



Historic District Commission

Sign Advisory Council

Commissioners: Chris Young (Chair), Kevin Kuester, Paul Wolf, Mark Cutone, Ben Normand

Planning and Land Use Services

2 Fairgrounds Road

Nantucket, Massachusetts 02554

APPROVED MINUTES

Tuesday May 06, 2025

I. Procedural Business

Call to order at 9:02 am.

Attending members: Chris Young (Chair), Paul Wolf, Kevin Kuester, Ben Normand

Staff in attendance: Nicky Sheriff, Land Use Specialist

Absent members: Mark Cutone

Late arrivals: None

Early Departures: None

Audio Recorded Announcement

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Paul Wolf and it was duly seconded by Ben Normand

Vote: carried unanimously

Motion to approve the minutes from **04/15/25** made by Paul Wolf and duly seconded by

Kevin Kuester.

Vote: carried unanimously

II. Public Comment N/A

III. Commissioner Comments

Chris Young commented that at the town meeting on May 05, 2025, Article 71 was amended and approved by voters. The amendment limits the number of speed feedback signs on the island to four. Additionally, the proposed inclusion of message boards was removed from the article, meaning they will not be formally permitted, maintaining the restriction from the previous bylaw.

IV. Old /New Business

Property Owner	Address	Scope of Work	Map/Parcel	Agent
16 FEDERAL LLC	16 FEDERAL ST	WALL SIGN (16 FEDERAL)	42.3.1/71	EDWIN CLAFLIN

Sign Name: **16 FEDERAL ST**

Comments

Chris- Explained that, according to the guidelines, each business location is allowed two signs, which can include combinations such as a wall sign and a projecting sign. However, when there are multiple tenants in a building, each requiring their own signage, things can become more complex. To manage this, there is a specific section in the guidelines dedicated to multi-tenant buildings to ensure all signage works together and complies with the rules. It was also clarified that while the applicant proposed 50-watt lighting, the guidelines limit lighting to 15 watts.

Ben stated that the sign is approvable as submitted. He appreciated Chris's transparency about the sign counting toward the building's overall sign allowance and was otherwise comfortable with the sign.

Paul agreed with approving the sign and its location. He suggested possibly approving it with the condition that a master sign plan be submitted in the near future.

Kevin had no issues with the sign itself but expressed concern about the proposed lighting. He wasn't sure if there was existing lighting and questioned whether the business is open late enough to justify it. He felt the fixture might not be appropriate and noted potential issues with the number of lights.

Recommendations

Ben Normand recommended approval as submitted stipulating that the lighting will meet the guidelines and it was duly seconded by Paul Wolf.

Vote: carried unanimously

Property Owner	Address	Scope of Work	Map/Parcel	Agent
KLAUDIUS & LEIPA LLC	5 CHESTNUT ST	PROJECTING SIGN (THE VAULT NANTUCKET)	42.3.1/5	CARA MARQUIS

Sign Name: THE VAULT NANTUCKET

Comments

Paul- No concerns

Kevin said he didn't have a major issue with the graphics but was concerned about the overall amount of bright white on the building, suggesting the white background on the sign might be too stark and could be toned down. He also mentioned that there have been past violations at this location and emphasized the importance of making the applicant aware of that history.

Ben expressed opposition to including "Nantucket" on the sign, stating that it's generally discouraged and not something the board typically allows. He said he would support the sign only if "Nantucket" were removed. He also raised concerns about the storefront itself, noting frequent signage violations, including a window decal, a menu box, and the use of a dry erase board with slogans that he described as "tacky" and a potential traffic hazard due to the narrow sidewalk and a nearby tree. Ben emphasized that these ongoing issues, especially the inappropriate signage, need to be addressed.

Recommendations

Kevin Kuester recommended the application be held for revisions and it was duly seconded by Paul Wolf.

