

Office of Outdoor Advertising
Public Meeting

June 10, 2021

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, June 10, 2021

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2

3 JOHN ROMANO: Good morning, everybody.

4 My name is John Romano. And I am the Director of

5 Outdoor Advertising for MassDOT. We are here for the

6 June 10th Office of Outdoor Advertising hearing.

7 This meeting is being held virtually by

8 Governor's Executive Order. Due to the ongoing COVID-

9 19 pandemic, we cannot meet in person, so we are doing

10 this virtually.

11 We are running this hearing by

12 GoToWebinar.

13 Please note that this meeting is being

14 recorded by our stenographer who is in attendance. He

15 will provide a transcript of the meeting as always,

16 and it will be posted to our web page once the meeting

17 notes are approved at the next meeting and we have the

18 transcript back from the stenographer; it will get

19 posted as well.

20 This meeting is accessible to people

21 with disabilities and individuals with limited English

22 proficiency. If you filed a request for assistance

23 and did not receive it, please contact MassDOT's

24 Office of Diversity and Civil Rights at 857-368-8580

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 or massdot.civilrights@dot.state.ma.us.

2 Please note that accessible versions of
3 the meeting materials have been previously posted to
4 the OOA website and will be referred to in the
5 meeting. The links for those documents are also in
6 the chat box, and the materials should also be
7 available to download through GoToWebinar.

8 One statement that I would like to make
9 is that at the last hearing, we did have some issues
10 with some people that were trying to call in, I
11 believe, and may not have been able to do so. We did
12 reach out to those people after the hearing. And I
13 will say today that if someone does have trouble
14 trying to make a comment or to reach us, you can send
15 it here, which I will read the email address
16 afterwards, and you can get your comments into us
17 after that as we will still take public comments after
18 the hearing in writing. So, I apologize if there are
19 any hiccups.

20 Also, we will be working towards
21 switching to the Zoom platform, most likely starting
22 with our July hearing, which would help us with any
23 hiccups that may have happened last month, hopefully
24 not again this month. But should they, we will have

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 them -- we will be on the Zoom platform, which will,
2 hopefully, eliminate any of those call-in type issues.

3 Also, if you're on a cell phone, in
4 your app store there is a GoToWebinar app that is free
5 that you can download if that helps you connect with
6 us.

7 So, we do apologize if there are any
8 technical problems related to the platform that we are
9 using. And, again, we hope to have those rectified
10 for July.

11 We are going to run this meeting as
12 close to normal as our regular Outdoor Advertising
13 hearing. I will go through the agenda. While the
14 sign-in sheet cannot be physically signed, we do have
15 a list of those who signed up for the webinar.

16 On the screen is the agenda.

17 Gerry, if we can get that posted
18 shortly?

19 What I will do is I will go through
20 each item. I will ask questions of the proponents,
21 just like I do in the hearing at the office in-person
22 at 10 Park Plaza.

23 Just so you know, everybody in the
24 public is currently muted. In about two minutes, the

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 organizer is going to unmute everybody. You should
2 mute yourself at that time. Should the organizer, who
3 is Gerry Kelleher from MassDOT, hear excessive
4 background noise, he will mute people individually or
5 the whole group if needed.

6 If you would like to speak when public
7 comment is requested, you can unmute yourself at that
8 time. If you have any trouble unmuting yourself to
9 make a comment, you can use the "Raise Hand" function
10 in GoToWebinar in order to indicate you would like to
11 make a comment. To raise your hand in GoToWebinar,
12 click the hand icon in the control panel. If you are
13 connected by phone to the audio, you can press *9 to
14 raise your hand. On the phone, you can also press *1
15 to play the features menu and *2 to mute or unmute the
16 audio.

17 So, that's where we had some problems
18 last month. But you can also post your comment or
19 question in the chat box.

20 You can also send in any comments to
21 our email address, which is
22 OOAInformation@dot.state.ma.us.

23 You will have a chance to make comments
24 just like you do in the regular public hearing at the

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 end of each item and then a final chance for overall
2 comments at the end of the agenda.

