

MINUTES OF THE
GATLINBURG ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
AUGUST 24, 2023
THURSDAY, 1:30 P.M., CITY HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT

Kevin Tierney
Ken Webster
Jared Durrett
Randy Watson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Maggie Bowers
Scott Holman
Brad Justice

OTHERS PRESENT

Baker Jones
Megan Grohl
Briley Saiyasak
Gabrielle Taylor

Staff Representative: Jeff Ownby, Building and Planning Director
 Dalton York, Assistant City Planner
 Jodi Bible, Executive Secretary

Chairman Ken Webster called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Mr. Kevin Tierney made a motion to approve the previous minutes from the August 10, 2023, meeting. Mr. Randy Watson provided a second with all members voting “aye.”

Staff Report

Petitions and Communications from the Public

Old Business

New Business

Review and consideration of proposed signage for “Hampton Inn,” located at 967 Parkway, requested by Stratus Unlimited.

Staff presented the request for proposed signage for “Hampton Inn,” located at 967 Parkway. The signage proposed is one (1) wall sign and one (1) free-standing sign. The wall sign is the basic corporate logo sign that measures out to sixty (60) square feet. The sign description is five (5) feet, deep face lit channel letters with remove power supplies, the color displayed will be red during the daytime and nighttime. The free-standing sign is simply getting a renovation, the footprint will remain the same as the previous structure. The renovation on the free-standing sign will include repainting the existing cabinet and retrofitting with LED lighting, confirmation of condition of faces to ensure proper illumination after LEF retrofit. The applicant will also be removing the letter board from the existing free-standing sign. The square footage for this sign is roughly fifty (50) square feet. The Hampton Inn does have road frontage on two city streets so that gives them additional allowance in sign square footage per Section 411 of the Municipal Zoning Ordinance.

Following a brief discussion, Mr. Randy Watson made a motion to approve the request as presented. Mr. Jared Durrett provided a second with all members voting, “aye.”

Review and consideration of proposed signage and an ornate object for “Sky Bridge Base Building,” located at 765 Parkway, requested by SmithGroup.

Staff presented the request for proposed signage and an ornate object for “Sky Bridge Base Building,” located at 765 Parkway. The signage proposed are three (3) different wall signs that will

be in different locations. The first sign presented will face the Parkway, positioned vertically and is twenty-eight (28) square feet. The proposed sign is aluminum applied letters with structural sealant to the glass. The second sign proposal is for another wall sign attached and constructed the same as the previously described sign, but only measures out to twelve (12) square feet this sign will face the Maples Lane side of the building. The third sign presented was the ticket sign that measures out to 2.8 square feet, but Staff informed the Board that this sign would be considered 1 of the 4 allowable incidental signs for the complex. The last item in the proposal to be presented was the ornate object that will be located near their information booth facing the Parkway. The ornate object is a black bear constructed of pieces of nails, an abstract sculpture, that compliments the industrial exterior of the new base building.

Following a brief discussion, Mr. Kevin Tierney made a motion to approve the request as presented. Mr. Jared Durrett provided a second with all members voting, "aye." Mr. Randy Watson abstained from the vote.

Review and consideration of proposed signage for "Embassy Suites," located at 520 Airport Road, requested by Stratus Unlimited.

Staff presented the request for proposed signage for "Embassy Suites," located at 520 Airport Road. The signage proposed is one (1) free standing sign and two (2) wall signs. The free-standing sign is their entrance sign to the hotel. The sign measures out to twenty-eight (28) square feet. The base of the free-standing sign will be replaced with a new stone veneer at the base. The first of the two wall signs are located above the porte cochere at the entrance. This wall sign measures out to thirty-nine (39) square feet. The logo portion of the sign proposal is eight (8) inches deep aluminum construction, acrylic face with applied vinyl and internal illumination. The letters are five (5) inches deep aluminum construction, acrylic faces with applied vinyl and internal illumination. The last sign proposed is the logo "E" wall sign display on the northeast side of the hotel. The logo is a little over twenty (20.7) square feet. The logo is an 8" deep aluminum construction with flex faces with applied vinyl and internal illumination.

