



Fort Point Channel Landmark District Commission Public Hearing Minutes

Boston City Hall, Piemonte Room
Boston, MA, 02201

AUGUST 8, 2019

Commissioners Present: David Berarducci, John Karoff, Lynn Smiledge, Thomas Rodde, Susan Goganian

Staff Present: Nicholas Armata, Senior Preservation Planner; Mary Cirbus, Preservation Planner

6:01 PM Commissioner Berarducci called the public hearing to order.

I. DESIGN

APP # 20.089 FPC 25, 26, 30, 35 & 36 Thomson Place

Applicant: Fort Point Channel Investors, LLC

Proposed Work: Work at the sidewalk including installing a raised speed table to align flush with the north and south side of Thomson Place, removing an existing ramp, and associated sidewalk repairs. Work at the front façade of 25 & 26 and 35 & 36 Thomson Place, including installing spanned catenary lighting across Thomson Place.

Nate Turner from Margulies Peruzzi Architects was the project representative.

The applicant explained that Thomson Place is becoming an increasingly heavily traveled pedestrian thoroughfare and the proposed work will enhance pedestrian safety by ensuring that vehicles adhere to a particular speed limit. He showed existing conditions at the street and sidewalk. He explained that the catenary lighting will span across Thomson place at the designated facades and that the speed table will be located at a midway point at 25 Thomson Place where there is already a building entrance. The lighting will be in keeping with the type of lighting that is already present at the Trillium plaza on Thomson Place.

Commissioner Goganian asked about the size of the light fixture and Commissioner Berarducci asked if emergency vehicles would be able to fit underneath them. The applicant confirmed that the lights are approximately 18" tall and they will be installed at the brick joints.

Commissioner Smiledge asked if Thomson Place is considered a public way. It is considered a private way. She also asked if these lights were present at any streets in the district. After discussion with staff it was determined that similar cantenary lighting exists on Channel Center Street.



Commissioner Berarducci asked about the street trees and the applicant confirmed that the street trees will remain. He also asked about the material of the speed table. The applicant confirmed that there will be granite curbs and bituminous coating. Commissioner Berarducci also expressed concern that the selected pavers will not hold up to Boston traffic.

Tom Ready from the Neighborhood Association offered public comment. He asked about the coordination between this development and the construction associated with opening up Thomson Place. Commissioner Berarducci noted that staff should be made aware of the construction method of the speed table.

Commissioner Smiledge expressed concern about the lighting and its installation above a trafficked area. She thinks they should be more industrial looking. After looking at the Channel Center Street example, Commissioner Berarducci asked about the light intensity and the applicants responded that they already have experience with this type of lighting at Trillium Plaza. Commissioner Berarducci thinks the lights should be able to be turned down if they are too intense.

Commissioner Smiledge reiterated that her concern is not with the intensity but rather the style of fixture. Commissioner Berarducci noted that there is no historic precedence for catenary lighting in the district but it would be nice to unify this lighting with that of Trillium Plaza. Commissioner Smiledge understands the rationale and does not feel that strongly in her objection to the lights.

Staff and Commission had a brief discussion about street trees. Commissioner Berarducci said that street trees should be clustered together in sections or pocket parks rather than along the street.

S. Goganian motioned to approve the application, with the proviso that the applicant provide a cross-section drawing of the speed table to staff, and that the lights have a means to adjust intensity if they are too bright. T. Rodde seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 (DB, JK, LS, TR, SG).

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Applicant: New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC (“AT&T”)

Proposed Work: Work at the Wormwood Smokestack, including installing three new panel antennas, shifting the location of the existing panel antennas to accommodate the new antennas, and installing port holes at the base of the smokestack and the antenna level to accommodate new interior cabling.

Edward Pare, attorney for the applicant, was the project representative.