Vote: carried unanimously

Property Owner	Address	Scope of Work	Map/Parcel	Agent
NHA	15 BROAD ST	TEMPORARY SIGN (LEFT SIDE)	42.3.1/70	ASHLEY SANTOS

Sign Name: NHA BANNERS

Comments

Kevin said he had no issue with the basic design of the banners but felt the photographic images were too vibrant. He recommended using a sepia tone or similar effect to tone them down and make them less colorful.

Ben agreed with Kevin, recalling that the original intent was for the banners to be less photographic and more artistic. He supported applying a filter to mute the background images.

Paul also agreed with Kevin and Ben, noting that the front of the building already features a lot of colors, white, red brick, and others so muted tones for the banners would be more appropriate and visually balanced.

Recommendations

Kevin Kuester recommended the application be held for revisions and it was duly seconded by Paul Wolf.

Vote: carried unanimously

Property Owner	Address	Scope of Work	Map/Parcel	Agent
NHA	15 BROAD ST	TEMPORARY SIGN (RIGHT SIDE)	42.3.1/70	ASHLEY SANTOS

Sign Name: NHA BANNERS

Recommendations

Kevin Kuester recommended the application be held for revisions and it was duly seconded by Paul Wolf.

Vote: carried unanimously

Property Owner	Address	Scope of Work	Map/Parcel	Agent
NHA	MULTIPLE LOCATIONS	FREESTANDING POST SIGN	42.3.1/70	ASHLEY SANTOS

Sign Name: NHA

Comments

Chris provided some background by noting that many of the organizations mentioned had previously applied for signage and undergone significant scrutiny to determine appropriate placement. However, he acknowledged that there are also many historical or commemorative markers that were likely installed without ever coming before the board for approval. He referred to this as an “interesting genre,” highlighting the inconsistency in how such markers have been handled. During the discussion on the proposed wayfinding signage, Ben disclosed that he had assisted the Nantucket Historical Association with similar signage about a decade ago but confirmed he had no current financial or commercial interest. He emphasized that each sign’s placement should be considered on a case-by-case basis, given the sensitivity of Nantucket’s historic architecture and landscapes. While he found the proposed location at the Oldest House reasonable, he felt the sign at the Hadwen House appeared out of place and recommended site visits for a more informed review. Paul agreed, noting that while the signs were well-designed, their placement must be carefully evaluated to avoid detracting from historic buildings. He also suggested reviewing photos or visiting sites to better assess context. Kevin, however, strongly opposed the proposal, citing that it violates the sign guidelines, which generally prohibit freestanding signs. He expressed concern that allowing such signage could set a dangerous precedent, especially if used for corporate branding, and argued that some signs could instead be integrated into fences or existing structures. Kevin concluded by stating that the applicant should have sought approval earlier, which would have helped avoid unnecessary complications.

Recommendations

Ben Normand recommended that the application be held for a view and that NHA remove all the existing signs until an application is approved and it was duly seconded by Paul Wolf.

Vote: carried unanimously

Property Owner	Address	Scope of Work	Map/Parcel	Agent
NIR RETAIL LLC	40 STRAIGHT WHARF	PROJECTING SIGN (THE BLACK DOG)	42.2.4/15	JAMES DECATUR

Sign Name: THE BLACK DOG

Comments

No concerns

Recommendations

Kevin Kuester recommended for approval as submitted and it was duly seconded by Paul Wolf.

Vote: carried unanimously

Property Owner	Address	Scope of Work	Map/Parcel	Agent
CLACK LLC	33 MAIN ST	PROJECTING SIGN	42.3.1/211	LINK02554

Sign Name: BEACHKREW

Comments

The council members collectively agreed that the proposed sign should be hung from the existing bracket, as it is better positioned near the actual public entrance, in accordance with the design guidelines. They emphasized that the sign must meet the required size of five square feet, and with that specification and the bracket location confirmed, they expressed overall support for the application. It was also clarified that the black door shown in earlier images is not the entrance, reinforcing the appropriateness of using the existing bracket. No additional concerns were raised.