3 For anybody who may be new to our
4 meetings, we do not make any decisions at this actual
5 hearing. Every item is taken under advisement and
6 decisions are made usually within a few weeks,
7 sometimes as early as a week, but we will give time
8 for write-in comments, again, to our email address,
9 which I will repeat is OOAInformation@dot.state.ma.us.

10 You can send your comments in writing
11 there as well even after the hearing.

12 With that, Gerry, if you can unmute
13 everybody, we will start.

14 (Participants unmuted.)

15 JOHN ROMANO: Also, I will mention, as
16 everybody knows, that the Governor's Executive Order,
17 State of Emergency, everything ends on June 15th. And
18 we're waiting to find out whether meetings will
19 continue virtual or in-person or a combination of
20 both. If anything changes from our virtual hearings,
21 we will be sure to get that information out to
22 everybody.

23 Thank you.

24 So, going to the agenda, the first item

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 on the agenda are the meeting notes of our regular
2 sessions from May 13, 2021.

3 Does anybody have any comments or
4 questions on those?

5 (No response.)

6 JOHN ROMANO: I am not seeing any.
7 So, Gerry, are you seeing any?

8 GERARD KELLEHER: No.

9 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. With that, I will
10 mark those approved.

11 Okay. Now, before we get to the other
12 agenda items, I want to call your attention to Agenda
13 Item C. Application for Electronic Permit(s),
14 Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority, 274 Southampton
15 Street, Rear, Application Number 2021D015 and D016.

16 The MBTA contacted me this morning and
17 they have withdrawn those applications. So those
18 applications will not be heard this morning. Those
19 boards will be operated in a static condition until
20 they are re-entered into a hearing agenda in the
21 future.

22 So, again, Item C. Application for
23 Electronic Permit(s), MBTA has been withdrawn from
24 this hearing. If there is someone that came here this

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 morning with the intent to make a comment on those, at
2 the of the agenda, I will still take comments as we
3 weren't able to notify you ahead of time that they'd
4 be removed. So, I will still take public comment on
5 those if you would like to make a comment on that
6 particular application, but please know those will not
7 be heard today.

8 With that, we will go first item on the
9 agenda, application for new license. The first
10 application is Shout Outdoor Media, LLC, 650 West Lake
11 Street, Suite 310, Chicago, Illinois. The contact
12 name is Joseph Rossi. Is Mr. Rossi here with us
13 today?

14 (No response.)

15 JOHN ROMANO: Not here. I do see him
16 there. Mr. Rossi, can you unmute yourself? He does
17 not -- Mr. Rossi, you need to unmute yourself. I'm
18 going to go forward. If you can unmute yourself --

19 PAUL ROSSI: I'm here now. I'm sorry.

20 JOHN ROMANO: There we go.

21 PAUL ROSSI: Can you hear me now?

22 JOHN ROMANO: Yes.

23 PAUL ROSSI: I've been clicking that
24 button for a minute and it wasn't working. So, I'm

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 here.

2 JOHN ROMANO: No problem.

3 So, Mr. Rossi, we have reviewed all the
4 paperwork from Shout Outdoor. We received your
5 Certificate of Good Standing and/or Tax Compliance
6 from the Department of Revenue. We also have your W-9
7 form. We did receive your payment for the application
8 fee. Everything as far as paperwork does seem to be
9 in order.

10 Is there anything you would like to add
11 to your application at this time?

12 PAUL ROSSI: No.

13 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Are there any
14 comments or questions from the public that's in
15 attendance today on this application?

16 (No response.)

17 JOHN ROMANO: I am seeing no raised
18 hands.

19 Gerry, do you see any?

20 GERARD KELLEHER: I do not.

21 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Seeing none, Mr.
22 Rossi, we will take this under advisement, your
23 application, and we will get back to you soon.

24 PAUL ROSSI: Great. Thank you very

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 much.

2 JOHN ROMANO: You're welcome.

3 Okay. Next is another application for
4 a new license. This is John Flatley Company, 45 Dan
5 Road, Suite 320, Canton, MA. A contact name is Mr.
6 Doug Richardson.