The applicant explained that they came before the Commission in 2017 to remove the catwalk, place structural bands, and remove cluttered areas of AT & T and relocated antenna equipment to the inside of the smokestack. Mortar and brick was approved by staff. When they were ready to pull the permit in 2018, AT&T decided to upgrade systems. The applicant explained the current scope of work of adding three additional antennas and shifting existing to accommodate the new.

Commissioner Berarducci and Commissioner Goganian sought confirmation that the antennas will be the same as those existing and that the catwalk will be removed. The applicant explained the existing and proposed conditions.

Commissioner Goganian expressed the need for cellular companies to work together to figure out a solution for consolidating equipment on the smokestack. The applicant noted that they did propose a significant restoration of the smokestack, financed by AT&T only, in 2017. The work under the original permit issued in 2017 was not completed. Commissioner Goganian mentioned that vendors are working together in similar historic districts. They must figure out a comprehensive plan for the structure.

The issue is that the other cellular companies are not present at the hearing to discuss sharing equipment at this time. Commissioner Goganian thinks the Commission should be doing more to advocate for this structure. The other issue is that technology is consistently evolving. Commissioner Smiledge wonders if this should be a city-wide initiative to make cellular companies work together to reduce the amount of equipment, especially in historic districts.

The applicant reiterated that he can only speak for AT&T at this moment.

Commissioner Goganian emphasized that the Commission should begin to put the onus on the cellular companies to solve the problem. Commissioner Berarducci thinks the time to do that should be when another company comes before the Commission asks for something more intrusive. He does not think that this installation is any worse than anything else on the tower.

Commissioner Berarducci commented that the Commission is getting upset at all the work on the smokestack and that further applications will be more scrutinized.



A turning point is required but the catwalk being removed is a good step in the right direction. The antenna will be painted clay red to match the smokestack. The applicant also explained how the cabling will be relocated to the interior of the smokestack.

There was no public comment.

T. Rodde motioned to approve the application. L. Smiledge seconded the motion. The vote was 4-1 (DB, JK, LS, TR) (SG).

APP # 20.069 FPC 346 Congress Street

Applicant: Imageone Industries

Proposed Work: Work at the front elevation, including installing a banner sign and associated flagpoles, a blade sign, and sign at the storefront band.

Dennis Clarty (?), attorney for Santander, Annette Hicks, CBRE/ Santander, and Thomas A. Gianni, Imageone Industries, were the project representatives.

The applicant explained that the main signband was removed from the application. They are applying for the banner sign and the blade sign which existed for the previous tenant. The applicant explained that the banner sign will be relocated to a new location on the façade and the new banner will be fabricated. Commissioner Berarducci asked about the brackets (they will be removed and returned to the owner; applicants will match area) and the material of the banner. The applicant responded that the banner is a flexible material and it will not be lit.

The blade sign will be internally illuminated but only the flame logo will be lit. Commissioner Berarducci said it was positive that none of the dimensions will be changed. He confirmed that there will not be new conduits added to the sign. The thickness of the blade sign will be the same (5").

Commissioner Berarducci asked again about the lit blade sign. The applicant confirmed that the blade sign is illuminated but that only the logo is lit because the rest of the sign is aluminum.

Commissioner Karoff asked if the applicants will be coming in for additional signage. The applicants said no, but asked that the Commissioners examine the signage at the ATM vestibule, which is behind a set of doors.

Staff asked about temporary signage present at the windows. Applicants noted that vinyl signage is installed. Staff noted that applicants need a permit and applicants said the signage will be removed.



There was no public comment.

L. Smiledge motioned to approve the application, T. Rodde seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 (DB, JK, LS, TR, SG).

II. Ratification of Meeting Minutes from 7/11/2019

J. Karoff motioned to approve the minutes, L. Smiledge seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 (DB, JK, LS, TR, SG).

III. Staff Updates

IV. Adjourn – 6:55 PM

S. Goganian motioned to adjourn the hearing. L. Smiledge seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 (DB, JK, LS, TR, SG).