



City of New Bedford

Department of Planning, Housing & Community Development

608 Pleasant St, New Bedford, Massachusetts 02740

Telephone: (508) 979.1500 Facsimile: (508) 979.1575

PATRICK J. SULLIVAN

DIRECTOR

STAFF REPORT - *AMENDED

**Amended text denoted by an asterisk, with bolded and italicized text*

REPORT DATE

June 29, 2018

PLANNING BOARD MEETING

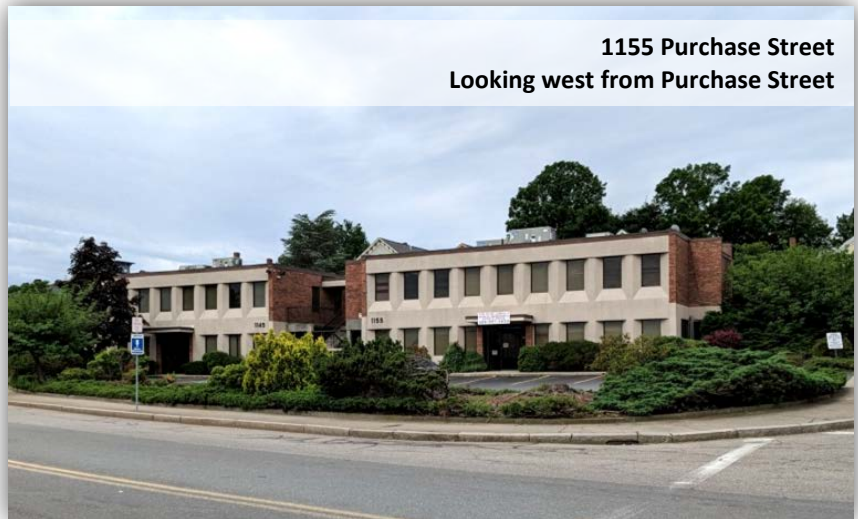
July 11, 2018

**Case #18-31: GROUND SIGN SITE
PLAN REVIEW**
1155 Purchase Street
Map: 59 Lot: 204

Owner: Lacoste Family
Limited Partnership
12 Hetty Green Drive
Dartmouth, MA
02748

Applicant: SouthCoast
Endodontics
1155 Purchase Street
New Bedford, MA
02740

**Applicant's
Agent:** Poyant Signs, Inc.
125 Samuel Barnet Blvd.
New Bedford, MA 02745



1155 Purchase Street

Looking west from Purchase Street

Overview

Request by applicant is for **New Ground Sign Site Plan** approval for a pylon sign at the Foster Hill Professional Center. The property is located at 1155 Purchase Street in a Mixed Use Business [MUB] zoned district. The proposed sign would be placed along the Purchase Street frontage in approximately the same location as a pylon sign recently removed from the site. Site Plan Review is required for commercial or industrial ground signs within Chapter 9 Comprehensive Zoning Section 5427.



Proposed location of sign in
landscape bed

Existing Conditions

The project site, the Foster Hill Professional Center, is situated just north of the downtown, and hosts a 5,288 SF, two-story professional office building. The building currently has multiple tenants, including medical offices. The 0.38 acre lot is triangular in shape with frontage on three streets: Purchase, Maxfield, and Pleasant Street. The surrounding neighborhood is commercial with residential uses present. The Quest Center, a professional office building, and an automobile service center are located directly across Maxfield Street (looking north from this site). The New Bedford Credit Union, and an office building are located directly across Purchase Street from the site (east). There are residential properties located directly across Pleasant Street on the west side of the property. Pylon signs are located in the surrounding neighborhood at the credit union and the office building across Purchase Street.

A pylon sign was recently located along the Purchase Street frontage in a landscaped area southeast of the front parking lot, but has since been removed; a photo of the previous pylon sign (see Photo A. on page 2) was submitted with the plans in application packet.

Address numbers are the only wall signage on the building. Directory signage is located in the front (east) and rear (west) sides of the building. The front directory is vinyl lettering affixed to a window. The rear directory comprises a sign in a landscaped bed next to the building.

Site Details. The land slopes downward on the north and east sides of the site. The building is constructed into the grade of the land, providing grade access from the second story to the rear (west side) parking lot.