7 Mr. Richardson, are you here with us
8 today?

9 DOUG RICHARDSON: Yes, I am. Can you
10 hear me?

11 JOHN ROMANO: Yes, we can hear you
12 good.

13 How are you today?

14 DOUG RICHARDSON: I'm good. Thank you.

15 JOHN ROMANO: That's good.

16 Mr. Richardson, we received your
17 application. We reviewed all of the paperwork. I've
18 got your W-9. Where you are not an LLC, we do not
19 need any tax certificate. So, all your paperwork,
20 your fee, everything seems to be in order.

21 Is there anything you would like to add
22 to your application at this time?

23 DOUG RICHARDSON: No, thank you.

24 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Any comments or

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 questions from the general public in attendance today
2 on this application for a new license?

3 (No response.)

4 GERARD KELLEHER: No hands raised.

5 JOHN ROMANO: I see no hands either,
6 Gerry.

7 Okay, Mr. Richardson, we will take your
8 application under advisement and we will get back to
9 you shortly.

10 DOUG RICHARDSON: Thank you very much.

11 JOHN ROMANO: You're welcome.

12 Okay. Next on the agenda, we have
13 another application for a license. This is 345
14 Boylston Street Nominee Trust, 320 Washington Street,
15 Suite 3FF, Brookline, Massachusetts. The contact name
16 is Fred Starikov.

17 Mr. Starikov, are you in attendance
18 today, or anybody else representing the company?

19 (No response.)

20 JOHN ROMANO: I do not see him or
21 nobody else is raising their hand from the company.

22 We have reviewed the application and
23 the paperwork for this company's request. We do have
24 their W-9. And, again, they did not need a Tax

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 Compliance Certificate as they are a trust.

2 Everything seems to be in order.

3 Does anybody have any questions or
4 comments for this application?

5 (No response.)

6 GERARD KELLEHER: I don't see anything.

7 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. I'm not seeing any
8 hands raised either, Gerry.

9 Okay. We will take this under
10 advisement. We will get back to the company in a
11 short time.

12 All right. So, those are the
13 applications for new licenses.

14 The next item on our agenda for today
15 is this is an application for transfer of permits.
16 And this is between the transferor is Total Outdoor
17 Corp. They have four permits in the Town of Auburn:
18 2018D015, 16, 17, and 18. These are two two-sided
19 boards, digital boards. They are proposed to be
20 transferred over to Outfront Media LLC.

21 Is there anybody here from either Total
22 Outdoor or Outdoor Media?

23 ANGELA RUFO: Hi, John. Angela Rufo
24 from Outfront.

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 JOHN ROMANO: Hi, Angela. How are you?

2 ANGELA RUFO: Good. How are you doing?

3 JOHN ROMANO: Very good. Thank you.

4 Okay. I'm going to have Jason -- I
5 know these boards have not yet been built, but I just
6 wanted Jason to give a little report on these.

7 Jason, can you just give a quick report
8 from the field on these?

9 JASON BEAN: Yes. Thank you, John.

10 These are -- there's actually four
11 existing permits, 2018D015 through 18. These are --
12 these will be facing I-90. They are currently not
13 built so they were asked to extend their build date.

14 At this time, no issues. These were
15 approved in 2018. So, we'll just keep an eye on them
16 and, hopefully, they will have them built quickly.
17 So, there's a total of four there facing east and
18 west, east and west.

19 And that's it.

20 JOHN ROMANO: Angela, as the person who
21 is taking over these permits, there's two things of
22 note. The current build by date is June 30th of 2021,
23 which is only a few weeks away from today.

24 And then, also, I did want to note that

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 where these two sets of boards are on the same
2 property, you know, as you know, digital boards have
3 to be a minimum of a thousand feet apart. These were
4 sited to be approximately 1,031 feet apart. So, while
5 they clearly meet the regulations, it is a tight area.
6 So, I just wanted to call those out. And all of that
7 still, you know, stays with the permit as it is
8 transferred to you. So, I just want to make sure
9 you're aware of those. And, you know, if you have any
10 questions on those, please let us know.

11 ANGELA RUFO: Understood. Yeah.

12 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Do you have
13 anything you'd like to add at this time to the request
14 for transfer?

15 ANGELA RUFO: No, nothing to add.

16 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Just to let people
17 know, as Jason said, these have all previously been
18 approved. They are conforming sites. It's a
19 conforming site. They just have not been built.

