

STAFF DESIGN COMMISSION REPORT

PROJECT INFORMATION:

Project Name: H&R Block
Project Address: 1040 S. Arlington Heights Road
Prepared By: Steve Hautzinger

PETITION INFORMATION:

DC Number: 18-081
Petitioner Name: Shaun Harris
Petitioner Address: South Water Signs
934 N. Church Rd.
Elmhurst, IL 60126
Meeting Date: September 13, 2018

Date Prepared: September 5, 2018

Requested Action(s):

1. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-402 Number, to allow one wall sign on the side of the building, where zero wall signs are allowed.
2. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-403a Dimensions, to allow a 30.8 sf wall sign on the side of the building, where zero sf is allowed.

ANALYSIS:

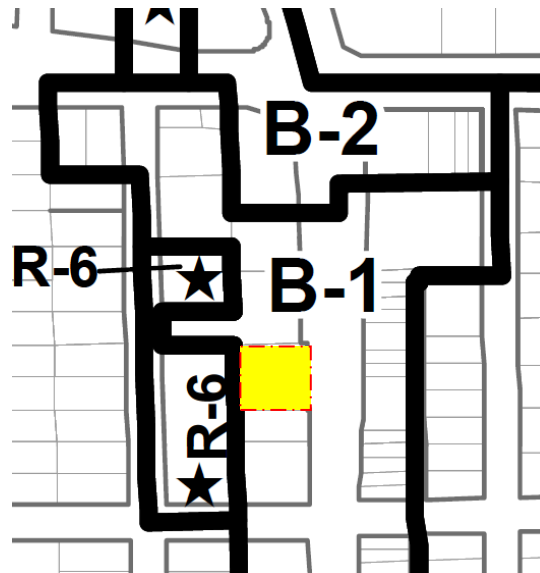
Summary

The subject design is being forwarded to the Design Commission for review pursuant to Chapter 6 of the Municipal Code, specifically Section 6-501 (e)(1), which states that the Design Commission "shall review all Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Building Permit and Sign Permit applications for new construction and those improvements which affect the architectural design of the building, site improvements or signage to determine whether it meets with the standards, requirements and purposes of the Design Guidelines and Chapter 30, Sign Regulations."

H&R Block is located in a two-story, multi-tenant office building, and they partially occupy the first and second floors. They are proposing to install one "H&R Block" wall sign on each side of the building, facing north and facing south. One sign is allowed per code, but a variation is required for the second wall sign. The signs are proposed to be the same size and design, and will be internally illuminated.



Aerial of Property



Zoning Map of Property

Surrounding Land Uses:

Direction	Existing Zoning	Existing Use	Comprehensive Plan
Subject Property	B-1, Business District Limited Retail	Multi-Tenant Office	Commercial
North	B-1, Business District Limited Retail	Multi-Tenant Office	Commercial
South	B-1, Business District Limited Retail	Martin Optical Eye Care	Commercial
East	B-1, Business District Limited Retail	Multi-Tenant Retail/Office	Commercial
West	R-6, Multiple Family Dwelling District	Multi-Tenant Office Building	Moderate Density Multi-Family

Table 1: Wall Sign Summary

SIGN	ELEVATION / FRONTAGE	SIGNABLE AREA	25% ALLOWED BY CODE	SIGN SIZE	REMARKS
"H&R Block"	North / parking lot	144 sf	36 sf	30.8 sf	Complies with code.
"H&R Block"	South / parking lot	0 sf	0 sf	30.8 sf	Variation required for number, Variation required for size. <u>Note:</u> If the proposed sign were approved, it would comply with the 25% signable area.
TOTAL				61.6 sf	

Sign Variation Criteria:

The Village Sign Code, Chapter 30, Section 30-902 sets out the standards for granting a sign variation.

- a. *That the particular difficulty or peculiar hardship is not self-created by the Petitioner.*
- b. *That the granting of said variation will not create a traffic hazard, a depreciation of nearby property values or otherwise be detrimental to the public health, safety, morals and welfare;*
- c. *That the variation will serve to relieve the Petitioner from a difficulty attributable to the location, topography, circumstances on nearby properties or other peculiar hardship, and will not merely serve to provide the Petitioner with a competitive advantage over similar businesses;*
- d. *That the variation will not alter the essential character of the locality;*
- e. *That the Petitioner's business cannot reasonably function under the standards of this chapter.*

The petitioner has submitted a letter stating that two wall signs (one on each side of the building) are required for visibility, because a wall sign on the front of the building would not be visible. Furthermore, the letter explains that a ground sign is not possible due to the tight site constraints.

Staff agrees that the design of the front façade is not accommodating for placement of wall signage. Visibility of signage on the front wall would be limited, and this hardship is not self-created. Allowing the proposed wall signs will serve to relieve the petitioner from a difficulty attributable to this unique location and building setback. The proposed wall signs are nicely designed, and they fit comfortably on the side walls. Staff does not object to the proposed signs, but recommends that if the variation is granted, it should include a condition that no other wall signage shall be allowed on this building.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Design Commission recommend **approval** to the Village Board of the following sign variations for *H&R Block* at 1040 S. Arlington Heights Road:

1. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-402 Number, to allow one wall sign on the side of the building, where zero wall signs are allowed.
2. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-403a Dimensions, to allow a 30.8 sf wall sign on the side of the building, where zero sf is allowed.

This recommendation is subject to compliance with the plans dated 10/3/17 and received 8/14/18, Federal, State, and Village Codes, regulations, and policies, and the issuance of all required permits, and the following conditions:

1. If the Design Commission supports the variation, then the recommendation for approval should be conditioned to prohibit any other wall signs on the building.
2. This review deals with architectural design only and should not be construed to be an approval of, or to have any other impact on, any other zoning and/or land use issues or decisions that stem from zoning, building, signage or any other reviews. In addition to the normal technical review, permit drawings will be reviewed for consistency with the Design Commission and any other Commission or Board approval conditions. It is the architect/homeowner/builder's responsibility to comply with the Design Commission approval and ensure that building permit plans comply with all zoning code, building permit and signage requirements.

September 5, 2018

Steve Hautzinger AIA, Design Planner
Department of Planning & Community Development

c: Charles Witherington-Perkins, Director of Planning and Community Development, Petitioner, DC File 18-081