

STAFF DESIGN COMMISSION REPORT

PROJECT INFORMATION:

Project Name: Arlington Town Square
Project Address: 21 S. Arlington Heights Road
Prepared By: Steve Hautzinger

Date Prepared: December 30, 2021

PETITION INFORMATION:

DC Number: 21-085
Petitioner Name: Nicholas Sahn
Petitioner Address: OKW Architects
600 W Jackson Blvd, Suite 250
Chicago, IL 60661
Meeting Date: January 11, 2021

Requested Action(s):

Office Center Blade Sign:

1. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-201.h.6.b to allow a blade sign at 27'-7 3/4" above the pedestrian thoroughfare, where 15 feet is the maximum allowed.
2. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-201.h.6.e to allow a 39.1 sf blade sign, where 6 square feet is the maximum allowed.
3. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-201.h.6.g to allow an internally illuminated blade sign where only external illumination is allowed.

Office Center Directory Sign:

4. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-201.h.3.a, to allow a 66.5 sf directory wall sign, where 30 sf is the maximum 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."

Arlington Town Square is an existing multi-tenant shopping center in the Downtown which has 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 a new "Office Center" blade sign and directory wall sign to help identify the entrance location to the second floor offices as well as to identify the names of the second floor tenants. In addition to the new signs, the petitioner is proposing to stain the existing orange brick at the office entry area with a dark red color to match the existing dark red brick within Arlington Town Square.

Previously Approved Signs and Sign Variations:

In 2018, this property received approvals for numerous sign variations for multiple new signs throughout the shopping center to improve their branding and exposure, as well as to improve wayfinding. As part of that package, the following sign variations were approved for a new "Office Center" entrance canopy:

1. 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.
2. 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.

To date, none of the 2018 approved signs have been installed. The current proposal for new "Office Center" signage will take the place of the previous canopy, so the previously approved canopy sign variations should be repealed as part of this review.