20 So, any questions from the general
21 public on this transfer?

22 (No response.)

23 GERARD KELLEHER: I'm not seeing
24 anything.

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 Oh, was someone -- Dana has a hand
2 raised or -- Dana Monsein?

3 JOHN ROMANO: Dana?

4 DANA MONSEIN: Can you hear me?

5 JOHN ROMANO: Yes. Go ahead.

6 DANA MONSEIN: Just a question. If I
7 were interested in knowing more about the regulations
8 having to do with the brightness of a digital board,
9 particular to this digital one in Auburn we're talking
10 about, could you direct me to the right place?

11 JOHN ROMANO: Sure. Dana, if you send
12 us an email to our email address, which is the
13 OOAInformation -- I'm sorry --
14 OOAInformation@dot.state.ma.us, we will send you the
15 link to our website that has the regulations. And
16 Section 3.17 is the digital or electronic board
17 regulations, and it has all of that information.

18 DANA MONSEIN: Zero, Zero A
19 Information, correct?

20 JOHN ROMANO: Sorry. Say that again.

21 DANA MONSEIN: Zero, Zero, A,
22 Information, correct?

23 JOHN ROMANO: It's the letter "O." So,
24 it's like Outdoor Advertising, OOA.

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 DAN MONSEIN: All capital.

2 JOHN ROMANO: Okay?

3 DAN MONSEIN: Thank you.

4 JOHN ROMANO: You are most welcome.

5 Any other questions?

6 (No response.)

7 GERARD KELLEHER: Yeah, I don't see
8 anything.

9 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Great. With no
10 other questions, we will take this application for
11 transfer under advisement.

12 ANGELA RUFO: Thank you.

13 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. So, next on the
14 agenda, we will go to C.2. Application for Electronic
15 Permit(s), 71 Newbury Street Properties, LLC. So,
16 this is Application 2021D017 and 18. This is by 71
17 Newbury Street Properties, LLC. These are at 1900
18 Andover Street in Tewksbury, MA.

19 Notification was sent to the town
20 manager and the town clerk on May 11th by my office.

21 Is there anybody here for the
22 applicant?

23 DAVID MODICA: David Modica.

24 JOHN ROMANO: How are you doing, Mr.

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 Modica?

2 DAVID MODICA: Fine, thank you. And
3 yourself?

4 JOHN ROMANO: Doing very well. Thank
5 you.

6 JASON BEAN: Gerry, if you could share
7 my screen?

8 GERRY KELLEHER: Oh, sure.

9 JOHN ROMANO: Is there anybody here
10 representing the municipality where the sign is being
11 proposed?

12 (No response.)

13 JOHN ROMANO: No. Okay.

14 Are there any abutters present today?

15 (No response.)

16 JOHN ROMANO: Do you see any hands,
17 Gerry? I don't see any hands raised. Seeing none.

18 I see Mark Kratman from the MassDOT
19 District Office.

20 Mark, would you like to say anything?

21 MARK KRATMAN: Just a typical, you
22 know, if this permit is approved to allow the
23 billboard, obviously, the applicant would also have to
24 come through the District to -- if there's going to be

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 anything they'll need in a typical permit to come
2 through. Other than that, we have no objections.

3 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Thank you, Mark.

4 LYDIA QUICK: Excuse me, John. I'm
5 seeing a raised hand from a Jayne Wellman.

6 JOHN ROMANO: Hold on one second.

7 LYDIA QUICK: Or Jamie, excuse me.
8 Jayne. Sorry.

9 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Jayne?

10 JAYNE WELLMAN: Okay. Thank you. I'm
11 a selectman for the Town of Tewksbury.

12 JOHN ROMANO: Oh, hi, Jayne.

13 JAYNE WELLMAN: Hi. I saw the
14 notification so I dialed in as an attendee. And I'm
15 here to support the application.

16 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Jayne, could you
17 spell your last name for the record so we have it?

18 JAYNE WELLMAN: Yes, it's Wellman, W-e-
19 l-l-m-a-n.

20 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. And what's your
21 position at the Town?

