

STAFF DESIGN COMMISSION REPORT

PROJECT INFORMATION:

Project Name: Arlington Town Square
Project Address: 70 S. Arlington Heights Road
Prepared By: Steve Hautzinger

Date Prepared: November 30, 2018

PETITION INFORMATION:

DC Number: 18-103
Petitioner Name: Jim Sutphen
Petitioner Address: Abbell Associates
30 N. LaSalle Street, Suite 2120
Chicago, IL 60602
Meeting Date: December 11, 2018

Requested Action(s):

Entrance Identity Signage on Arlington Heights Road:

1. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-302 Number, to allow two ground signs, where only one ground sign is allowed per street frontage.
2. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-302 Number, to allow ground signs with a separation distance of 40 feet, where 800 feet of separation is required.

Courtyard Shops Directory Signage:

3. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-201.h.3.a, to amend a previous variation to allow an increase in size for a directory sign from 13 sf to 67 sf.

Town Square Fountain:

4. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-201, to allow a 45 sf development identification sign, where no development identification sign is allowed.

Office Center Signage:

5. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-201.h.2.b, to allow 30 sf of canopy signage, where 4.4 sf is the maximum allowed.
6. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-201.h.2.b, to allow signage to be located on top of a canopy, where lettering is not allowed to project above or beyond the physical dimensions of the awning.

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."

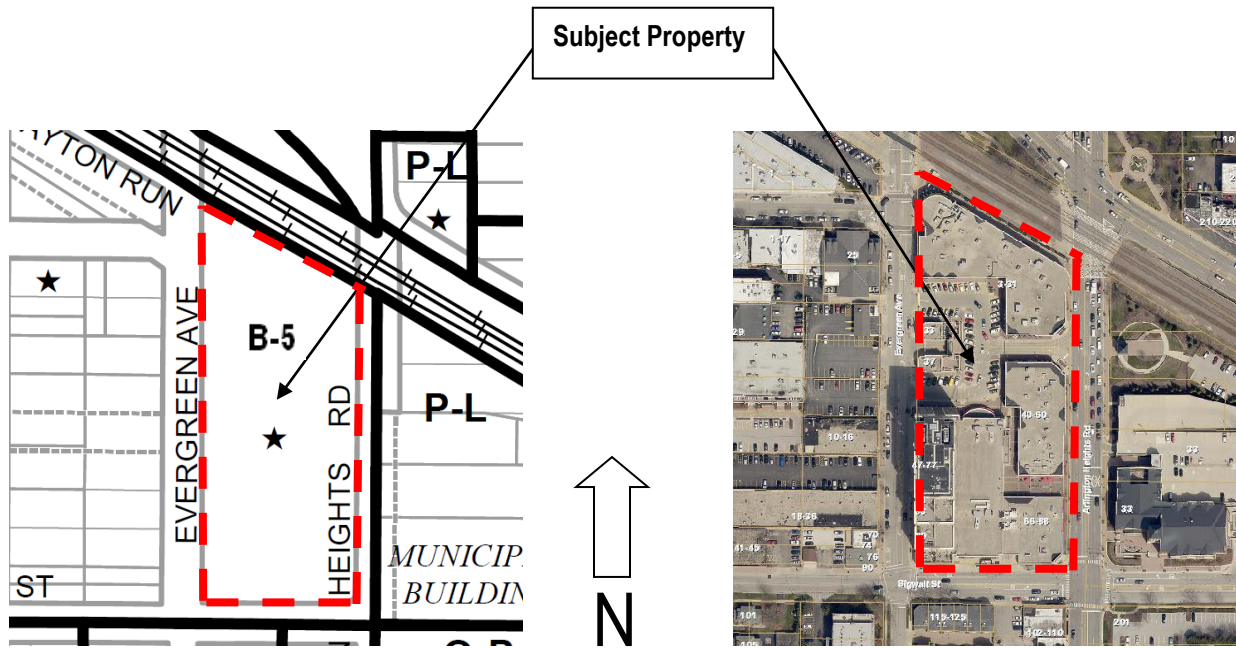
Arlington Town Square is an existing multi-tenant shopping center in the Downtown. It includes approximately 66,000 sf of retail space on the ground level, and an additional 34,000 sf of office space on the second floor. The petitioner is proposing multiple new signs throughout the shopping center to improve their branding and exposure, as well as to improve wayfinding.

The sign package includes the following:

1. **Development Identification Canopy Sign at Evergreen Avenue.** The petitioner is proposing a new canopy above the entrance ramp to the underground public parking garage with signage as follows:
 - a. "ARLINGTON TOWN SQUARE" development identification signage is proposed on the top of the canopy, which complies with the 20% sign size allowed by code for canopies.
 - b. The canopy will also include new internally illuminated "PUBLIC PARKING" signage. The signage font and color is designed to complement other new "public parking" signage planned by the Village to be installed at public parking surface lots and garages throughout the Downtown. The proposed 53 sf of signage is comparable in size to the existing 33 sf "ARLINGTON HEIGHTS" sign that spans above the parking garage entrance on Vail Avenue. However, the proposed sign will be internally illuminated, whereas the Vail garage sign is externally illuminated.
 - c. Two new 9 sf blade signs mounted perpendicular to the walls on each side of the ramp will replace the existing flush mounted signs.

Per Chapter 30, Section 30-103.d, public parking signs are exempt as non-advertising signs designed for public safety and convenience as approved by the Village Manager. Therefore, variations are not required, but final Village Manager approval and sign permits are required.

