

Office of Outdoor Advertising
Public Meeting

November 12, 2020

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 November 12, 2020

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

2

3 JOHN ROMANO: Good morning, everybody.

4 I hope you all can hear me. My name is John Romano.

5 And I am the Director of Outdoor Advertising for

6 MassDOT. We are here for the November 12 Office of

7 Outdoor Advertising public meeting.

8 This meeting is being held virtually by

9 Governor's Executive Order. Due to the COVID-19

10 pandemic, we cannot meet in person, so we are doing

11 this virtually as we have been since April.

12 We are running this hearing by

13 GoToWebinar.

14 Please note that this meeting is being

15 recorded by our stenographer who is in attendance. He

16 will provide a transcript of the meeting as always,

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

18 notes are approved at the next meeting.

19 This meeting is accessible to people

20 with disabilities and individuals with limited English

21 proficiency. If you filed a request for assistance

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

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

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

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

7 We are going to run this meeting as
8 close to normal as our regular Outdoor Advertising
9 hearings. I will go through the agenda. While the
10 sign-in sheet cannot be physically signed, we will
11 have a list of those who signed up for the webinar and
12 use that as the sign-in sheet.

13 On the screen is the agenda, as you can
14 see. As I had mentioned before, it is also -- a link
15 to it is also posted in the chat box.

16 What we will do is I will go through
17 each item. I will ask the questions of the
18 proponents, just like I do in the hearing at the
19 office in person at 10 Park Plaza.

20 Just so you know, everybody in the
21 public is currently muted. In about two minutes, the
22 organizer, who is Gerry Kelleher who works with me, is
23 going to unmute everybody, and then you should mute
24 yourself at that time. Should the organizer hear

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1 excessive background noise, he will mute people
2 individually or the whole group if needed.

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

14 You can also post your comments or
15 questions in the chat box. You will have a chance to
16 make comments just like you do in the regular public
17 hearing at the end of each item and then a final
18 chance for overall comments at the end of the agenda.

19 For anyone who may be new, we do not
20 make any decisions at this actual hearing. Every item
21 is taken under advisement and decisions are made
22 usually within a few weeks, sometimes as early as a
23 week, but we will give time for write-in comments to
24 our email address, which is

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1 OOAInformation@dot.state.ma.us. You can send comments
2 in writing there as well.

3 With that, Gerry, if you can unmute
4 everybody, we will start.

5 GERARD KELLEHER: Okay.

6 JOHN ROMANO: So, as we normally do in
7 the agenda, the first item is to review the meeting
8 notes from last meeting. So, Gerry, if you could put
9 up the regular session meeting notes from October 8th.
10 They are also posted in the chat box. There's a link
11 there if you need it.

12 GERARD KELLEHER: Do you see it?

13 JOHN ROMANO: Those are them. Okay.

14 GERARD KELLEHER: Okay.

15 JOHN ROMANO: Does anybody have any
16 comments or questions on October 8th's regular session
17 minutes?

18 (No response.)

19 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. I am not seeing
20 any, and nobody is raising their hands, and I do not
21 see anything in the chat box. So, we are going to
22 mark those approved. Today is the 12th.

23 Okay. The next item on the agenda is
24 an application for a permit amendment. This is from

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1 American Outdoor Advertising Company. The permit
2 numbers that the amendments are requested on is Permit
3 Number 2020D001 and D002. They're at 150 Royall
4 Street in Canton, Mass. These signs have not yet been
5 built. And the request for the amendment was received
6 in my office.

7 Is the applicant present?

8 (No response.)

9 JOHN ROMANO: Gerry, everybody is
10 unmuted, right?

11 GERARD KELLEHER: Who is the applicant?

12 JOHN ROMANO: Mr. Ross, are you
13 representing the applicant today?

14 STEPHEN ROSS: I am.

15 JOHN ROMANO: There you go. Can you
16 please state your name for the record please?

17 STEPHEN ROSS: Stephen Ross.

18 JOHN ROMANO: Is there anybody here
19 from the municipality?

20 (No response.)

21 JOHN ROMANO: Any abutters present?

22 (No response.)

23 JOHN ROMANO: I'll say none.

24 Okay. So this is just -- this is an

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1 amendment to previously approved signs. And what is
2 being asked is that the torsion pipe to be extended to
3 move the faces closer to the right of way. And we'll
4 have a 25.5-foot setback. The pole on which the sign
5 is being built, the monopole, is not being moved.
6 It's in the exact same location as the original
7 permits indicated. The application has been signed
8 off by the Town, Charles Aspinwall, authorized by the
9 variance through the Town, providing that MassDOT is
10 okay with it.

11 So, Mr. Ross, I'm just going to ask
12 you, do you have anything that you'd like to say about
13 the application, just specifically a brief summary of
14 what is intended to be done?

15 STEPHEN ROSS: So, it's exactly as you
16 indicated. The base pole is not moving. The torsion
17 pipe is being extended to bring the faces closer to
18 the traveling roadway. The Town has signed off on
19 their approval for it, as has each abutter of the
20 property.

