

The Chairman, Mr. Dziurman, called the meeting of the Building Code Board of Appeals to order at 8:31 AM on Wednesday, September 1, 2010 in the Lower Level Conference Room of Troy City Hall.

PRESENT: Ted Dziurman
Michael Carolan
Teresa Brooks
John Szerlag

ALSO PRESENT: Mitch Grusnick, Building Official
Paul Evans, Housing & Zoning Inspector Supervisor
Matt Royer, Director of Regional Operations, SAFEbuilt
Gerald Rice, Recording Secretary

ITEM #1 – APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MEETING OF AUGUST 4, 2010

Motion to approve by Mr. Szerlag

Seconded by Mr. Carolan

MOVED, to approve the minutes of the meeting of June 2, 2010 as written.

Yeas: 4 – Dziurman, Carolan, Pylar, Szerlag

MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES AS WRITTEN CARRIED.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

ITEM #2 – VARIANCE REQUEST. JEFF JOHNSON, HARMON SIGN. 3921 ROCHESTER ROAD, for relief of Chapter 85 to relocate a 56 sq. ft. ground sign setback 13' from the right of way line.

Petitioner is requesting relief of the Ordinance to relocate a 56 square foot ground sign. The property in question is located in the B-3 Zoning District. Table 85.02.05 of the sign code requires signs between 50 and 100 square feet in size be setback at least 20' from the front property line. The petitioner is proposing to relocate the 56 square foot sign 13' from the property line.

This item first appeared before this Board at the August 4, 2010 meeting and postponed as there was no representative from Harmon Sign present.

Mr. Harmon stated if they tried to conform to the setback as stated by the Ordinance the sign would not be visible from the roadway.

ITEM #2-cont'd

Mr. Szerlag asked how far the sign would be from the sidewalk if it were relocated to where the petitioner is requesting.

Mr. Grusnick stated there is a new easement going on along the property line. The sign in its current location is in that easement so it has to be moved. It is showing one foot behind the new easement making it 14 foot from the edge of the sidewalk. There are no vision obstructions.

There were no public objections.

Motion to approve by Mr. Szerlag
Seconded by Mr. Carolan

MOVED, to grant the request of Jeff Johnson, Harmon Sign, 3921 Rochester Rd, for relief of Chapter 85 to relocate a 56 sq. ft. ground sign setback 13' from the right of way line.

Yeas: 4 – Dziurman, Brooks, Szerlag, Carolan

MOTION TO GRANT VARIANCE CARRIED.

ITEM #3 – VARIANCE REQUEST. KIM ALLARD, ALLIED SIGNS, 2932 E. LONG LAKE, for relief of Chapter 85 to alter a portion of an existing ground sign that will measure 159 square feet in area.

Petitioner is requesting relief of the Sign Ordinance to alter a portion of the existing ground sign that will measure 159 square feet of sign area. The existing 25' front setback will remain the same. The property in question is located in the B-2 Zoning District. Table 85.02.05 requires signs exceeding 100 square feet in size be setback at least 30' from the front property line.

There was one written correspondence objecting to this item, stating it blocked the visibility of their center and created a traffic hazard.

Bryan Terry from Allied Signs stated if the sign were relocated it would create a practical hardship. They are only requesting to update the electronic portion of the sign.

Mr. Dziurman stated there is a relatively new development in the area and asked if the sign ordinance had changed since it has been there.

Mr. Grusnick stated the ordinance has not changed, stating there was a permit issued for the sign there is now. He reemphasized there is a two-part sign and the sign below is only being changed. Mr. Grusnick stated he inspected the sign August 31 and noticed the depth of the sign has been changed to 30" since the original sign permit was

ITEM #3- cont'd

issued back in 1999. Both sides are being counted for the square footage because of the depth.

Mr. Szerlag stated one neighbor indicated there was a vision obstruction and asked if there was any evidence to that effect.

Mr. Grusnick stated there was not. There would be no change over what is currently there.

Mr. Carolan asked what the function of the sidewalk is beneath the sign.

Mr. Terry stated at some point in time a sidewalk development was proposed within the right-of-way, but the Shell Gas station next door occupies parking lot space that goes through the road abutment. It would be impractical for that sidewalk to continue, but nonetheless it exists and they would not want to impede that.