Recommendations

1. Ben Normand recommended approval as submitted provided that the sign is reduced to 5 square feet and installed at the existing bracket location, and it was duly seconded by Paul Wolf.

Vote: carried unanimously

Property Owner	Address	Scope of Work	Map/Parcel	Agent
TRACY & SUSAN ROOT	20 BROAD ST	PROJECTING SIGN	42.4.2/33	LINK02554

Sign Name: BILLIE'S

Comments

The council members discussed the proposed sign, focusing on concerns with the font and design details. Kevin expressed that the script font used feels too modern and inconsistent with the earlier historical periods typically preferred by the commission, stating he could not support it. Ben indicated he might be comfortable with the font but felt the sign design lacked a proper border, suggesting a gold leaf rectangular border would improve it, a sentiment Paul agreed with. Chris clarified that the design guidelines allow for logos to occupy up to 15% of the sign area, measured by the rectangle that would contain the logo. He pointed out that the angled script may push the logo beyond that limit, something applicants should consider in future proposals. Overall, the council members showed conditional support if design adjustments, particularly to the border and logo scale are made, though concerns about the appropriateness of the font remained.

Recommendations

1. Ben Normand recommended for approval through staff, with the addition of a gold leaf border and the logo not to exceed 15% of the total sign area, and it was duly seconded by Paul Wolf.

Vote: carried unanimously

Property Owner	Address	Scope of Work	Map/Parcel	Agent
ZERO INDIA STREET LLC	1 CAMBRIDGE ST	PROJECTING SIGN	42.3.1/130.2	LINK02554

Sign Name: MARISSA COLLECTIONS

Comments

The council members raised concerns about the completeness of the application and the clarity of the sign's proposed location. Ben confirmed with the applicant whether the sign is intended for the single-story brick building, which is currently under construction. He emphasized the need for proper documentation, including clear images showing the exact placement of the sign, how it relates in size to the building, and ensuring it is mounted high enough for pedestrian clearance. He also expressed concern about the pink color of the sign and how it would appear against the brick facade. Paul agreed, stating he is still unclear about the exact location and context of the sign, and questioned whether it was on the former chocolate shop or another part of the block. Both commissioners concluded that the application is currently incomplete and should not proceed without more accurate and detailed materials.

Recommendations

Kevin Kuester recommended that the application be held for more information, and it was duly seconded by Ben Normand.

Vote: carried unanimously

Property Owner	Address	Scope of Work	Map/Parcel	Agent
NIR RETAIL II LLC	22 CENTER ST (DOOR 26)	PROJECTING SIGN	42.3.1/165	LINK02554

Sign Name: POETA

Comments

The council members expressed general support for the sign application, with no major concerns raised. Paul and Kevin had no questions or comments, while Ben confirmed that the sign size 18 by 36 inches falls within the guidelines and presented no issues. Kevin supported the motion but offered a minor design suggestion, noting that visually shifting the “P” closer to the “O” could improve the appearance.

Recommendations

Paul Wolf recommended approval as submitted, and it was duly seconded by Ben Normand.

Vote: carried unanimously

Property Owner	Address	Scope of Work	Map/Parcel	Agent
COMM FOUND FOR NANTUCKET INC	9B BAYBERRY CT	WALL SIGN	55/709.2	LINK02554

Sign Name: COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR NANTUCKET W/LOGO

Paul Wolf- Recused

Comments

The council members reviewed a proposed change to the graphic on an existing sign. Kevin stated he had no comments on this item. It was clarified that the review pertains only to changing the graphic, which remains under the 15% size threshold allowed by guidelines. Ben supported the change, noting that the yellow radiating from the lighthouse gives a pleasant and evocative effect. He expressed comfort with replacing the existing logo with either the yellow or blue version. Additionally, Ben pointed out for the record that the phrase “for Nantucket” conveys a different message than simply using “Nantucket,” suggesting the distinction may be meaningful for future considerations.

Recommendations

Kevin Kuester recommended approval as submitted, and it was duly seconded by Ben Normand.

