

Office of Outdoor Advertising
Public Meeting

April 14, 2022

11:00 AM

State Transportation Building

10 Park Plaza

2nd Floor

Boston, MA 02116

(via Webinar)

Present:

John Romano, Executive Director

Office of Outdoor Advertising, April 14, 2022

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P R O C E E D I N G S

JOHN ROMANO: Good morning, everybody. My name is John Romano. I am the Director of Outdoor Advertising for MassDOT. We are here for our April 2022 Office of Outdoor Advertising public meeting hearing.

This meeting is being held virtually by the June 16th Act extending certain COVID-19 measures adopted during the State of Emergency, and a further extension that extends this through July 15, 2022 for virtual public meetings, by the Governor.

We are running this hearing by Zoom platform.

Please note that this meeting is being recorded by our stenographer, and we have our stenographer in attendance, and he will provide a transcript of the hearing, as we usually do. When that is available, we will post that online on our web page.

This meeting is accessible to people with disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency. If you filed a request to be available today and did not receive it, please contact MassDOT's

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1 Office of Diversity and Civil Rights at 857-368-8580
2 or massdot.civilrights@dot.state.ma.us.

3 Please note that accessible versions of
4 the meeting materials have been previously posted to
5 the OOA website and will be referred to in this
6 meeting. A link to these documents is also posted in
7 the Q&A box.

8 I am going to ask Jerry Kelleher of my
9 staff to review the Zoom controls at this time.

10 Jerry, can you put up that sheet and
11 review the Zoom controls, please?

12 GERARD KELLEHER: Sure. Okay. So,
13 here we go, the platform controls.

14 The microphone is something you should
15 check to see that your speakers and your own
16 microphone is working.

17 The panelists are the only ones that
18 will be on camera.

19 If you'd like to ask a question, use
20 the question icon, Raise Your Hand.

21 The chat and the interpretation
22 features are not functional for this webinar.

23 And if you can't access the internet or
24 you have any technical problems as we go along, you

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1 may call into this meeting at the number 301-715-8592.

2 The ID for this meeting is 936 5424
3 4901, and the passcode, which is case sensitive, is
4 v4By#qrD\$Q. They've tightened security, so these
5 passwords are a lot longer.

6 And then if you would like to ask a
7 question, you simply have to raise your hand, and I
8 will unmute you. You can also put written questions
9 in the Q&A feature, and we'll answer them as we go.

10 Please state your name before asking a
11 question, and only ask one at a time, and keep it to
12 the subject on the agenda that we're covering at that
13 time.

14 Also, if you'd like to call in by
15 phone, dial *9, and then I will mention your last
16 three digits of your phone number and unmute your
17 audio when it's your turn to speak.

18 And those are the basic outline of the
19 rules.

20 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Thank you, Jerry.

21 So, the meeting will be run. We will
22 go through the agenda items. Obviously, we don't have
23 a physical sign-in sheet, but we do have a record of
24 those who are attending today as you have signed up

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1 for the, you know, through the Zoom platform. And so
2 that will be our actual sign-in part of the agenda.

3 Jerry, if you could now post the agenda
4 up on the screen?

5 GERARD KELLEHER: Sure.

6 JOHN ROMANO: We will go through each
7 item. We will ask questions of the proponents. They
8 will respond to them.

9 As Jerry has mentioned everybody in the
10 public, other than the panelists, your camera is
11 turned off and you are muted.

12 There will be times during the
13 presentation where public comment is requested, and
14 you can follow the prompts, as Jerry had gone over a
15 few minutes ago, or you can put your question or
16 comment in the Q&A box and we will read those out.
17 You will have the same chance to make comments, as
18 always, which are at the end of each item. And then
19 there is an overall chance to make a comment at the
20 end of the hearing.

21 And you can make comments in writing to
22 us by email as always.

23 For anyone who is new to the hearing,
24 we do not make any decisions at this actual hearing.

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1 Every item is taken under advisement, and decisions
2 are usually made within a few weeks, sometimes as
3 early as a week, but we give time for write-in
4 comments through our email address. That email
5 address is OOAInformation@dot.state.ma.us.

6 You can send your written comments
7 there.

8 With that, Jerry, we are going to start
9 the meeting.

10 GERARD KELLEHER: Okay.

11 JOHN ROMANO: So, going to the agenda
12 here, the first item will be the regular session
13 minutes approval for March 10, 2022, which was the
14 last hearing.

15 Does anybody have any questions or
16 comments on those?

17 (No response.)

18 JOHN ROMANO: I am not seeing any hands
19 raised.

20 Okay. Not seeing any hands raised, and
21 not seeing any Q&A, so I am going to mark those as
22 approved. Today's date is 4/14/22. All right. Very
23 good.