Mr. Szerlag asked if there were eventually a sidewalk program that would run parallel to Long Lake, the location seen under the sign would be the location of the sidewalk.

Mr. Grusnick stated it would be and at that time the sign would be required to be moved back.

Mr. Terry stated Walgreens would agree to pay for the relocation.

Mr. Szerlag moved to approve the sign variance contingent upon the City having a future sidewalk program that would extend to the area where the sign is located that Walgreens would agree to move the sign at their own expense.

Seconded by Ms. Brooks

MOVED, to grant the request of Kim Allard, Allied Sign, 2932 E. Long Lake, for relief of Chapter 85 to alter a portion of an existing ground sign that will measure 159 square feet in area contingent upon a future sidewalk program requiring Walgreens to move the approved sign at their own expense.

Yeas: 4 – Dziurman, Brooks, Szerlag, Carolan

MOTION TO GRANT VARIANCE CARRIED.

ITEM #4 – VARIANCE REQUEST. DAN HEILEMAN, HEILEMAN SIGNS, 1790-1794 MAPLELAWN, for relief of Chapter 85 to erect a 386 square foot ground sign and install six building wall signs.

Petitioner is requesting relief of Chapter 85, section 85.02.05 and table 85.02.05 to erect a 386 square foot ground sign and install six building wall signs. This property is located in a M-1 planned auto center Zoning District. Table 85.02.05 limits the maximum area of a ground sign in this Zoning District to 200 square feet and section 85.02.05 (5)(F) limits the total number of wall signs to three.

Mr. Heileman stated the ground sign is the new Chrysler identification program. It is just in the center that the face on either side bows out or is arched to 28 inches; otherwise the sign cabinet at either end is 1 foot, 10 inches, which would make it under the 24 inches.

He also stated the wall signs have 182 total square feet. The reason for the amount of signs is because this is the new way corporate is doing business of grouping all their brands together. They have Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep and the new truck line, Ram. They have the dealer's name and all the brands he's carrying.

Mr. Dziurman asked what would happen if Fiat came in.

Mr. Heileman stated they would have a stand-alone building with its own service department.

Mr. Szerlag asked if the total square footage of the signs were condensed into three signs would that be within allowance.

Mr. Grusnick stated the total area of all six signs is 182 square feet and using a ten percent figure of the total square footage of the building would allow for 332 square feet of total signage.

Mr. Dziurman asked if there were any public objections. There were none

Motion to approve by Mr. Carolan
Seconded by Ms. Brooks

MOVED, to grant the request of Dan Heileman, Heileman Signs, 1790-1794 Maplelawn, for relief of Chapter 85 to erect a 386 square foot ground sign and install six building wall signs.

Yeas: 4 – Dziurman, Brooks, Szerlag, Carolan

MOTION TO GRANT VARIANCE CARRIED.

ITEM #5 – VARIANCE REQUEST. SITE ENHANCEMENT SERVICES, 2966 E. BIG BEAVER, for relief of Chapter 85 to install two wall signs, totaling 202 square feet.

Petitioner is requesting relief of the Sign Ordinance to install two wall signs each measuring 101 square feet in area resulting in a total of 202 square feet of wall signage. This property is located in the B-1 Zoning District. Section 85.02.05 limits the maximum area of wall signage at this location to 95 square feet.

Mr. Shawn Smith from Site Enhancement Services explained this site is unique in that it has frontage on Big Beaver and lot access to Dequindre at the rear of the building. There is a curb cut off Dequindre solely for this parcel, giving it a distinguished frontage. What they are requesting is to be allowed to have signage on the front facing Big Beaver and the rear where the entrance door is facing Dequindre.

Mr. Dziurman asked if there was any public objection to this variance request. There was none.

Mr. Grusnick had no prior variance requests at this location.

Ms. Brooks asked if there was an awning that went all the way around.

Mr. Grusnick stated he saw evidence of an awning that went over the windows.

Mr. Dziurman asked who decided how many signs would be on the building.

Mr. Smith stated they are brand consultants for Advance Auto Parts but ultimately it is the company's decision.

Mr. Dziurman stated he did not understand the necessity of the sign size at the rear.

