

APPROVED

MINUTES OF THE VILLAGE OF ARLINGTON HEIGHTS DESIGN COMMISSION

HELD AT THE ARLINGTON HEIGHTS MUNICIPAL BUILDING
33 S. ARLINGTON HEIGHTS RD.
OCTOBER 11, 2022

Acting Chair Eckhardt called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Members Present: Ted Eckhardt, Acting Chair
Kirsten Kingsley
John Fitzgerald

Members Absent: Jonathan Kubow, Chair
Scott Seyer

Also Present: Alex Loeff, Signs by Tomorrow for *At Home Store*
Steve Hautzinger, Planning Staff

REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES FOR SEPTEMBER 27, 2022

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER FITZGERALD, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER KINGSLEY, TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 27, 2022. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

Acting Chair Eckhardt explained that a unanimous vote from all three commissioners here tonight is required for approval of the project. The petitioner has the option to continue the project to a future meeting where all five commissioners are present.

ITEM 1. SIGN VARIATION REVIEWDC#22-067 – At Home Store – 750 E. Rand Rd.

Alex Looff, representing *Signs by Tomorrow*, was present on behalf of the project.

Mr. Hautzinger presented Staff comments. 'At Home' is a new retail tenant moving into the vacant space formerly occupied by Bif Furniture at the Southpoint Shopping Center. On April 12, 2022, the Design Commission reviewed a sign variation request for a new dedicated "At Home" ground sign to face Rand Road. The proposed sign required the following variations:

1. A variation from Chapter 30, Section 30-302.a, to allow 7 ground signs, where 6 is the maximum allowed per a previously approved 1989 sign variation, and 5 is the maximum allowed per code (one for each building).
2. A variation from Chapter 30, Section 30-302.a, to allow a ground sign with 444' and 548' of separation from the adjacent ground signs, where 800' is the minimum separation required.

The sign was proposed to be located next to a new driveway entrance into the parking lot from Rand Road. The proposed driveway is subject to IDOT and Village approvals. The Design Commission recommended approval of the proposed variations with a condition that the sign approval is contingent upon Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and Village approvals for the new driveway. On June 6, 2022, the Village Board approved the requested sign variations per Ordinance 22-033, including the condition for the driveway approval.

At this time, the petitioner is in the process of pursuing IDOT approval for the new driveway. However, due to IDOT permit review times, the petitioner is requesting approval of the same sign, in the same location, but without the condition for IDOT approval of the new driveway. This requires the following action:

1. Amendment to sign variation Ordinance 22-033 to omit condition D, which states that the sign approval is contingent upon Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and Village approvals for the new driveway.

The petitioner has provided a letter explaining that the ground sign is required by At Home to be installed prior to opening the store which is scheduled for early Spring 2023. The petitioner anticipates a 95% chance of IDOT approval for the new driveway, but they do not know when final approval or denial will be obtained. They have clarified that regardless of the outcome of IDOT's review, they need to install the ground sign, with or without the driveway.

Staff feels that locating the ground sign next to the new driveway entrance makes sense to provide customers clear and direct access to At Home's parking area. However, if the driveway does not get approved, Staff does not object to the proposed ground sign in this location, which is roughly midpoint between the two existing multi-tenant Southpoint Shopping Center signs. As outlined in the attached Staff Report from April 12, 2022, Staff raised concerns about the possibility of excessive signage along Rand Road if every large retail business were allowed a dedicated ground sign, but due to the unique situation and hardship of this building having less visibility because it is not oriented parallel to Rand Road, Staff does not object to the proposed ground sign in this location.

However, instead of omitting the driveway condition, Staff recommends that the condition be amended to require the petitioner to continue pursuing IDOT and Village approval for the new driveway in a timely manner. Amending the condition will allow the petitioner to proceed with installation of the approved ground sign at this time, but it still requires them to follow through with the driveway permits and driveway installation, if approved.

Staff recommends the Design Commission recommend approval to the Village Board for the following amendment to sign variation Ordinance 22-033 for *At Home* located at 750 E. Rand Road:

1. Amendment to sign variation Ordinance 22-033 to omit condition D, which states that the sign approval is contingent upon Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and Village approvals for the new driveway.

This recommendation is based on the plans received 9/22/22, Federal, State, and Village Codes, regulations, and policies, and the issuance of all required permits, and the following conditions:

1. The petitioner is required to continue pursuing IDOT and Village approvals for the new driveway in a timely manner, and install the new driveway, if approved.
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.

Ms. Looff clarified that her client has submitted their third round comments to IDOT; however, IDOT is taking upwards of 90 days to provide any kind of feedback. They are anticipating IDOT approval by mid-Spring, but At Home is hoping to have the new store open and fully functional by first quarter of 2023. They do not want to open the store without this new monument sign.

Acting Chair Eckhardt asked if there was any public comment on the project and there was no response from the audience.

Commissioner Kingsley had no issue with the request to amend the previous sign variation approval for the ground sign, and she agreed with Staff's recommendation to change the language of the condition. She also asked for clarification that the location and size of the monument sign is appropriate for the new driveway, if it gets approved in the future, and **Mr. Hautzinger** said that the sign location is coordinated with the proposed driveway location. **Commissioner Fitzgerald** agreed with the comments made by Commissioner Kingsley. **Acting Chair Eckhardt** agreed as well, but pointed out that if IDOT approves the driveway, the petitioner is required to put the driveway in, and **Ms. Looff** replied that her client has seen the comments and understands the condition.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER KINGSLEY, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER FITZGERALD, TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL TO THE VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, FOR THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENT TO SIGN VARIATION ORDINANCE 22-033 FOR AT HOME LOCATED AT 750 E. RAND ROAD:

1. **AN AMENDMENT TO SIGN VARIATION ORDINANCE 22-033 TO OMIT CONDITION D, WHICH STATES THAT THE SIGN APPROVAL IS CONTINGENT UPON ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (IDOT) AND VILLAGE APPROVALS FOR THE NEW DRIVEWAY.**

THIS RECOMMENDATION IS BASED ON THE PLANS RECEIVED 9/22/22, FEDERAL, STATE, AND VILLAGE CODES, REGULATIONS, AND POLICIES, THE ISSUANCE OF ALL REQUIRED PERMITS, AND THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

1. **THE PETITIONER IS REQUIRED TO CONTINUE PURSUING IDOT AND VILLAGE APPROVALS FOR THE NEW DRIVEWAY IN A TIMELY MANNER, AND INSTALL THE NEW DRIVEWAY, IF APPROVED.**
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.**

KINGSLEY, AYE; FITZGERALD, AYE; ECKHARDT, AYE.
ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.