2. **Entrance Identity Signage on Arlington Heights Road.** There are two existing raised planters flanking the entrance driveway from Arlington Heights Road. Two new ground signs are proposed to be installed within these planters to highlight the entrance to the shopping center. Variations are required to allow two ground signs, where only one ground sign is allowed per street frontage, as well as to allow 40 feet separation between the signs, where 800 feet is required.
3. **Courtyard Shops Entrance Sign.** There is an existing "COURTYARD" sign above the entrance to the south courtyard that was approved by variation in 2004. The sign is proposed to be upgraded with a new painted perforated metal screen and new metal "COURTYARD SHOPS" signage. The proposed upgrades will be a nice enhancement to the existing sign, and they are substantially compliant with the previously approved variation. New variations are not required.
4. **Courtyard Shops Directory Signage.** There is an existing 13 sf wall-mounted "COURTYARD" directory sign at the entrance to the south courtyard that was approved by variation in 2004. A new internally illuminated larger 67 sf directory sign is proposed to replace the existing sign, so the existing variation needs to be amended to allow the proposed larger sign.
5. **Courtyard Artwork Installation.** The petitioner is proposing to enhance the courtyard with overhead strings of lights and a large artwork piece mounted on the back wall. The petitioner has indicated that the final artwork design will not be used to promote or advertise Arlington Town Square or any of the businesses. The final artwork piece is required to be submitted for Design Commission approval, which is consistent with past practice.
6. **Town Square Fountain.** A 45 sf "ARLINGTON TOWN SQUARE" development identification sign is proposed to be added to the existing fountain feature that is located along the internal drive aisle in the middle of the shopping center. A painted perforated metal screen is proposed to be added between the existing brick piers. A variation is required to allow the 45 sf development identification sign.
7. **Office Center Signage.** Arlington Town Square has office tenants located on the second floor. The existing entrance to the office lobby is understated with a small green canvas awning. The petitioner is proposing to enhance the prominence of the office lobby with new dark gray fiber cement wall cladding. Additionally, a new black metal canopy with "OFFICE CENTER" signage is proposed to highlight the office entry door. Variations are required to allow signage on top of the canopy, where lettering is not allowed to project above or beyond the physical dimensions of the awning, as well as to allow signage that exceeds 20% of the canopy face.



Zoning Map of Property

Aerial of Property

Table 1: Sign Package Summary

SIGN TYPE	FRONTAGE	SIZE	REMARKS
“Public Parking” Canopy and Blade Signs	Evergreen Ave.	37 sf “Public Parking” 9 sf “P” blade signs 16 sf “Arlington Town Square”	Exempt (non-advertising for public convenience) Complies with Code.
Ground Sign 1	Arlington Heights Road	10 sf	Complies with Code.
Ground Sign 2	Arlington Heights Road	10 sf	Variations Required for Number and Separation Distance.
Courtyard Sign	Internal Drive Aisle	33 sf	Complies with 2004 Variation.
Courtyard Directory	Internal Drive Aisle	67 sf	Amendment to 2004 Variation is required.
Art Piece	Courtyard / Arlington Heights Road	500 sf	Shall not be used as Signage. Final design requires Design Commission approval.
Fountain Sign	Internal Drive Aisle	45 sf	Variation required to allow the sign.
“Office Center” Canopy	Internal Drive Aisle	30 sf	Variations required for Size and Signage located on Top of Canopy.

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 the need for proper signage, and that the lack of signage has caused hardships for leasing as well as for the success of some existing tenants.

Staff agrees that this development needs better branding and wayfinding signage. The need for signage is not self-created, it is due to the unique layout of the shopping center. Overall, the proposed signage package is very nicely designed, and it will be a nice enhancement to the property.

- The ground signs facing Arlington Heights Road will help to guide customers into the development, and the request for two signs is justified based on the existing layout of the entrance drive and planters. The signs are small and tastefully designed. Consider adding external illumination so that the signs will be visible in the evening.
- The larger directory sign is justified to improve wayfinding to the courtyard shops which lack visibility from the internal drive and surrounding roads.
- The new development identification sign at the existing fountain will be a nice focal point, further reinforcing "Arlington Town Square" as the name of the shopping center. The size of the proposed sign fits well with the existing structure, and the sign is internal to the site. If the letters are backlit, then it is recommended that the portion of the panel behind the letters be solid instead of perforated.
- The proposed office entry signage is also nicely designed, and it is needed to guide visitors to the office lobby. Consider adding lighting to the signage.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Design Commission recommend **approval** to the Village Board for the following sign variations for *Arlington Town Square* at 70 S. Arlington Heights Road:

Entrance Identity Signage on Arlington Heights Road:

1. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-302 Number, to allow two ground signs, where only one ground sign is allowed per street frontage.
2. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-302 Number, to allow ground signs with a separation distance of 40 feet, where 800 feet of separation is required.

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This recommendation is subject to compliance with the plans dated 11/28/18 and received 12/3/18, Federal, State, and Village Codes, regulations, and policies, and the issuance of all required permits, and the following conditions:

1. Consider adding external illumination to the two ground signs facing Arlington Heights Road.
2. The courtyard artwork shall be for aesthetic interest only. It shall not be used to promote or advertise Arlington Town Square or any other businesses, and the final design shall be submitted for Design Commission approval.
3. If the fountain signage is backlit, then it is recommended that the portion of the panel behind the letters be solid instead of perforated.
4. Consider adding lighting to the Office Center signage.
5. 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.

December 3, 2018

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

c: Charles Witherington-Perkins, Director of Planning and Community Development, Petitioner, DC File 18-103