

Advisory Board on the Visual Environment

MEMORANDUM

From: Douglas Wehrle, Chair
To: Robert Luntz, Chair of Planning Board
CC: Daniel O'Conner, Village Engineer
Date: April 21, 2014
Subject: Blue Pig Ice Cream--121 Maple Street (Sec. 78.08 Blk. 7 Lot 7)—Application for Amended Site Plan to construct a pergola over the patio area and review of freestanding sign and waiver of requirements for freestanding sign

Following are comments and considerations based on review of drawing, superimposed photo and discussion with John Grant who is supervising/constructing the work.

Pergola

A 12 feet by 12 feet wooden pergola will be constructed within the existing brick paved sitting area immediately east of the Blue Pig building. Mr. Grant stated that construction will follow design plans developed by Timber Frame HQ. Plans call for construction with heavy wood beams measuring 16 feet long with dimensions ranging from 4"X8" to 8"X10", supported by four 8"X8" posts. Posts will be attached to concrete footings. The lowest level of the overhead structure is proposed to be 8 feet above the ground plane, however knee bracing at each of the four corners will angle the lowest element to within 5 feet 6 inches from the ground plane.

The VEB commends the Blue Pig for its proposal to construct what promises to be an attractive overhead structure within its patio area. However some consideration should attend the following:

1. Above ground clearance of 8 feet will provide sufficient clearance for pedestrians. However Mr. Grant noted that they may wish to use free standing propane heaters under the structure. The VEB questions weather an 8 foot clearance will be sufficient to prevent any possible risk of fire and suggests that the minimum clearance recommended by the propane heater company be followed. This may require raising the height of the wood frame above the 8 foot clearance. Mr. Grant indicated that the height may be raised by extending the footings above ground and facing the concrete with decorative stone.
2. Knee braces could present a possible danger in that they will extend down below head height on all four corners off the structure. Suggest that the lowest point of attachment provide at least 6 foot 6 inches of clearance.
3. Mr. Grant advised that he will be using locally sourced untreated lumber for both posts and beams. The VEB recommends that all timber framing be appropriately sealed to retard decay.

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Free Standing Sign

A free standing hanging sign is proposed to be constructed within the front patio area adjacent to the public sidewalk. Construction is proposed to entail a 4"X4" pressure treated post and cross beam with a 32" by 19 ¼" sign made from a medium density overlay panel (MDO). The sign will feature the Blue Pig logo image without text. The sign will be lighted by mounted outdoor flood lights (solar) that will cast light directly onto the sign.

The VEB advocates the use of hanging signs set perpendicular to the pedestrian right-of-way. The upper Village now has several positive examples including Croton Music Center, Organic Teaching Kitchen and Tagine. Code requires that where these signs overhang sidewalks they must provide at least 8 feet ground clearance. In the present case, the sign will not overhang the sidewalk and will be aligned so that it reaches no closer to the sidewalk than the existing benches. Because it would not present a pedestrian impediment, the height of the sign could be lowered below the standard 8 feet to improve its relationship to both pedestrian and auto traffic. The VEB recommends establishing the height of the sign "in the field" using a mock up, and suggests that 5 foot 6 inches to the center of the sign may be ideal.

The VEB feels that the post and cross piece that will support the sign be made of the same wood and construction as the pergola. In addition, it is suggested that the sign incorporate a shoulder brace, with similar construction as the pergola's knee bracing. This will further tie the two constructions together visually while preventing the horizontal beam from sagging, especially over time as it bears the weight of the sign.