24 The next item is Harbor Outdoor, LLC is

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1 going to transfer two permits to Interstate IIH
2 Outdoor, LLC. These two permits are Permit Number
3 2020005 and 006. They are at 2181 Providence Highway
4 in Walpole. These structures have not yet been built.

5 Do we have anybody here from either
6 Harbor Outdoor or Interstate Outdoor?

7 KENNETH ROWELL: Ken Rowell from
8 Interstate Outdoor.

9 JOHN ROMANO: Hi, Ken. How are you
10 today?

11 KENNETH ROWELL: Good. And you?

12 JOHN ROMANO: Very good. Thank you.

13 KENNETH ROWELL: So, Ken, we reviewed
14 the application that you submitted. Everything seems
15 to be in order. All the paperwork is here. The
16 payment was made correct. So, everything appears to
17 be in order here from a paperwork standpoint.

18 I just wanted to let you know that a
19 request from Harbor Outdoor for an extension to build
20 to December 30th of this year was requested and
21 granted. And so these will need to be built by that
22 time. So, you will need to -- if the transfer goes
23 through, you will inherit that date for the build-to
24 date. Okay?

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1 KENNETH ROWELL: Understood.

2 JOHN ROMANO: All right. Do you have
3 any questions or comments that you would like to add
4 to your application at this time?

5 KENNETH ROWELL: Nothing at this time.
6 Thank you.

7 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Does anybody have
8 -- oh, excuse me. I'm going to have my inspector give
9 his inspection report on this. I believe, Chris, is
10 this yours, or is this Marc's?

11 MARC PLANTE: It's mine, John.

12 JOHN ROMANO: Sorry about that.

13 Marc, anything to report on this? As
14 you know, they're not built, so --

15 MARC PLANTE: Sorry. The area
16 previously had a board. Everything's been dismantled,
17 and those permits were surrendered. And the area
18 remains conforming to all the rules, and it just needs
19 to be built within that timeline.

20 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Great. Thank you,
21 Marc.

22 MARC PLANTE: Thank you.

23 JOHN ROMANO: Does anybody have any
24 comments or questions on this?

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1 (No response.)

2 GERARD KELLEHER: I don't see anything,
3 John.

4 JOHN ROMANO: Yeah, I'm not seeing
5 anything. All right. Okay. Very good.

6 All right, Mr. Rowell, we'll take these
7 -- take this under advisement, and we will get back to
8 you.

9 KENNETH ROWELL: Thank you.

10 JOHN ROMANO: All right. Okay. Next
11 up on our agenda is Rocco Realty II, LLC. This is a
12 new application for digital permits at 9 Harding
13 Street, Lakeville, Application 2022D007 and D008.

14 Notice was sent on 3/15/2022 to the
15 town administrator and the town clerk.

16 Is the applicant present?

17 JAMIE BISSONNETTE: Jamie Bissonnette
18 and Attorney Michael O'Shaughnessy here on behalf of
19 the applicant.

20 JOHN ROMANO: Mr. Bissonnette and
21 O'Shaughnessy, thank you for being here today with us.

22 Is there anybody here representing the
23 municipality where the sign is being proposed?

24 (No response.)

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1 GERARD KELLEHER: No hands.

2 JOHN ROMANO: I am seeing nobody.

3 Are there any abutters present today?

4 (No response.)

5 GERARD KELLEHER: None indicated.

6 JOHN ROMANO: Seeing none.

7 Anybody present from the MassDOT

8 Highway District Office?

9 (No response.)

10 JOHN ROMANO: I am not seeing anybody.

11 GERARD KELLEHER: No raised hands.

12 JOHN ROMANO: Gentlemen, I just want to

13 let you know that we did receive an email from the

14 Highway District Office, as they usually do. Mr. Bill

15 Travers is from MassDOT's District 5. Mr. Travers

16 recommends that you contact him at the District office

17 should there be any need for any type of tree-trimming

18 or anything of that nature on MassDOT's property. You

19 need to get a separate permit from the District. It's

20 totally separate from this permit. And if you contact

21 him, he will conduct a site walk with you and walk you

22 through that permit application. So you can do that

23 directly with him should it need to be done. Okay?

24 JAMIE BISSONNETTE: Sounds good. Thank

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1 you.

2 Also, is anybody present from MassDOT
3 Traffic Operations?

4 (No response.)

5 GERARD KELLEHER: I don't see any.

6 JOHN ROMANO: I am not seeing any.

7 Again, we have received a traffic memo
8 from the State Traffic Engineer's Office. They have
9 reviewed this location, as they do with all digital
10 traffic -- digital billboard applications. After
11 their review, they have determined that no traffic
12 study will be required for this location. And that
13 memo is put in the -- will be with the file for this
14 application.