Vote: carried unanimously

Property Owner	Address	Scope of Work	Map/Parcel	Agent
NIR RETAIL LLC	34 MAIN ST	WALL SIGN	42.3.1/218	LINK02554

Sign Name: ELLSWORTH + IVEY

Comments

The council members discussed concerns about the visual impact and detailing of the proposed sign. Paul had no initial questions and later agreed with the comments made by others. Kevin expressed concern that the sign appeared more like a flat label than a fully integrated architectural element. He recommended adding a more three-dimensional frame or trim detail to better complement the building's ornate features, particularly around the windows. Ben agreed, stating that the current design does not blend well with the building's architecture and lacks the visual weight appropriate for the location. Both Kevin and Ben suggested that a dimensional frame, possibly with cove or sculpted detailing would enhance the sign's presence. Ben also noted that aligning the green of the sign with the green used on the window trim could improve cohesion. All members ultimately agreed that additional detailing and framing are needed before the sign is ready for approval, especially given its prominent location.

Recommendations

Kevin Kuester recommended that the application be held for revisions, and it was duly seconded by Ben Normand.

Vote: carried unanimously

Property Owner	Address	Scope of Work	Map/Parcel	Agent
KEN WITHROW	7 UNION ST	WALL SIGN	42.3.1/146	PLYMOUTH SIGN CO

Sign Name: UNION STREET INN

Comments

The council members reviewed the application for a new projecting sign and bracket to be mounted above a doorway, replacing a rusted existing bracket. Kevin and Chris expressed initial concern about the proposed height of the new bracket, noting it may sit too high and risk appearing as if it's mounted on the second floor, which is inconsistent with prior approvals. Kevin suggested the sign be lowered to better align with the building's entryway trim. Ben had no concerns with the sign design itself but supported lowering the sign to maintain visual cohesion with the doorway, recommending a bottom height of approximately 7'6 inches to maintain required head clearance while avoiding the appearance of a second-floor installation. Paul agreed with both comments and felt the sign could be lowered to about halfway down the white trim above the door. All commissioners ultimately supported the new bracket and sign,

provided that it is installed at a more appropriate height, visibly aligned with the entry trim and maintaining at least the 7-foot clearance required by guidelines.

Recommendations

Recommended for approval, subject to the bottom of the sign be lowered to 7 feet 6 inches above the landing of the door, and that the sign dimensions be limited to 17 inches by 40 inches and it was duly seconded by Paul Wolf.

Vote: carried unanimously

Property Owner	Address	Scope of Work	Map/Parcel	Agent
KEN WITHROW	7 UNION ST	FENCE SIGN	42.3.1/146	PLYMOUTH SIGN CO

Sign Name: UNION STREET INN

Comments

The council members reviewed the proposed fence-mounted sign and expressed concern about its purpose and location. Ben noted that while the sign is visually appealing and modest in scale, its placement on a fence does not appear to serve the core function of signage, guiding people to an entrance and instead feels more like a billboard. Paul echoed this, questioning whether the sign marks an actual gate or entry point, as none was clearly visible. Chris agreed with both comments and added that the placement creates redundancy, as the sign would be visible in the same plane as the existing projecting sign, which contradicts the intent of the sign guidelines. He emphasized that signage should not duplicate messaging from the same perspective. Overall the council agreed that the sign does not contribute to wayfinding and instead serves as additional advertising.

Recommendations

Ben Normand recommended that the application be held for revisions, and it was duly seconded by Paul Wolf.

