



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK
Architectural Review Board

302 Main Street • Old Saybrook, Connecticut 06475-1741
Telephone (860) 395-3131 • FAX (860) 395-1216
www.oldsaybrookct.org

Executive Board

Emily Grochowski, Chairman
Andre Laferriere, Vice Chairman
Edward Armstrong
Donna Leake
Kathryn Toolan

Alternate Members

Tina Rupp
Kate Caldarella

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
HYBRID MEETING

Monday, May 22, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.
Town Hall, 2nd Floor Conference Room
302 Main Street, Old Saybrook

I. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Roll Call

The Chair E. Grochowski called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

Members Present – E. Grochowski, A. Laferriere, K. Toolan, D. Leake (left at 7:52),
E. Armstrong, T. Rupp (remote, arrived at 7:04, seated later in meeting)

Members Absent – K. Caldarella

Staff – Carolina Maharbiz, Recording Clerk

B. Minutes - This agenda item was heard at the end of the meeting.

II. SIGN APPLICATIONS

**A. “Hartford Healthcare & CT GI” Application for Certificate of Zoning
Compliance for Signs**

215 Elm Street, Map 38/Lot 002, Industrial District

Applicant/Agent: Kristine Braccidiferro, Sign Pro Inc.

Owner: 215 Elm, LLC

Tracy Becker presented and Martha Santilli, Hartford Healthcare Ambulatory Brand Manager, was present to answer questions. Kristine Braccidiferro was also present from Sign Pro Inc.

With respect to the monument sign, Ms. Becker stated that the applicant has applied for a special exemption for use of the colors and requested that the Board approve both options. E. Grochowski stated that the sign is not dark sky compliant and proposed a linear, concealed LED light that washes the sign from above. Ms. Santilli and Ms. Becker agreed to that option. The Board then discussed the directional signs and the number allowed under the regulations. Ms. Becker mentioned that at the most recent ARB meeting, the Board stated that the address line does not count as a directional sign. Ms. Becker also confirmed that the applicant is allowed four total at four s.f. each.

With respect to the building signs, E. Grochowski stated that these signs are not what was in the original application, and they do not complement the building; the original approval had black letters with gooseneck lighting. She also stated that the text “powered by GI Alliance” is not legible and could be dangerous for someone driving on the highway, and further that the signs give a “Frontage Road” look. She also mentioned that the signs are just for the highway and not for drivers coming off of the 95 southbound exit. T. Rupp suggested enlarging the Hartford Healthcare sign and taking out the CT GI sign. Ms. Becker said that the applicant would be amenable to placing the CT GI sign above Hartford Healthcare, but E. Grochowski stated that would not be enough. D. Leake stated that not every applicant includes a logo and opined that the two signs together do not look good. In response to a question from Ms. Becker regarding what portion of the regulations the signs do not meet, E. Grochowski said that the signs do not meet the qualitative aspects of the regulations, specifically that the signs do not complement the architecture or the other signs. She also stated that this is a modification to a previous approval and the previous approval was black lettering with gooseneck lighting on an architectural trim band, which is the epitome of what the regulations ask for, so she does not want to approve a modification that is less consistent with the qualitative aspects of the regulations. Although she opined that one or both signs could be in the frieze board or one of them could be on the cupola, she still feels the signs do not work together. A. Laferriere pointed to several standards under 64.3 of the Regulations, specifically (1) the standard that mentions whether the sign preserves the historic integrity of the building and (2) whether the sign is basic enough to ensure legibility as well as reduce visual clutter along the roadway. The Board members all agreed that the building signs do not work together and create visual clutter. Ms. Becker requested that the building signs portion of the application be continued so that the applicants can regroup and come up with alternatives.

The Board next discussed the window sign and agreed that it is acceptable. E. Grochowski confirmed that the decal is only four colored pieces and nothing else. Finally, regarding the future tenant signs, E. Grochowski requested that the recessed section not be included in the total length and that the applicant return with sizing dimensions for future tenants, specifically the widths corrected and shown as black lettering with dashes boxing the lettering to show size.

MOTION for conditional approval of either option for the monument sign in the “Hartford Healthcare & CT GI” Application pending Zoning approval for the colored option with the requirement that the ground-mounted up light be replaced with a top-mounted LED dark-sky-compliant light; and motion in support of the colored option; **MADE:** E. Grochowski; **SECONDED:** K. Toolan; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** E. Grochowski, A. Laferriere, K. Toolan, D. Leake, E. Armstrong; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None. **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

MOTION to recommend approval of the directional signs as presented in the “Hartford Healthcare & CT GI” Application; **MADE:** E. Grochowski; **SECONDED:** K. Toolan; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** E. Grochowski, A. Laferriere, K. Toolan, D. Leake, E. Armstrong; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None. **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

MOTION to recommend approval of the window sign as presented in the “Hartford Healthcare & CT GI” Application; **MADE:** E. Grochowski; **SECONDED:** A. Laferriere; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** E. Grochowski, A. Laferriere, K. Toolan, D. Leake, E. Armstrong; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None. **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

MOTION to continue the internally-illuminated wall signs on the west elevation and tenant signs of the “Hartford Healthcare & CT GI” Application to the next available meeting; **MADE:** E. Grochowski; **SECONDED:** D. Leake; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** E. Grochowski, A. Laferriere, K. Toolan, D. Leake, E. Armstrong; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None. **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

D. Leake left the meeting at 7:52 p.m. T. Rupp was seated for D Leake.

B. “Pro Building & Excavation, LLC” Application for Certificate of Zoning Compliance for Signs

97 Elm Street, Map 36/Lot 90, Shopping Center B-2 District

Applicant/Agent: Olin Paige Owner: FC Real Estate, LLC

Olin Paige presented and stated that he kept the same sign and colors. E. Grochowski stated that the sign is legible and asked about lighting. Mr. Paige stated that there is ground-mounted lighting already there.

MOTION to approve “Pro Building & Excavation” Application as presented; **MADE:** E. Grochowski; **SECONDED:** K. Toolan; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** E. Grochowski, A. Laferriere, K. Toolan, E. Armstrong, T. Rupp; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None. **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

III. REFERRALS

A. “2023 Comprehensive Update to the Plan of Conservation & Development”

Petitioner: Old Saybrook Planning Commission

ACTION: Review draft plan and report to the Planning Commission by June 1, 2023

A. Laferriere and E. Armstrong shared their comments on the Plan. E. Armstrong agreed to mark up the various sections with his changes and incorporate A. Laferriere’s comments into a cover letter from the Board.

MOTION that the Board supports the inclusion of any comments received tonight or received in the upcoming week; **MADE:** E. Grochowski; **SECONDED:** A. Laferriere; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** E. Grochowski, A. Laferriere, K. Toolan, E. Armstrong, T. Rupp; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None. **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

Agenda Item I.B. Minutes:

MOTION to accept the Minutes of May 8, 2023, as presented. **MADE:** E. Grochowski; **SECONDED:** E. Armstrong; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** E. Grochowski, A. Laferriere, K.

Toolan, E. Armstrong, T. Rupp; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None. **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to adjourn the meeting of May 22, 2023 at 8:13 p.m. to the next regular meeting scheduled for Monday, June 12, 2023, at 7 p.m., Town Hall, 2nd Floor Conference Room.
MADE: E. Grochowski; **SECONDED:** A. Laferriere; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** E. Grochowski, A. Laferriere, K. Toolan, E. Armstrong, T. Rupp; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None. **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Carolina Maharbiz, Recording Clerk