15 So, gentlemen, these questions are for
16 you.

17 Was service mail notice to abutters
18 sent out by the applicant at least 30 days prior to
19 submitting your application to my office?

20 JAMIE BISSONNETTE: Yeah, the applicant
21 has informed us, yes.

22 JOHN ROMANO: And I do have a copy of
23 those post office receipts. He did submit them with
24 his application, so I have those.

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1 And he also provided me with a copy of
2 the letter. That was also part of the package that he
3 submitted, so I have that as well.

4 Has the applicant received any comments
5 in support or opposition?

6 JAMIE BISSONNETTE: Just the one -- the
7 one that was drafted by the Town yesterday.

8 JOHN ROMANO: Yeah. So, I will read
9 that. So, we did receive a letter yesterday, the one
10 you referred to, Mr. Bissonnette. And I'm going to
11 read this into the record. It's a short letter.

12 "Dear Mr. Romano:

13 This correspondence is provided in
14 response to your request for comments regarding the
15 proposed installation of an electronic billboard at 9
16 Harding Street, Application 2022D007. The proposal
17 was initially considered by the Town of Lakeville in
18 2017, during which the Zoning Board of Appeals and the
19 Board of Selectmen, now the Select Board, indicated
20 their approval, subject to review.

21 During its April 11, 2022 business
22 meeting, the Select Board, now consisting of Richard
23 LaCamera, Evagelia Fabian, and Lorraine Carboni, voted
24 to record their opposition to the current application

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1 due to the length of time that has lapsed since the
2 initial proposal was submitted and to be consistent
3 with the Town's proposed sign bylaw, which would
4 prohibit electronic message boards.

5 Thank you for your consideration.
6 Please do not hesitate to contact my office if you
7 have additional questions.

8 Sincerely,
9 Ari J. Sky, Town Administrator."

10 You know, for the record, I did contact
11 Mr. Ari Sky yesterday. There is no bylaw in place
12 that prohibits this at this time. It is a future
13 bylaw that is going to be going to Town Meeting, which
14 basically has no effect on this application because
15 there is -- the bylaw -- whatever's in place now in
16 the special permit that is submitted with this
17 application is in effect. This application has been
18 signed off by the Lakeville zoning commissioner and
19 zoning enforcement officer. It was signed off only
20 last month.

21 When I spoke to Ari, he said that's
22 still, you know, in effect, and it's still a valid
23 signature. But the current new board is in opposition
24 based on the new bylaw that's going to go in place.

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1 So, Jamie, is that your -- Jamie and
2 Michael, is that your understanding as well, based on
3 what you --

4 JAMIE BISSONNETTE: Yes. Yes, it is.
5 We, just for the record, we did receive, when we had
6 gone in front of the zoning board of appeals
7 originally and started the permitting, we did receive
8 unanimous approval from that select board at that
9 time. And I know that letter has also been forwarded
10 to you, Mr. Romano.

11 JOHN ROMANO: Yes, we do have that
12 letter as part of your application. And the special
13 permit at the time said, you know, you needed a letter
14 from the select board, and the select board at that
15 time submitted unanimous approval as well. So, that's
16 what we have.

17 Do you have anything else that you
18 would like to add to your application at this time?

19 JAMIE BISSONNETTE: I don't believe so.

20 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Marc, would you
21 like to give your report on this, or Chris?

22 CHRISTOPHER CHAVES: It's me, John.
23 Thank you.

24 JOHN ROMANO: Sorry.

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1 CHRISTOPHER CHAVES: As you mentioned,
2 John, this is a proposed two-sided electronic
3 monopole, facing east and west on Harding Street,
4 which is otherwise known as Route 44, in Lakeville.

5 The property is zoned business, as
6 checked off on the application and verified on the
7 assessor's database. There are two and multiple
8 businesses within 500 feet of the location. There are
9 no critical areas, conservation land, parks, etc.,
10 within 300 feet of this location. So, the proposed
11 site does meet the field criteria in the CMR.

12 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Great. Thank you.
13 Thanks, Chris.

14 Are there any comments, questions,
15 concerns from those in attendance at this hearing?

16 (No response.)

17 GERARD KELLEHER: I am not seeing
18 anything. No hands are raised.

19 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. And we have
20 nothing in the Q&A.

21 All right, gentlemen. We will take
22 this application under advisement, and we will get
23 back to you.

24 Thank you very much.

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1 JAMIE BISSONNETTE: Thank you. Have a
2 great day.

3 JOHN ROMANO: You, too.

4 Okay. Moving on to the next item,
5 Application for Renewal of Unlicensed Outdoor Permits,
6 we have Stoney Brook Village, LLC and Six Flags New
7 England.