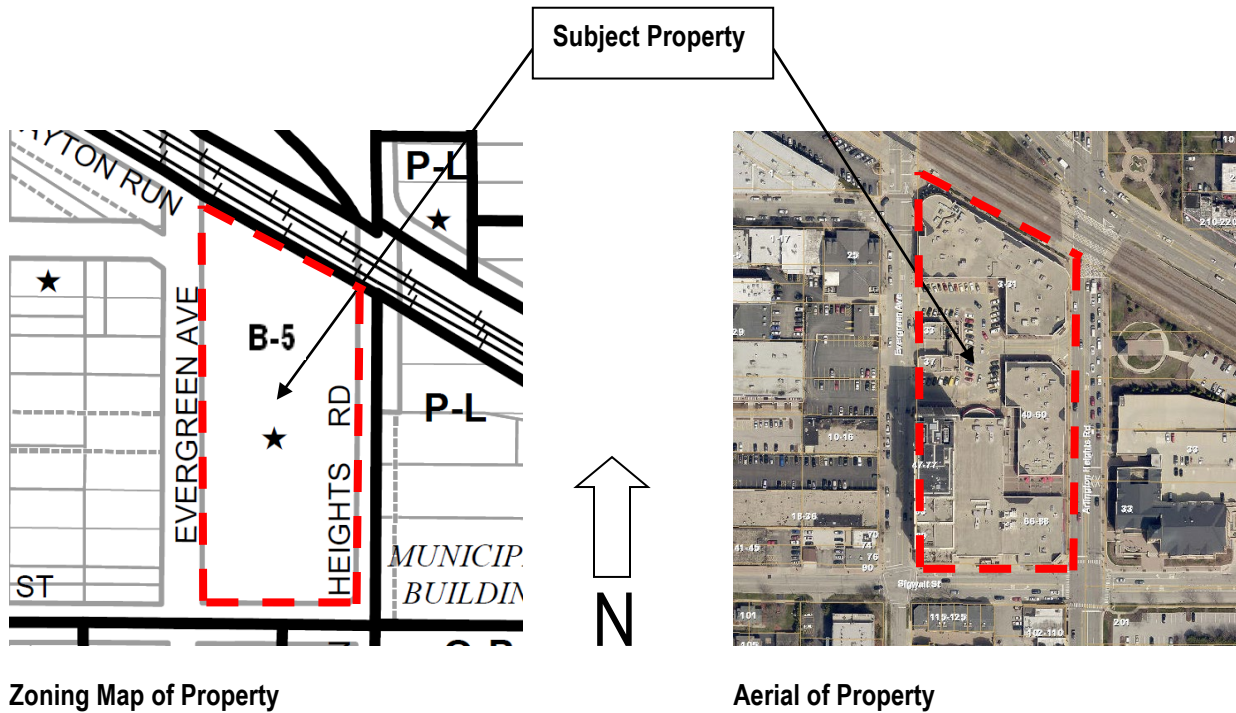


Table 1: Blade Sign Code Summary

CODE REQUIREMENT	PROPOSED	REMARKS
Number. One blade sign allowed per street frontage.	One blade sign proposed.	Complies with code.
Location. 8' minimum clearance above pedestrian thoroughfare. 15' maximum height to top of sign.	10'-10 3/4" clearance to bottom. 27'-7 3/4" to top of sign.	Complies with code. Variation required for height.
Projection. 40-inch maximum projection from wall.	37-inch projection proposed	Complies with code.
Square Footage. 6 sf maximum	39.1 sf proposed	Variation required for size.
Illumination. External illumination is permitted. Internal illumination is not allowed.	Internal illumination proposed.	Variation required for internal illumination.

Table 2: Directory Wall Sign Code Summary

CODE REQUIREMENT	PROPOSED	REMARKS
Size. One square foot of sign area is allowed for each linear foot of storefront. The office entry storefront is 30 linear feet, allowing a 30 sf wall sign.	The proposed directory wall sign is 66.5 sf.	Variation required for size.

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 the proposed signage to provide adequate visibility and wayfinding for the second floor tenants, and that the existing lack of signage has caused hardships for leasing.

Staff agrees that improved visibility and wayfinding signage for the second floor office entrance is needed. The proposed blade sign and wall directory are very nicely designed and scaled to fit with the existing character of Arlington Town Square.

In regards to staining the brick color, Staff agrees that this would enhance the office entry area, however there is concern about the finished appearance of the stained brick matching the existing dark red brick walls which have a red tinted mortar and slight color variations among the individual bricks. The Design Commission should evaluate the details of the proposed brick staining technique.

Staff is also concerned at the lack of a canopy above the office entry door. It is recommended that a nice metal canopy be added to highlight the entry location and provide protection above the door. The canopy should be designed to match/complement the proposed blade sign.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Design Commission recommend **approval** to the Village Board for the following sign variations for *Arlington Town Square* at 21 S. Arlington Heights Road:

Office Center Blade Sign:

1. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-201.h.6.b to allow a blade sign at 27'-7 3/4" above the pedestrian thoroughfare, where 15 feet is the maximum allowed.
2. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-201.h.6.e to allow a 39.1 sf blade sign, where 6 square feet is the maximum allowed.
3. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-201.h.6.g to allow an internally illuminated blade sign where only external illumination is allowed.

Office Center Directory Sign:

4. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-201.h.3.a, to allow a 66.5 sf directory wall sign, where 30 sf is the maximum allowed.

This recommendation is subject to compliance with the plans received 12/6/21, Federal, State, and Village Codes, regulations, and policies, and the issuance of all required permits, and the following conditions:

1. Repeal the previously approved 2018 office center canopy sign variations.
2. Evaluate the details of the proposed brick staining technique to ensure a good match to the existing red brick walls and tinted mortar.
3. A recommendation to add a metal canopy above the office entry door, designed to match/complement the new blade sign.
4. 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 30, 2021

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

c: Charles Witherington-Perkins, Director of Planning and Community Development, Petitioner, DC File 21-085