21 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Thank you. And we
22 have had our Traffic Operations -- as this is a
23 digital sign, they had originally reviewed the
24 applications. There was no need for a traffic study

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1 at that time. They indicated that seeing that the
2 pole was not moving and it's in the same location,
3 just extending the torsion pipe, as you explained,
4 they stated that there are no changes to their initial
5 assessment of this application, or of the original
6 application. So, no effects, no changes, to the
7 original application.

8 Okay. With that, I'm going to have my
9 field inspector, Chris Chaves, give his report on his
10 field inspection on this application.

11 CHRISTOPHER CHAVES: Thank you, John.

12 As you both have mentioned, the sign
13 location will not -- will not change. It will remain
14 in the same location. The torsion pipe will be
15 extended toward the highway to make the sign faces
16 offset the pole closer to the highway. From a field
17 standpoint, the location of the sign remains the same,
18 so there are no issues or no changes to the original
19 recommendation.

20 JOHN ROMANO: Thank you, sir.

21 Mr. Ross, as you indicated, I know that
22 in the notes from the local hearing that you had, it
23 was required that you had permission from the two
24 abutters that had originally signed off on this. And

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1 you gave me copies of both those letters. And I have
2 those in the file. Is that correct?

3 STEPHEN ROSS: That is correct.

4 JOHN ROMANO: Anything else you'd like
5 to add to your application at this time?

6 STEPHEN ROSS: No, thank you.

7 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Any comments,
8 questions, or concerns from anybody in attendance?

9 (No response.)

10 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. I don't see or
11 hear anybody, or see any chats. Gerry, nobody in the
12 chat room? With that, we will take this under
13 advisement, Mr. Ross, and we will get back to you.

14 STEPHEN ROSS: Thank you, sir.

15 JOHN ROMANO: You're welcome.

16 The next item on the agenda is Carroll
17 Advertising, LLC. And this is -- one is for a digital
18 permit, 2020D009, and one static 2020007.

19 Mr. Carroll, are you here today?

20 JOHN CARROLL: Yes, sir.

21 JOHN ROMANO: So, I just want to give a
22 little explanation. I'm going to do this one a little
23 bit different.

24 Mr. Carroll came to our hearing last

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1 month for this exact same location. And at the end of
2 the -- at the end of the hearing, there was a little
3 bit of confusion as to which direction the static was
4 going to face and which direction the digital was
5 going to face. And there was actually a little
6 confusion probably on my part more than anything. But
7 we -- I asked him to come back again this month just
8 as a point of clarification so that everybody was on
9 the same page, including the Town, and him, and my
10 inspector, and everybody else so that there will be no
11 confusion, you know, for the public record and for
12 those, you know, involved.

13 So, the digital screen, 2020D009, the
14 sign is going to face north; the static is going to
15 face south.

16 Do I have that correct, Mr. Carroll?

17 JOHN CARROLL: Yes, sir.

18 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Last month, we had
19 those reversed. So, that was never Mr. Carroll's
20 intention. It was inadvertently marked off that way -
21 - I apologize -- on the application. And, again, as I
22 said, there was some confusion and I appreciate Mr.
23 Carroll's patience. We wanted to make sure that this
24 was corrected and done following at the hearing and

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1 not just done behind the scenes where we switch which
2 sign -- we didn't want it to appear we were actually
3 switching anything when this was Mr. Carroll's
4 intention all along.

5 So, Mr. Carroll, I'm going to read
6 through this. We did, on August 18th, notify the Town
7 about you coming last month to the hearing of which it
8 went through the town clerk and the town administrator
9 was notified. There were no issues from the Town.
10 There were no issues from any abutters. Our District
11 had no issues. Our Traffic Operations group sent us a
12 memo saying no traffic study would be needed. And my
13 inspector, Marc Plante, had no issues until we did,
14 you know, we all got to the point where we were just -
15 - had that confusion over which sign was facing which
16 way.

17 As I stated, that has been clarified by
18 all of us. The digital sign will be facing north and
19 the static sign will face southbound.

20 We're all set with that unless you have
21 anything further you'd like to add to your
22 application. Anything else you'd like to say at this
23 point, Mr. Carroll?

24 JOHN CARROLL: No, sir. I just want to

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1 apologize for the confusion. I probably had a hand in
2 it myself. And I appreciate all the work on your end,
3 John, and the staff. So, thank you. And I'm glad
4 it's all cleared up.

5 JOHN CARROLL: Thank you.

6 And, Marc, from the field inspection,
7 anything you'd like to add or are you all set?

8 MARC PLANTE: Thank you, John.

9 No, everything has remained constant
10 and was all conforming to the regulations. And this
11 location is conforming.

12 JOHN ROMANO: Great. Okay. Does
13 anybody from the public have any questions, comments,
14 or concerns?

15 (No response.)

16 GERARD KELLEHER: I don't see any.

17 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Seeing none, we
18 will take this under advisement and we will get back
19 to you shortly as we've already been reviewing this
20 for a month now.