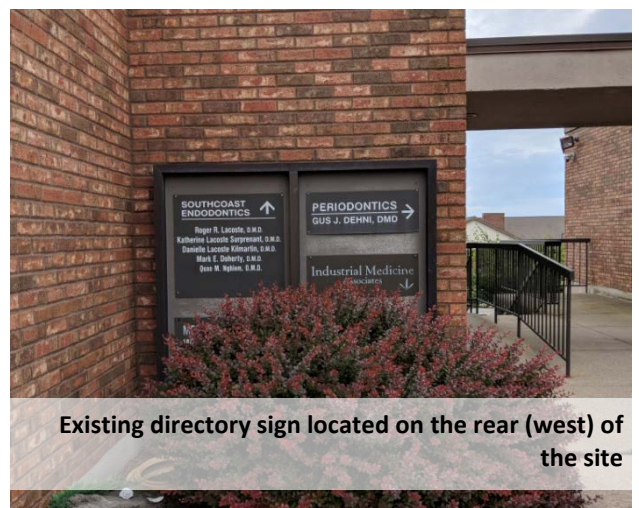
Two separate parking lots flank the building. The front side (east) of the building along the Purchase Street frontage has a parking lot with nineteen (19) spaces. In the rear (west) of the building along the Pleasant Street frontage is a larger parking lot with twenty-one (21) parking spaces. Each parking area is accessible via a separate driveway off of Maxfield Street. The rear lot also has an exit driveway onto Pleasant Street.

Exterior lighting is provided via a combination of wall pack lights and flood lights.

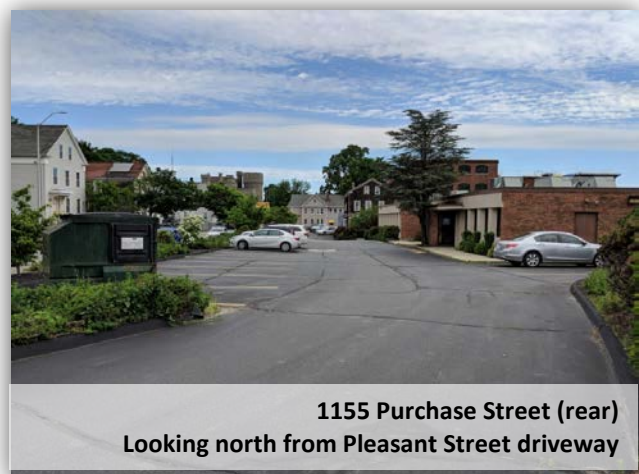
Landscaped areas surround the site and are also located around the perimeter of the building.



Photo A. Photo of the old Pylon sign that previously existed on-site which has since been removed. The proposal includes the installation of a new pylon sign in an area in close proximity to the previous. The red circle outlines a light attached to the old



Existing directory sign located on the rear (west) of the site



**1155 Purchase Street (rear)
Looking north from Pleasant Street driveway**

Proposed Conditions

The applicant proposes to install a new pylon sign along the Purchase Street frontage in approximately the same location of the previous sign, in the same landscape bed. The proposed sign area would be ***24.63** SF. The proposed, primary sign face dimensions are 4'-7"h x 5'-4 ½"w (24.63 SF) with a smaller triangular area for the address number measuring 11 ½"h x 4'-9"w (2.3 SF). ***The upper portion of the sign which includes the address is not included within the sign face area.** The sign as proposed would have an overall height of 11' 6" from the ground to the top of the sign. The height from the ground to the base of the sign would be approximately 5'-11 ½". The sign would be setback six feet (6') from the front property line as required under ordinance.

****Per an amended rejection packet from the Department of Inspectional Services, the proposed sign complies with sign area requirements; 24.63 SF is the proposed size of the sign, where 25 SF is the maximum allowed within the zoning code in the MUB zoning district. Therefore, the sign as proposed would not require a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals.***

The proposed sign would be non-illuminated with a black background and space for four tenant panels (10"h x 4'-9"w). Each tenant panel would have carved lettering and beveled edges, painted gold. The address numbers would also be painted gold. Additionally, two, gold decorative elements are proposed for the area of the sign where the base attaches to the two poles.

Additionally, two flood lights are proposed to be installed on the sign. The lights are intended for lighting the parking lot area. On the image of the previous sign, submitted by the applicant, a similar type of light can be seen in a state of disrepair (please see the photo denoted with the asterisk on page 1).