8 Any questions on those?

9 (No response.)

10 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Seeing none.

11 GERARD KELLEHER: I don't see any.

12 JOHN ROMANO: Item 4. For the Record -
13 Actions Taken Since the Last Public Hearing. There
14 are several items that were approved, several items
15 that are still taken under advisement.

16 Any comments or questions on those?

17 GERARD KELLEHER: I'm not seeing
18 anything.

19 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Seeing none.

20 The last item, public comment. Any
21 further public comment on anything either on today's
22 agenda or anything else related to Outdoor
23 Advertising?

24 Oh, I see something. I see a hand

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1 raised.

2 GERARD KELLEHER: Oh, there's one.
3 Allen Smith, I'm going to allow to talk. Go ahead.

4 ALLEN SMITH: Hi. This is Allen Smith.
5 I had a comment regarding a sign that I saw the Town
6 of Braintree erect over on Route 37 yesterday. And I
7 just put the photo I took in the Q&A.

8 They put a sign across the Route 37.
9 And I called the District Highway Office and then
10 called MassDOT, and they said it was for a funeral
11 procession and they would take it down in I think the
12 afternoon, and I believe they did. But I just
13 wondered if this, you know, they keep this regard for
14 any permitting process. And, of course, this would
15 never be permitted, a sign like that would never be
16 permitted. I just wonder if a fine might be
17 appropriate?

18 JOHN ROMANO: Are you talking about the
19 flags and the two -- the flag and the banner, sir?

20 ALLEN SMITH: Right. It went all
21 across the state highway, using the state highway sign
22 supports. Kind of shocking, I thought.

23 JOHN ROMANO: So, that would be under
24 the purview of the Highway Department. That's not

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1 considered the business of Outdoor Advertising.

2 ALLEN SMITH: Well, that's a sign under
3 their regulations, I believe, right?

4 JOHN ROMANO: No, we wouldn't consider
5 that Outdoor Advertising. Flags, banners of that
6 sort, like that, we would defer to the Highway
7 Department.

8 ALLEN SMITH: So the Highway Department
9 is empowered to issue fines for people using the --

10 JOHN ROMANO: I couldn't tell you.
11 That would be up to the district. Each district would
12 address those.

13 ALLEN SMITH: So you're saying that
14 your department would have no problem with people
15 hanging banners across state highways?

16 JOHN ROMANO: No, I didn't say that. I
17 said it's not our jurisdiction.

18 ALLEN SMITH: If it were an advertising
19 sign, would you be concerned?

20 JOHN ROMANO: If that was an
21 advertising sign, yes, we would talk with the district
22 about how to have it removed. When there's things of
23 that nature, that's not, you know, a flag or
24 something, I know sometimes we see them on the fences

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1 next to highway overpasses and stuff, that's not --
2 that's not something we would be addressing.

3 ALLEN SMITH: Okay. Thank you.

4 JOHN ROMANO: What was the -- that was
5 in Braintree, you said, Allen?

6 ALLEN SMITH: Yes, that was in
7 Braintree, the intersection of West Street and
8 Massachusetts State Highway 37.

9 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. I'm just making a
10 note of that. I'll forward that to the District
11 office just to let them know that it came up today.

12 ALLEN SMITH: Thank you. Yeah, they
13 seemed -- they didn't think it was their issue either.
14 So, you're saying there's an exception for non-
15 advertising? Anything that's non-advertising is not
16 under your purview?

17 JOHN ROMANO: That's right. We only do
18 third-party advertising. That's what our -- that's
19 what our board is. Our Outdoor Advertising Department
20 is third-party advertising. That's what we are
21 responsible for.

22 ALLEN SMITH: Thank you.

23 JOHN ROMANO: Thank you.

24 Any other public comment or questions?

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1 (No response.)

2 GERARD KELLEHER: I'm not seeing any.

3 The Q&A was that photo. I popped it up
4 on my --

5 JOHN ROMANO: Yeah. And, Jerry, can we
6 see if we can just get that and see if you can forward
7 that to my email?

8 GERARD KELLEHER: Yeah. Sure.

9 JOHN ROMANO: Thank you. All right.
10 With that, we are going to officially adjourn at
11 11:24.

12 Thank you all very much. I appreciate
13 it. We will see you next month. Have a great day.

14 (Whereupon, the proceedings were
15 concluded on April 14, 2022, at 11:24 a.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Judith Luciano, do hereby certify that the foregoing record is a true and accurate transcription of the proceedings in the above-captioned matter to the best of my skill and ability.

Judith Luciano

Judith Luciano

**All names not provided were spelled phonetically to the best of my ability.