whole Foods would look similar to the existing circular sign for “Big Y”, located at 255 West Main.

Mr. Ladouceur commented that there will not be a wall sign for Whole Foods on the western elevation of the building (facing Climax Road) such that people will only see the Whole Foods' sign as they are traveling down Climax Road, from north to south, from the traffic circle to Route 44. Mr. Peck noted that that is correct.

There were no comments from the public.

There were no further comments from the Commission.

The public hearing for Apps. #4938-39 was closed, as well as the entire public hearing portion of the meeting.

## **PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

Mr. Ladouceur motioned to waive Administrative Procedure #6 and consider the public hearing items. Ms. Levin seconded the motion that received unanimous approval.

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Mr. Ladouceur motioned to approve Apps. #4938 and #4939, as represented and discussed subject to the following clarification:

**NOTE:** The drawing entitled "Avon Village Center Avon, CT, Exhibit A, Amended – Project Site Plan" shall only be referenced for the purposes of identifying the "Location of Proposed Sign A" and the "Location of Proposed Sign B".

Ms. Levin seconded the motion.

Mr. Armstrong indicated that the Commission agrees that Apps. #4938 and #4939 meet the criteria and requirements of Section VIII of the Regulations.

The Commission unanimously granted approval for Apps. #4938 and #4939.

## **STAFF UPDATES**

### Avon Village Center Status

Mr. Peck reported on Avon Village Center noting that the steel is now going up for Buildings R1 and R2, located on the west side of Climax Road; the grading for those buildings is also moving forward such that hopefully soon the wall and plantings to be located behind those buildings can also be installed. The paving of Climax Road will be done as soon as the weather is warm enough (above 40 degrees consistently).

The work on the inside of Whole Foods continues and the building should be turned over to the developer sometime in May 2021 for the final interior fit out.

Mr. Meyers addressed the Whole Foods building noting that the interior work is being done by Whole Foods but clarified that both are being done by the same general contractor (CM&B). The building is on target to be finished and turned over to Whole Foods on May 7, 2021. Whole Foods is not yet willing to commit to an opening date. Mr. Meyers indicated that while the time between building turnover and opening is approximately 4 weeks right now there is no guarantee.

Mr. Peck reported that Town Staff continues to work with the developer to address any issues as they arise. There are some technical items that will need to go before the Town Council (e.g. changes to sewer lines, water lines, and road locations/ownership – some areas may have changed due to construction); the timing of a public hearing before the Council is not yet known. The building under construction next to Whole Foods is also making good progress; this building will represent the southern half of the new “Main Street” and “Market Street”. Construction is moving along as fast as possible taking into account Covid. The bike trail will reopen sometime in March 2021; the building also under construction right near the trail will have public restrooms. As soon as the snow is gone a sculpture garden will be constructed. The project is coming together and the Staff works continuously to move things forward. He concluded by welcoming calls to the Town Hall with any questions about this project.

Mr. Armstrong addressed outdoor dining and communicated to Mr. Meyers that it would be in the best interests of the developer to look for outdoor dining possibilities in the Avon Village Center project adding that identifying such areas in advance would be easier than doing it later as an afterthought.

Mr. Meyers indicated his understanding and agreement adding that there have been 5-7 areas identified to date (Letters of Intent have been sent and include café users).

#### **Covid (Executive Order Revised)**

Mr. Peck reported that the latest Order from the Governor talks about the possibility of making outdoor dining a permitted use in the future. He added that the Town appears to be on the same page as the Governor’s Order noting that he has received calls from many restaurants who want to continue outdoor dining on a more permanent basis. Relative to Whole Foods, there is a small space between the eastern end of the building and Climax Road where there is some outdoor dining setup (pergola). He indicated that he is paying close attention to what is going on at the State legislature and encouraged the Commission to tune into the virtual sessions if interested. He confirmed that the Town Hall is still closed to the public but Staff can meet people in the parking lot if they need to drop things off.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:35pm.

Linda Sadlon  
Avon Planning and Community Development