22 JAYNE WELLMAN: I'm a selectman.

23 JOHN ROMANO: Oh, great. Thank you.

24 JAYNE WELLMAN: Thank you very much.

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 JOHN ROMANO: You're welcome.

2 Is there anybody present from MassDOT
3 Traffic operations?

4 (No response.)

5 JOHN ROMANO: I am not seeing anybody,
6 but I did receive a memo this morning from the state
7 traffic engineer, James Danila. And his memo states
8 that based on their review and observations, it is
9 their judgment that a detailed traffic study at this
10 location will not be required.

11 So, Mr. Modica, no traffic study is
12 required.

13 DAVID MODICA: Thank you.

14 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Mr. Modica, a few
15 questions to you.

16 Was certified mail notice to abutters
17 sent out by you at least 30 days prior to submitting
18 your application to my office?

19 DAVID MODICA: Yes, sir, it was.

20 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. And I have copies
21 of post office receipts. You did submit those with
22 your application, so thank you.

23 Also, you did submit a copy of the
24 letter that you sent out, is that correct?

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 DAVID MODICA: Yes, sir, I did.

2 JOHN ROMANO: Thank you.

3 Mr. Modica, have you received any
4 written comments in support or opposition for this
5 board's application?

6 DAVID MODICA: No, sir, I have not.

7 JOHN ROMANO: Neither have we.

8 Also, based on the paperwork that you
9 submitted and the sign-off on the application by the
10 town, you received a special permit from the town, is
11 that your understanding?

12 DAVID MODICA: Yes, sir, I did.

13 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Let's see. With
14 that, I am going to have my inspector, Jason Bean,
15 give his field report on this.

16 JASON BEAN: Yes, thank you, John.

17 As prior stated, this is Application
18 2021D0017 and 18. They will be facing east and west.
19 It's commercially zoned. They will face I-95. There
20 are two businesses within 500 feet. There are no
21 parks and no spacing issues.

22 The Traffic Engineering reviewed this
23 and (garbled) a detailed analysis on 495. So, a
24 report was sent back to us detailing that. And, at

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 this time, no issues have been found. And this is
2 brand new, so there's no existing ones there, so this
3 is just a brand new site.

4 As you can see on the picture, the
5 circle with the cross through it -- or the cross
6 through it is exactly where it's going, not the stake
7 right in the front of the picture there, but it's the
8 spray paint, the circular spray paint in that parking
9 spot.

10 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Great. Thank you
11 very much.

12 Mr. Modica, is there anything you'd
13 like to add to your application at this time?

14 DAVID MODICA: No, sir, there's none.

15 JOHN ROMANO: Thank you.

16 Are there any comments, questions, or
17 other issues by the public in attendance?

18 (No response.)

19 GERARD KELLEHER: I don't see anything.

20 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Great. Seeing
21 none.

22 Mr. Modica, we will take this
23 application under advisement and we will get back to
24 you shortly.

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 DAVID MODICA: Thank you very much.

2 JOHN ROMANO: The next item on the
3 agenda is just For the Record - Actions Taken Since
4 the Last Public Hearing, Items 4A, B. Does anybody
5 have any questions on those?

6 (No response.)

7 JOHN ROMANO: I don't see any.

8 Gerry, do you see any? I don't see any
9 hands up or hear anybody.

10 GERARD KELLEHER: No, I don't see any.

11 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. And, let's see.
12 All the way through. That will take us all the way to
13 public comment.

14 At this time, public comment, if
15 anybody was planning to make a public comment on the
16 MBTA board application that was withdrawn, if you want
17 to raise your hand, we'll take your comment now. As I
18 had stated at the beginning of the hearing, that was
19 withdrawn. But if someone has taken the time to
20 participate today, we will take that comment at this
21 time.

22 GERARD KELLEHER: I see a hand, Martyn
23 Roetter.

24 MARTYN ROETTER: Yes, thank you very

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 much.

2 Well, first, I'd like to say that I
3 assume that this application may be submitted again.
4 I hope that we, that everybody who is interested, will
5 get proper notice of it so that we can prepare our
6 comments accordingly.

