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PLANNING & COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

LAND USE VARIATION REQUEST

1312 WEST NORTHWEST HIGHWAY

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Arlington Signs and Banners is a Full Service Sign Shop that offers clients a wide variety of sign products including: banners, yard signs, magnetics, vehicle graphics, full color digital prints, vinyl lettering for vehicles and retail stores, architectural products like tenant signs and much more. Our office is set up like an administrative office. To be clear, we do not manufacture all the products that we provide in-house. Actually, a fair number of our products come from third parties. We are very similar to the most common sign shops prevalent all over America. Sign Shops like: FastSigns, Signs By Tomorrow and Signarama operate like us. Probably about 80% of the sign shops in the US operate in this fashion. The typical sign shop size, like us, is very small - about 1200 - 1400 sq feet. The offices are basically administrative with all heavy duty sign manufacturing out-sourced to a third party.

The sign industry changed significantly about 35 years ago with the advent of Digital Printing. Prior to that time, hand painting was much more common and widely used. Most sign shops today do not paint any signs at all in house. Wide Format (36", 54", 60" and larger) Digital Printers now produce a huge amount of the signage offered in the industry today.

Our sign shop follows this pattern, we have a state of the art 54" Roland Digital Printer which produces about 3/4 of the signs we produce in the shop. The other 25% of our products produced in the shop are vinyl die cut lettering using a machine called a plotter which had a knife blade that cuts into a thin vinyl material. This lettering is then applied to a surface (plastic, aluminum, cardboard or right onto window glass, etc.). Accordingly, our office is super clean. Like any administrative office. We do have a large cutter in our back room that cuts materials, but again we do not do any hand painting of any kind or fabricate with any heavy machinery as was much more common prior to 1985.

We opened as a business in 1999 in Arlington Heights at 1400 West Northwest Highway. We sold our building to the current owners who are a dental lab. We operated our sign shop there until February, 2002 when we moved our business to 818 West Northwest Highway and operated our sign shop there for 17 years until March 29, 2019 when the building was sold. We have just moved to our new location at 1312 West Northwest Highway and, for the first time, have been advised that we are in a B2 Business Zone.

Sign shops, under the Village of Arlington Heights Administrative Code fall into the B3 Business Zone due to a perceived more heavy duty manufacturing process. Again, while some large sign shops out there continue to hand paint and fabricate metal sign products (channel letters, lighted letters, box signs); we are not one of them. Actually, as explained, most sign shops in operation today contract out to a third party for that type of signage.