Vote: carried unanimously

Property Owner	Address	Scope of Work	Map/Parcel	Agent
CHARLES & CYNTHIA LENHART	137A ORANGE ST	WALL SIGN	55/665	PLYMOUTH SIGN CO

Sign Name: THE BALDWIN GROUP

Comments

The council members had a detailed discussion focused primarily on the typography and logo of the proposed sign. While Paul initially moved to approve the application, Kevin and Ben voiced strong objections to the graphic design, particularly the use of a corporate-style, sans-serif font that they felt was not in keeping with the character of the historic district. The chair supported these concerns, explaining that while sans-serif, all-caps lettering has previously been allowed as in the Rogers & Gray sign that exception was based on a historical precedent established through documented research. In that case, the all-caps style used a condensed, traditional typeface that more closely resembled early 20th-century signage and not standard modern fonts like Helvetica. The current application, by contrast, was seen as too modern and corporate. It was further noted that if the applicant considers the text and logo together as part of their branding, this combined element would likely exceed the 15% graphic limit allowed under the guidelines, making it subject to additional scrutiny. Chris suggested that if the applicant wished to maintain clarity and meet the guidelines, switching to a serif font such as a bold version of Times New Roman would bring the sign into compliance with the expectations for traditional typography. The council agreed that serified lettering would resolve concerns and align the design more closely with established standards for signs in the historic district.

Recommendations

Ben Normand recommended that the application be held for revisions, and it was duly seconded by Paul Wolf.

Vote: carried unanimously

Property Owner	Address	Scope of Work	Map/Parcel	Agent
10 STRAIGHT WHARF LLC	10 STRAIGHT WHARF	FREESTANDING SIGN	42.3.1/137	LINDA WILLIAMS

Sign Name: JACK + CHARLIE'S

Comments

The commissioners held an in-depth discussion regarding the application for a freestanding sign on an existing post that had not been used for several years. Several commissioners, including Ben, Paul, and Kevin, recalled past discussions in which the signpost was deemed abandoned, citing the three-year rule in the sign guidelines which states that nonconforming signs must be removed if not used for three consecutive years. Paul emphasized that the sign's grandfathered status was void under this provision, as no sign had occupied the post during that period. Kevin added that the signpost's location does not meet the guideline requirement for signs to be "at or near" the entrance to a business and expressed concern that reinstating a freestanding sign in that spot could confuse visitors.

They also discussed the size and design of the proposed sign itself. Ben and Kevin felt that the sign, at nine square feet, was too large, especially in the absence of documentation proving it matched a prior

approved sign, which is required under the pre-existing, nonconforming sign provision. The guidelines specify that any replacement must be identical in size and design to the original. Kevin noted that if historical evidence of the previous sign is available, such as photographs, the applicant would have a better chance by replicating that design rather than proposing a new one. Paul agreed and emphasized that, without this documentation, the council had no basis to approve the application under current guidelines.

All council members expressed appreciation for the historical character of the signpost and the uniqueness of the building's recessed location but agreed that guidelines must be followed. Chris reminded everyone that the matter would ultimately go before the full HDC board for discussion. Council members collectively recommended holding the application for revisions, with a request that the applicant submit documentation of the original sign and adjust the size and design accordingly.

Recommendations

Kevin Kuester recommended that the application be held for revisions and more information, and it was duly seconded by Ben Normand.

Vote: carried unanimously

V. Enforcement

Nicky Sheriff provided an update on ongoing sign enforcement efforts. She shared that an updated enforcement spreadsheet would be circulated later in the week. Notices have already been sent to Lex RX and Lilly Pulitzer, who acknowledged receipt and subsequently removed their noncompliant freestanding sign. She also issued notices to 54 Old South Rd and multiple businesses on Old South Wharf, citing unauthorized or excessive signage. She is awaiting responses from these property owners and expects updates in the coming weeks. She mentioned she is gradually working through remaining violations and cited communication issues with one business due to a language barrier. To address this, she plans to use the town's translation services to ensure compliance. For simpler infractions, like signs on lawns, she prefers calling directly rather than sending formal letters. Lastly, she confirmed she would be contacting Cape Cod 5 about their new signage at both their Zero Main Street and Pleasant Street locations within the week.

VI. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn made by Kevin Kuester seconded by Ben Normand.

Vote: Carried Unanimously.

Link to Meeting Recording: [HDC Sign Advisory Council - 5/6/2025](#)

Submitted by: Nicky Sheriff