It is not noted on the plans if there will be any external illumination of the sign. Staff has reached out to the applicant for clarification. ***The applicant has since specified that there will not be any external illumination for the proposed sign. Furthermore, the applicant has explained that the client did not feel the external illumination was necessary, as the businesses typically close before sunset.***

Site Plan Approval

Site Plan Review is required for commercial or industrial ground signs (Ch. 9 Section 5427)

In considering Site Plan Approval for the proposed project, the Board must find the plan to meet a number of objectives identified in Section 5470 of the City's (c.9) Zoning Ordinance including:

- **Adequate access to each structure for fire and service equipment;**
- **Adequate provision for utilities and stormwater drainage;**
- **Site alteration shall be designed after considering the qualities of the specific location, proposed land use, the design of building form, grading, egress points and other aspects of the development so as to:**
 - Maximize pedestrian/vehicular safety to/from the site;
 - Minimize the obstruction of scenic views from publicly accessible locations;
 - Minimize visual intrusion by controlling layout/visibility of parking, storage and outdoor service areas viewed from public ways and residential areas;
 - Minimize glare from vehicle headlights and lighting fixtures;
 - Minimize unreasonable departure from the character, materials and scale of buildings in the vicinity;
 - Ensure compliance with the Zoning Ordinance;
 - Minimize damage to existing adjacent public ways;

The proposed sign is unobtrusive to the surrounding neighborhood, given the mixed-use character of the neighborhood directly surrounding the proposed sign location, which includes commercial properties. The sign location as proposed is appropriate given the sign is located along the Purchase Street frontage and it is not viewable from the residential properties located to the rear of the property along Pleasant Street. Also, the existing site layout and initial design intended for a sign to be located in the landscape bed. The location does not impact vehicular traffic along the heavily traveled Purchase Street nor internally in the parking lot areas. It is setback from the parking area, public sidewalk, and does not impact sight lines for drivers on the roadway. Therefore, the location as proposed will not have any negative impacts on pedestrian or vehicular safety, nor visual intrusion as viewed from public ways or residential areas. In light of these circumstances staff finds that, with the conditions presented under "staff recommendations", this proposal satisfies these zoning code objectives.

Review Comments

As required under city ordinance, the case submittal documents were distributed to City Clerk, City Solicitor, Health Department, Inspectional Services, Engineering, Public Infrastructure, Conservation Commission, Fire Department and School Department.

The Department of Public Infrastructure submitted correspondence dated July 5, 2018 stating that the proposed site plan has been reviewed, and there were no comments due to the lack of proposed work within the city layout.

Comments from city departments were not received as of the writing of this report. Any comments received will be made available at the public meeting.

Master Plan Goal

The proposal is consistent with the Master Plan in that the proposed sign would support the active use of an existing commercial property.

Materials for Consideration

The plan set consists of the following sheets, prepared by Poyant Signs:

- ❏ Cover Sheet
- ❏ Sheet 1A.1 Sign Elevations and Detail
- ❏ Sheet 1A.2 Photo Comparison Existing and Proposed
- ❏ Sheet SP1 Site Plan

Staff Recommendations



Site Plan Approval. Having reviewed the submitted materials, planning staff offers the following recommendations for conditions to the Planning Board should it act favorably on the requested site plan approval for the project:

- That the following general conditions be applied to this decision:
 - The project shall be completed according to the plans, notes, reports, and specifications submitted for consideration and final approval by the Planning Board.
 - The applicant shall submit final plan revisions to the Planning Division in the following formats: one (1) -11" x 17" Plan Set and one (1) CD or USB with Plan Set in PDF format and shall ensure that these same plans are properly submitted to the Department of Inspectional Services.
 - The applicant shall ensure that a copy of the Notice of Decision, bearing the certification of the New Bedford City Clerk signifying no appeal has been made against the project's approval, be provided for the Planning Division Case file folder.
 - The applicant shall present any proposed modification from the approved plans for consideration to the City Planner for determination as to whether the modified plan must return before this Board for further review.
 - The rights authorized by the granted approval must be exercised by issuance of a Building Permit by the Department of Inspectional Services and acted upon within one year from the date the decision was granted or they will lapse.

Materials Provided by the Applicant are available at: <http://www.newbedford-ma.gov/planning/planning-board/planning-board-agenda-info-2018/>

1155 Purchase Street Map: 59, Lot: 204

NOTE: Property line is approximate; for discussion purposes, only. Aerial map is oriented north.

