Chair Dziurman called the Special meeting of the Troy City Building Board of Appeals to order at 3:00 p.m. on June 20, 2012 in the Lower Level Conference Room of the Troy City Hall.

1. ROLL CALL

Members Present:
Theodore Dziurman, Chair
Gary Abitheira (arrived 3:15 p.m.)
Teresa Brooks
Michael Carolan
Mike Culpepper

Support Staff Present:
Mitch Grusnick, Building Official/Code Inspector
Kathy L. Czarnecki, Recording Secretary

Also Present:
Attached and made a part hereof is the signature sheet of those present and signed in at this meeting.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by: Carolan
Seconded by: Brooks

RESOLVED, To approve the minutes of the June 6, 2012 Regular meeting as submitted.

Yeas: All present (4)
Absent: Abitheira (arrived 3:15 p.m.)

MOTION CARRIED

3. HEARING OF CASES

A. **VARIANCE REQUEST, ROBERT MOORHOUSE, MOORHOUSE AND ASSOCIATES, 900 TOWER** – For relief of Chapter 85 in order to place two additional 206 square foot wall signs.

Mr. Grusnick presented a brief report on the item. He indicated the department received no responses to the public hearing notices.

The petitioner, Robert Moorhouse, was present. Tony Antone of Kojaian Management and Mike Twarozyouski of Plex Systems were also present.

Mr. Antone announced Plex Systems is looking to move to Troy and occupy four floors (62,000 square feet) of the 900 Tower building, with the right to expand up to seven floors (110,000 square feet) in the future. He briefly addressed the commercial vacancy rate, and said the signage and visibility for the customers and client base of the new company is critical from a wayfinding standpoint. Mr. Antone said no more than two signs would be visible at one time, no matter where one would stand on the site. He noted Citizens Bank signage has visibility from I-75 and the bank has exclusive rights on the elevations.

Mr. Moorhouse informed the Board that Plex Systems is requesting the signage at 900 Tower as a wayfinding aid for their worldwide customers and clients. He said the signage would give visibility to a growing company whose headquarters would be new to the City of Troy and the State of Michigan. Mr. Moorhouse addressed the proposed signage with respect to location, elevation, lettering and symmetry to the existing Citizens Bank signage, and further noted there is no surrounding residential property.

Mr. Twarozyouski, Sr. Vice President of Finance and Operations, said Plex Systems is a software computer company that provides enterprise resource planning (ERP) services to high liability manufacturers in the automotive supply, aerospace, beverage and food supplies and electronics industries. He said the company is a high growth company that grew on an average of 27% in the past five years. Mr. Twarozyouski indicated the company has committed to four floors of the 900 Tower building, with the right to an additional three floors. It is anticipated that 250 people will be employed within the next four to five years.

Chair Dziurman shared a concern about the size of the sign and asked if the applicant would be amenable to smaller 200 square foot signs.

Mr. Antone replied they could go with 200 square feet per sign.

Chair Dziurman said the 200 square feet is the maximum size permitted by the Sign Ordinance, and the only approval needed by the Board would be for the additional signage.

There was discussion on:

- Allowable signage on Big Beaver Road.
- Visibility from I-75.
- Sign dimensions.

Moved by: Carolan
Seconded by: Culpepper

RESOLVED, To approve the appeal request because the proposed signage goes well with the area, the request is only for six square feet above the square footage requirement, two signs only will be visible at any one time and there are no public objections.

Yeas: 3 (Brooks, Carolan, Culpepper)
Nays: 1 (Dziurman)
Absent: Abitheira (arrived 3:15 p.m.)

MOTION CARRIED

Chair Dziurman indicated his opposing vote is based on the size of the signs.

[Gary Abitheira arrived 3:15 p.m.]

B. **VARIANCE REQUEST, JIM GHANEM FOR JIM'S AWNING, 5600 CROOKS** – For relief of Chapter 85 in order to place a 30 square foot ground sign.

Mr. Grusnick presented a brief report on the item. He indicated the department received no responses to the public hearing notices. Mr. Grusnick displayed photographs of the existing three signs on the property. He explained the reason the appeal application is before the Board today is that it has come to the attention of the City that the property has been maintaining three existing ground signs since 2004. At the time the City issued a sign permit to the former Palm restaurant, the City requested removal of the existing 'For Lease' sign; but to date, the sign still exists. In order to approve the proposed new sign, a sign variance is necessary to allow three ground signs on the site. Mr. Grusnick said the proposed new sign would replace the existing Loccino restaurant sign (located in the middle) with a smaller LED sign.

Frank Shushtari, owner of Loccino restaurant, was present. Mr. Shushtari said the new LED sign would advertise the restaurant's banquet and catering facility and special occasions. He addressed the existing vacancy rate and indicated the landlord has no intention of removing the 'For Lease' sign until all vacancies are filled.

Mr. Grusnick addressed the difference between real estate signs for residential and commercial properties. He said this particular "For Lease" sign is considered permanent because it is a ground sign and because of its size, even though the need for the sign will eventually go away. Mr. Grusnick confirmed that in this instance because of the economic times, the "For Lease" sign is restricting signage for ongoing businesses.

Khalil Ajami of Jim's Awning, was present to represent the petitioner. Mr. Ajami addressed the sign dimensions and message board in relation to timing and control of multiple messages.

There was discussion on:

- Future signage on building dependent on Board's decision today.
- Timing / changing of message board.
- Illumination intensity/regulations of intensity during after dark hours.

Mr. Culpepper voiced concern that an active business is being penalized because of a temporary sign.

Moved by: Carolan
Seconded by:

RESOLVED, To approve the appeal request because the applicant has shown a true hardship and with the stipulation that lighting intensity is dimmer at night.

Motion on the floor fails due to lack of support.

Discussion continued on the illumination and brightness intensity of the proposed signage.

Mr. Ajami addressed the light intensity of their manufactured signs. He indicated the signs are not very bright during after dark hours and would not be distracting to traffic. Mr. Ajami said their signs comply with regulations of most cities.

Mr. Grusnick said the Sign Ordinance does not regulate light intensity/illumination, other than stating sign lighting shall not adversely affect driver visibility. He did note that the Sign Ordinance regulates the timing of board messages to one minute.

Moved by: Carolan
Seconded by: Brooks

RESOLVED, To approve the appeal request subject to the Planning Department approval of intensity.

Yeas: All present (5)

MOTION CARRIED

4. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

6. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Chair Dziurman reminded the Board there are no agenda items scheduled for a July meeting at this time.

After a brief discussion on whether to charge fees for holding Special meetings, it was determined that Mr. Grusnick would research a change in the fee schedule and report back to the Board.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The Special meeting of the Board of Building Appeals adjourned at 3:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Theodore Dziurman

Theodore Dziurman, Chair

Kathy L. Czarnecki

Kathy L. Czarnecki, Recording Secretary

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BUILDING BOARD OF APPEALS SIGN-IN SHEET

June 20, 2012

NAME *(PLEASE PRINT)*	*ADDRESS*
Frank shushtari from	Loccino Rest
Tony Antone - Kojaian mngt	900 Tower Dr.
Bob Moorhouse RE. Moorhouse & Assoc.	33 Squirrel
MIKE TWARDZYNSKI	1731 HARMON, AUBURN HILLS
Khalil Ajami (Khalil Ajami)	Loccino rest. (Jina's Awning)