7 I'd just like to say a few things about
8 it. In many cases, when I and others oppose an
9 application for an initiative, you know, there may be
10 one reason why we do so. In this case, there's a
11 multitude of reasons.

12 First of all, electronic billboards
13 themselves are very bad when they impact residential
14 communities -- the quality of life in a residence, the
15 public safety on urban streets and so forth. So,
16 generally, whether it's the MBTA or anybody else, we
17 oppose this.

18 Secondly, it seems to me that this
19 application is a violation of the MBTA's mission,
20 which is to serve the communities. And, indeed, as a
21 rider of the MBTA, I appreciate the services that they
22 provide. But this is not a service to the community.
23 This is something which is actually harmful to the
24 community. And, therefore, I would urge the MBTA to

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 give serious consideration to whether to pursue this
2 opportunity.

3 Secondly, or thirdly rather, there's a
4 whole series of precedents that will be established if
5 this application is approved. Not only, presumably,
6 will the MBTA then try to have similar electronic
7 billboards in stores and other sites throughout the
8 City of Boston, but also it would encourage people
9 other than the MBTA to request similar installations
10 for approval because they'll be able to say, "Well,
11 look, if the state approves these kinds of billboards
12 that affect residential communities, why should the
13 City be allowed to forbid them because the ones that
14 we are proposing, not being the MBTA, are no better or
15 no worse than those of the MBTA itself?"

16 So, for this, and there are other
17 reasons that I know some of my people I'm working with
18 have put forward as to why this is a bad idea, it
19 reminds me of the situation, the assassination of the
20 mad Russian monk Rasputin. He was knifed, shot, hit
21 over the head, thrown in the river with weights tied
22 around his legs. And the question is, "What killed
23 him?" Well, any one of these things might do, but the
24 combination is surely unassailable.

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 I think there's an unassailable
2 combination of reasons why this application and others
3 similar to it, comparable to it, should be rejected,
4 including, for example, the other point that
5 electronic billboards are not simply a conversion or
6 an upgrade of static billboards. Their impact upon
7 people who -- for whom it is visible is much greater,
8 much more intrusive than that of static billboards.
9 So, that's another reason why I think it should be
10 rejected.

11 We don't consider automobiles to be an
12 upgrade or a conversion of horse-drawn carriages, even
13 though they were, at one point, called horseless
14 carriages. And, for the same reason, I think that one
15 should look at that application as being a request for
16 an entirely new type of installation, not a
17 straightforward conversion.

18 Thank you very much.

19 JOHN ROMANO: Martyn, thank you.

20 Would you mind spelling your last name
21 for the record, please?

22 MARTYN ROETTER: Yes, it's R as in
23 Roger, O as in Otto, E as in Edward, T as in Tommy, T
24 as in Tommy, E as in Edward, R as in Roger. And I

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 apologize for my parents for giving me that name.

2 JOHN ROMANO: No problem, sir. Thank
3 you very much for your comments.

4 Anybody else that would like to make
5 comments on the MBTA application or any other OOA
6 business?

7 GERARD KELLEHER: John, I have a Rachel
8 Thurlow with a hand raised.

9 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Rachel, go ahead.

10 RACHEL THURLOW: Hi. Thank you.

11 So, I realize the MBTA is not required
12 by law to engage with the community or undertake any
13 public process outside of this meeting. I would urge
14 them to do so.

15 And you, as the Office of Outdoor
16 Advertising, as you are also MassDOT, you have the
17 ability to solve these issues, or a lot of these
18 issues. There's no reason why an email to a limited
19 pre-registered email group should serve as the only
20 notice to the community about these things. You're
21 well aware of all the neighborhood efforts in this
22 area, from the Boston Bowl up and down 93. You know
23 the neighborhoods have been working hard to stop these
24 billboards. There's a big element of inequity with

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 this blighting.

2 I urge you, when this application comes
3 back, to engage with the public, use all the typical
4 MassDOT notifications, right, the publications, the
5 Twitter, the public notices, and to do a proper
6 MassDOT hearing. It would be -- the community
7 deserves it. It would help you, the MassDOT
8 submitting for billboard permits, when the MassDOT
9 gives out the billboard permits. There's all sort of
10 transparency issues that could easily be addressed if
11 you just engaged with the community.