21 JOHN CARROLL: Thank you.

22 JOHN ROMANO: Thank you very much.

23 JOHN CARROLL: Thank you.

24 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Next on the

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1 agenda, we have two applications from Harbor Outdoor,
2 LLC. The application numbers are 2020005 and 006. It
3 is at 2181 Providence Highway in Walpole. These are
4 two new static structures. And notice was sent to the
5 municipality, the town administrator and the town
6 clerk, by my office, October 13, 2020.

7 Is the applicant present?

8 BRIAN HANEY: Yes, Mr. Romano. Brian
9 Haney for Harbor Outdoor.

10 JOHN ROMANO: Great. Thank you for
11 coming, Mr. Haney.

12 BRIAN HANEY: Thank you.

13 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Are there any
14 abutters present today?

15 (No response.)

16 JOHN ROMANO: I don't see anybody.

17 Is anybody from the District Office,
18 MassDOT District Office, here?

19 (No response.)

20 JOHN ROMANO: I don't see anyone.

21 Traffic Operations is not applicable as
22 this is a static board. They review digital boards
23 for traffic only.

24 Mr. Haney, was certified mail notice to

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1 abutters sent out by you at least 30 days prior to
2 submitting your application to the Outdoor Advertising
3 Office?

4 BRIAN HANEY: Yes, Mr. Romano, they
5 were.

6 JOHN ROMANO: Great. And you did
7 submit the post office receipts to me, and I do have
8 those with your application. So, thank you.

9 And, also, you did provide a copy of
10 the letter with your application that I have as well,
11 is that correct?

12 BRIAN HANEY: Correct.

13 JOHN ROMANO: Have you received any
14 comments in support or opposition to this application
15 -- to these applications?

16 BRIAN HANEY: Neither, Mr. Romano.

17 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. We have not
18 either.

19 And I can tell you that I did -- I did
20 speak to Michael Yanovitch, the Building Commissioner.
21 And he had no issues. He says everything was fine on
22 the Town's end and that they were looking forward to
23 this going forward. So, no issues on their end.

24 And you guys received a special permit

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1 approved by the Town. The only thing that I noted
2 from the special permit is that the board can be
3 lighted between dusk and midnight, is that correct? I
4 noted that as one of their requirements or conditions.

5 BRIAN HANEY: Yes, you have that
6 correct.

7 JOHN ROMANO: Yeah. Okay. And should
8 you decide -- the other thing I noticed was should you
9 decide to at some point go to change this to digital,
10 a revised special permit would be needed.

11 BRIAN HANEY: Yes.

12 JOHN ROMANO: Okay. Great. And I have
13 that. Everything else seems to be fine from a
14 paperwork standpoint.

15 I'm going to have my field inspector
16 give his report at this time.

17 Mr. Plante?

18 MARC PLANTE: Thank you, John.

19 This is a proposed monopole with two
20 static faces, one to the north, one to the south. The
21 area has two businesses within 500 feet. There are no
22 parks, reservations, or playgrounds within 300 feet.
23 And any spacing issue, there is a static sign to the
24 south, which is well over 500 feet from this location.

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1 So, it is conforming to the regulations.

2 JOHN ROMANO: Great. Thank you, Marc.

3 I appreciate your report.

4 MARC PLANTE: Thank you, John.

5 JOHN ROMANO: Mr. Haney, do you have
6 anything you'd like to add to your application at this
7 time?

8 BRIAN HANEY: No, Mr. Romano. We
9 appreciate your office's patience while we got our
10 paperwork in order.

11 And, Mr. Plante, thank you very much
12 for your inspection of the proposed site.

13 We are excited to construct a new
14 billboard where there previously was an existing
15 billboard for decades. And we're excited to get
16 going. So, thank you very much for your assistance
17 and your patience.

18 JOHN ROMANO: Great. Does anybody on
19 the call have any questions, comments, or concerns
20 regarding these two permits?

21 (No response.)

22 GERARD KELLEHER: I don't see any.

23 JOHN ROMANO: You don't see any? Okay.
24 Great.

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1 Mr. Haney, we will take these under
2 advisement and get back to you.

3 BRIAN HANEY: Thank you, Mr. Romano.
4 Appreciate it as always.

5 JOHN ROMANO: No problem. Thank you.

6 Okay. The next part of the agenda is
7 For the Record. Does anybody have any questions under
8 the For the Record section?

9 (No response.)

10 JOHN ROMANO: I don't see any.

11 Does anybody have any general public
12 comments on anything?

13 (No response.)

14 JOHN ROMANO: I don't see any.

15 I will just make note that invoices for
16 renewals of licenses and permits have been put out in
17 the mail. We've started to get some in this past
18 week. And we appreciate you are getting those in as
19 quickly and fast as you can. If you have any
20 questions, please reach out to Lydia: 857-368-9700.
21 Please don't hold onto them. Please try to get them
22 back as quick as you can. We will try to process them
23 as fast as we can. But, again, if you have any
24 questions or concerns about your invoices, please

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1 reach out to Lydia and we will help you resolve them
2 as soon as we can.

3 So, with that, thank you all very much.
4 Happy Thanksgiving to everybody. And, hopefully, we
5 continue to have this nice weather.

6 The meeting is adjourned. Thank you
7 all very much.

8 (Whereupon, the proceedings were concluded
9 on November 12, 2020.)

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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.

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