

STAFF DESIGN COMMISSION REPORT

PROJECT INFORMATION:

Project Name: Forbici Salon - Sign Variation
Project Address: 7 S. Highland Avenue
Prepared By: Steve Hautzinger

PETITION INFORMATION:

DC Number: 22-001
Petitioner Name: Jackie Lewis
Petitioner Address: Forbici Salon
7 S. Highland Avenue
Arlington Heights, IL 60005
Meeting Date: March 8, 2022

Date Prepared: February 25, 2022

Requested Action(s):

1. A variation from Chapter 30, Section 30-201.h.6.a, to allow two blade signs, where each business shall be permitted no more than one blade sign for each street it fronts on.
2. A variation from Chapter 30, Section 30-201.h.6.b, to allow blade signs with 7'-6" of clearance above the public sidewalk, where blade signs are required to maintain a minimum clearance of eight feet above a pedestrian thoroughfare.
3. A variation from Chapter 30, Section 30-201.h.9, to allow a business with three types of signage, where only two of the following four types of signs are allowed: wall sign, awning sign, blade sign, and plaque sign.

ANALYSIS:

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."

Summary:

Forbici Salon in an existing business in Downtown Arlington Heights. They are proposing to install two small blade signs to the bottom of the existing awning frames above the storefront windows on each side of the entrance to their salon. The business currently has a small 9 sf wall sign next to their entrance doors as well as signage on the awnings above their storefront. Per Chapter 30 sign code, each business in the Downtown is allowed only two of the following four types of signs: wall sign, awning sign, blade sign, and plaque sign. Since Forbici already has a wall sign and awning signs, a variation is required to also allow the use of blade signs. Additionally, per code, only one blade sign is allowed per street frontage, so a variation is required to allow two blade signs. Finally, a variation is required to allow blade signs with 7'-6" of clearance above the public sidewalk, where blade signs are required to maintain a minimum clearance of eight feet above a pedestrian thoroughfare.

Table 1: Summary of Blade Sign Requirements per Section 30-201.h.6:

	Item	Code Requirement	Proposed	Remarks / Recommendations
a.	Number	Each business shall be permitted no more than one blade sign for each street it fronts on.	Two blade signs are proposed.	Variation Required.
b.	Location	Minimum clearance of 8 feet required above pedestrian thoroughfare.	7'-6" clearance to the bottom of the signs is proposed.	Variation Required.
c.	Message	Only the name and/or logo of the business and/or type of business is permitted.	Business name and logo proposed.	Complies with code.

d.	Projection	Blade signs shall not project more than 40 inches maximum from the building 4" minimum clearance between the inside face of the sign and the building.	38.5" maximum projection proposed. 4" minimum clearance provided.	Complies with code. Complies with code.
e.	Square Footage	6 sf maximum allowed.	1.5 sf x 2 signs = 3 sf total.	Complies with code
f.	Brackets	Blade signs may be attached to the building wall, or suspended from an awning or building overhang.	Proposed to be suspended from an awning.	Complies with code.
g.	Design Considerations	Blade signs shall be a minimum of 1/8 inch thickness.	1/4" thick aluminum composite material proposed.	Complies with code.

Sign Variation Criteria:

The Village Sign Code, Chapter 30, Section 30-901 sets out the criteria 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 addressing the hardship criteria, stating that due to the undeveloped site across the street and the parking garage to the south, their existing awning and wall signage receives limited visibility. They are requesting the proposed blade signs to improve their visibility to foot traffic and passing vehicles. They also state that 7'-6" is enough clearance from the sidewalk for pedestrians, which is minimal due to the existing benches located beneath their awnings.

Staff Comments:

Staff agrees that the location of this business does have less visibility than other businesses that are located in the middle of the Downtown. Staff also agrees that 7'-6" of clearance to the proposed blade signs is adequate for pedestrians, noting that only 7 feet of clearance is required for awnings. Also, since the existing Forbici wall sign, the existing awning signage, and the proposed blade signs are all quite small and understated, in this unique case, Staff does not object to the use of three types of signage, where only two are allowed. Finally, Staff does not object to the use of two blade signs instead of one since it works well to frame out the entry doors, and the combined 3 sf size of the two blade signs is still less than the allowed 6 sf size for a single blade sign.

RECOMMENDATION

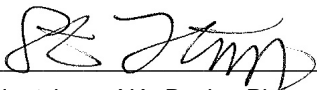
It is recommended that the Design Commission recommend **approval** to the Village Board for the following sign variations for *Forbici Salon* at 7 S. Highland Avenue:

1. A variation from Chapter 30, Section 30-201.h.6.a, to allow two blade signs, where each business shall be permitted no more than one blade sign for each street it fronts on.
2. A variation from Chapter 30, Section 30-201.h.6.b, to allow blade signs with 7'-6" of clearance above the public sidewalk, where blade signs are required to maintain a minimum clearance of eight feet above a pedestrian thoroughfare.

3. A variation from Chapter 30, Section 30-201.h.9, to allow a business with three types of signage, where only two of the following four types of signs are allowed: wall sign, awning sign, blade sign, and plaque sign.

This recommendation is subject to compliance with the plans received 1/12/22, awning measurements received 2-10-22, Federal, State, and Village Codes, regulations, and policies, and the issuance of all required permits, and the following conditions:

1. 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.



February 25, 2022

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

c: Charles Witherington-Perkins, Director of Planning and Community Development, Petitioner, DC File 22-001