Mr. Smith stated the sign on Big Beaver is necessary because they have access from Big Beaver. The business model is to also have signage over the front entrance facing Dequindre. They do have a smaller set that they could come down to 81 square feet and be under the 10% allowance. That would still allow for proper branding.

Mr. Grusnick clarified the photographs submitted show the entryway is at the rear and that is what is being referred to as the front. And the photographs being referred to as the rear actually abut Big Beaver.

Mr. Dziurman asked if there would be a problem with having different size signs.

Mr. Smith stated they would prefer to have two smaller signs for consistency.

Motion to approve smaller signs by Mr. Carolan
Seconded by Ms. Brooks

ITEM #5- cont'd

MOVED, to grant the request of Site Enhancement Services, 2966 E. Big Beaver, for relief of Chapter 85 to install two 81 square foot wall signs, totaling 162 square feet.

Yeas: 4 – Dziurman, Brooks, Szerlag, Carolan

MOTION TO GRANT VARIANCE CARRIED.

ITEM #6 – VARIANCE REQUEST. MARK GIBSON, MAJESTIC SIGN & DESIGN, 738 E. BIG BEAVER, for relief of Chapter 85 to install two wall signs, totaling 106 square feet.

Petitioner is requesting relief of the Sign Ordinance to install two wall signs that measure a combined total area of 106 square feet. The subject property is located in a B-2 Zoning District. Section 85.02.05 limits the total area of signage visible from the street right-of-way at this tenant space to 55 square feet.

Mr. Gibson stated this location is directly behind Pei Wei in the same building. He directed the Board to photo 2, stating it looks east. This part of the year with the foliage the sign is more difficult to see and once the traffic light turns green traffic is going at 60 miles per hour. In order to bring in the most traffic off Big Beaver they want to have as big of a sign as possible. They are asking for a variance to have a same size sign facing west and east.

Ms. Brooks asked if there was a record of how big Pei Wei's sign was.

Mr. Grusnick stated he did not have one with him. The problem with this location is that the front faces west which limits the size of allowable signage.

Mr. Dziurman asked if this was a franchise.

Mr. Gibson stated this is the owner's first stand-alone. They have a restaurant in Grosse Pointe, but this one is to be the showcase to attract potential investors. Pei Wei utilizes 60% of the facility and the other tenant utilizes 40%. He felt it would be handicapped forever if they are not granted a variance.

Mr. Dziurman understood his position but stated it is a poor location.

Ms. Brooks asked if there was any plan for lighting.

Mr. Gibson stated it would be a backlit sign.

Mr. Carolan asked if there were any concern of passing this and anyone else requesting a similar variance later.

Mr. Dziurman stated that was not a concern.

ITEM #6- cont'd

Mr. Grusnick suggested making both signs 42 inches.

Mr. Gibson stated that was possible but the owner wanted to make the letters larger and give up the salad bowl.

Mr. Dziurman stated the preference was to keep the size of the signs down. He suggested postponing the variance request a month while Mr. Gibson conferred with his client.

Mr. Grusnick stated it would be a less excessive variance to reduce the size of the signs.

Mr. Carolan suggested making the signs 4 by 10.

Mr. Dziurman reiterated they could vote on approving smaller signs or postpone while going to his client.

Mr. Gibson stated he wanted to have something to take back to his client now.

Mr. Szerlag asked how wide the window panes were.

Mr. Grusnick stated he did not have that information.

Motion to approve two 4 by 10 square foot signs by Mr. Carolan
Seconded by Mr. Szerlag

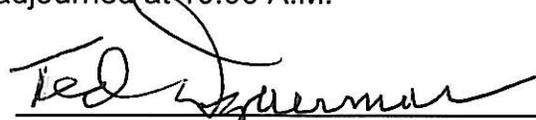
Ms. Brooks asked to amend the motion to two 40 square foot signs. Mr. Carolan had no objection.

MOVED, to grant the request of Mark Gibson, Majestic Sign & Design, 738 E. Big Beaver, for relief of Chapter 85 to install two 40 square foot signs.

Yeas: 4 – Dziurman, Brooks, Szerlag, Carolan

MOTION TO GRANT VARIANCE CARRIED.

The Building Code Board of Appeals meeting adjourned at 10:00 A.M.



Ted Dziurman, Chairman



Gerald Rice, Recording Secretary