Following a brief discussion, Mr. Jared Durrett made a motion to approve the request as presented. Mr. Kevin Tierney provided a second with all members voting, "aye."

Review and consideration of proposed signage and an ornate object for "Pucker's Sports Bar," located at 745 Parkway, requested by R2R, Studios and Sign Co., Inc.

Staff presented the request for proposed signage and a request for an ornate object for, "Pucker's Sports Bar," located at 745 Parkway. The proposal includes one (1) wall sign, one (1) blade sign, and one (1) ornate object located at the front entrance of the sports bar. Sign 1 is the wall sign. Sign 1 is a marquee sign with open channel letters with bulbs that measures out to a little over seventeen (17.5) square feet. The background of the wall is black with white bulbs illuminating. Sign 2 is a double sided, blade sign with "Pucker's" displayed on it. The "Pucker's" section of the blade sign is channel letters and lips with internal LED lighting and open channel arrow with 2" bulbs. The lips will be colored "real red", "Pucker's" will be colored "shamrock", and the background will be the same shade black used in sign 1 proposal. The ornate object being presented is a large lip display as the patrons enter the establishment. The color proposed for the lips is the same "real red" being used in sign #2 proposal. The inside of the lips will be internally lit with a tape light. The dimensions for the ornate object were not provided in the submittal, without knowing how far they are going to protrude does not give the Board all the information required to pass the item. The building sits right at setback line, not allowing much room for a dimensional ornate object. Staff mentioned a section of the zoning ordinance, section 412.3.1, that references approval and applications of the Environmental

Design Review Board. The Board expressed concern about approving such a provocative image to be displayed on the Parkway. The Board defends that the proposed ornate object could possibly “constitute a traffic and safety hazard because it is distracting or is not considered indecent or otherwise offensive to public morals.” (Gatlinburg Zoning Ordinance section 412.3.1, G) The Board feels strongly that it is not suitable and appropriate for the commercial district. Aside from the strong feelings regarding the ornate object, the applicant was not able to provide accurate setback information regarding the location of the ornate object thus resulting in the Board inability to approve the request.

Following a discussion, the Board decided to approve the items presented in this package individually. Mr. Randy Watson made a motion to approve sign #1 as presented. Mr. Jared Durrett provided a second with all members voting, “aye.” Mr. Kevin Tierney made a motion to approve Sign #2 as presented. Mr. Jared Durrett provided a second with all members voting, aye.” Mr. Kevin Tierney made a motion to deny the ornate object as presented. Mr. Jared Durrett providing a second with all members voting, “aye.”

Review and consideration of proposed signage for “Fairfield by Marriot,” located at 611 Airport Road, requested by Stratus Unlimited.

During new business, Ms. Gabrielle Taylor, sales representative for Stratus Unlimited, presented this item to the Board for their review and consideration. Mr. Kevin Tierney made a motion to accept the new item as an agenda item. Mr. Jared provided a second with all members voting, “aye” to add the item.

The proposal includes replacement faces for the signs located on 611 Airport Road. The face changes are corporate updates. The first sign to review is a wall sign measuring out to fifty (50) square feet that will be located on the front of the hotel. The main difference between the new proposed signs and the previous is the color scheme. The original Fairfield by Marriot is red, and the new sign will have “Fairfield” in blue and “by Marriot” in black. The sign proposal also included a free-standing sign located at the road entrance to the hotel. The proposed free-standing sign will be in the same footprint as the previous sign. Measuring out to eleven (11) square feet. Much like the other signs in this proposal, the color change will be the most significant change in this proposed free-standing sign going from black to blue.

Following a brief discussion, Mr. Kevin Tierney made a motion to approve the request as presented. Mr. Jared Durrett provided a second with all members voting, “aye.”

Unscheduled Items

Staff approached the Board with a procedural inquiry. Staff inquired about how the Board believes Staff should enforce ordinances pertaining to ornate objects. Upon recent inspections of downtown, Staff has noticed a few ornate objects that are being placed without the Board’s review and approval or objects that are not permitted. The Board suggested approaching business owner and giving them an opportunity to comply prior to issuing citations.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:42 p.m. following a motion made by Mr. Kevin Tierney and a second provided by Mr. Brad Justice.