12 So, please do that. You have all these
13 methods at your disposal.

14 Thank you.

15 JOHN ROMANO: Thank you, Ms. Thurlow.

16 Are there any other comments or
17 questions on today's agenda?

18 GERARD KELLEHER: Yeah, I have Ford
19 Cavallari with a hand raised.

20 JOHN ROMANO: Sure. Mr. Cavallari, go
21 right ahead.

22 FORD CAVALLARI: Great. Thank you very
23 much. I appreciate the opportunity to comment.

24 Again, my name is Ford Cavallari. I'm

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 the chair of the Alliance of Downtown Civic
2 Organizations. In Boston, downtown civic
3 organizations are the ten largest neighborhood
4 associations, many of which abut Route 93 and Route
5 90, of course.

6 And, as the two prior speakers have
7 said, we are -- our neighborhoods are opposed to what
8 we consider an uptick in electronic billboard
9 applications and some grants of permits.

10 As you probably know, Boston Zoning
11 Code, which we understand the MBTA, through a quirk in
12 legal interpretation, in my opinion, doesn't need to
13 go through. But the Boston Zoning Code specifically
14 states that there are only three areas where
15 electronic billboards are allowed, so-called
16 electronic sign zones, in Boston. And this is well
17 outside that. There is a process by which through the
18 Zoning Commission you can designate a new electronic
19 sign zone as was proposed at one point for Causeway
20 Street, but rejected. And then you can petition to
21 get an electronic billboard, if you go through normal
22 ZBA and Boston process.

23 This sort of avoidance of the process
24 that the MBTA can do is just -- is something that

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 we're very uncomfortable with. We understand that
2 MOOA has a good history of honoring the philosophies
3 of the various towns where electronic billboard
4 permits are made. So, if there is a town that is very
5 much opposed to electronic billboards, say Weston, you
6 guys tend to not allow the electronic billboards, and
7 everyone in the Commonwealth is appreciative of that.

8 I just want you all to know that in
9 Boston, there is a huge upswell, really activated over
10 the last year by applications, you know, through you
11 and through the Zoning Board of Appeals for way over
12 the top electronic billboards hanging off of buildings
13 in Chinatown, etc., that it's just basically activated
14 the community and made us really understand we don't
15 want any more of these.

16 So, I would echo what my colleagues
17 have said. Electronic billboards blight
18 neighborhoods. They're actually dangerous. We have
19 an uptick in fatalities on Mass. highways. And many
20 studies, and many of them are on our website and we'd
21 be happy to share them with the entire board here,
22 many of the studies show that you can have up to 25
23 percent increase in traffic accidents if you put an
24 electronic billboard near or on a highway near an

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 intersection. Well, this is on a highway, near an
2 intersection. It also will shine into three different
3 emerging neighborhoods in Boston. And we really urge
4 you on the merits to say no to this.

5 And we also hope that this notion that
6 the MBTA can sort of do what they want regarding
7 getting around community process, we hope this is
8 something we can solve together, too, because it is
9 becoming a bit anxiety-producing to the residents of
10 Boston.

11 Thank you.

12 JOHN ROMANO: Thank you for your
13 comments, Mr. Cavallari.

14 Is there anybody else? Lydia? Gerry?
15 Do you see --

16 GERARD KELLEHER: I don't see any other
17 questions.

18 JOHN ROMANO: All right. We'll give it
19 another second or two here. Just making sure. I
20 don't want to miss anybody.

21 (No response.)

22 GERARD KELLEHER: Okay. Oh, I see
23 Ford. Okay. That's it. Yeah.

24 JOHN ROMANO: All right. Thank you all

Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

1 very much. Seeing no other public comment at this
2 time, I will adjourn the meeting at 11:38.

3 We will get back to you if anything
4 changes as far as whether the meetings will continue
5 virtually or in-person. For now, we will plan on the
6 July hearing being virtual, unless something changes.

7 Thank you all very much. Have a great
8 day.

9 (Whereupon, the proceedings were concluded
10 on June 10, 2021 at 11:38 a.m.)

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Office of Outdoor Advertising, June 10, 2021

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.