

APPROVED

MINUTES OF
THE VILLAGE OF ARLINGTON HEIGHTS
DESIGN COMMISSION
HELD AT THE ARLINGTON HEIGHTS MUNICIPAL BUILDING
33 S. ARLINGTON HEIGHTS RD.
APRIL 12, 2022

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

Members Present: Jonathan Kubow, Chair
Ted Eckhardt
Kirsten Kingsley
John Fitzgerald

Members Absent: Scott Seyer

Also Present: Scott Fertitta for *At Home Stores*
Raphael Anguiano, Core States Group for *At Home Stores*
Alex Loeff, Signs by Tomorrow for *At Home Stores*
Steve Hautzinger, Planning Staff Liaison

REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES FOR MARCH 8, 2022

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER FITZGERALD, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER KINGSLEY, TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 8, 2022. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

ITEM 2. SIGN VARIATION REVIEW**DC#22-009 – At Home – 750 E. Rand Rd.**

Alex Looff, representing Signs by Tomorrow, and **Scott Fertitta**, representing *At Home Stores*, were present on behalf of the project.

Mr. Hautzinger summarized Staff comments. The petitioner is requesting a new dedicated ground sign for their At Home store to face Rand Road. Southpoint Shopping Center currently has 6 ground signs. Per code, each building is allowed one ground sign. There are 5 buildings on the site, allowing 5 ground signs. A sign variation was approved in 1989 to allow a 6th ground sign. Table 1 in the Staff report provides a complete summary of the 6 existing ground signs. In addition to At Home's dedicated ground sign, they will also have tenant panels on the three existing multi-tenant "Southpoint" ground signs.

A sign variation is also required for the separation distance between the proposed At Home ground sign and the existing ground signs. Per code, 800 feet of separation is required between the signs. The proposed new sign will be located between two existing Southpoint multi-tenant ground signs with 444' and 548' of separation. The sign will be located next to a proposed new driveway entrance into the parking lot from Rand Road, and the proposed driveway is subject to IDOT and Village approvals.

The petitioner is seeking 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 the 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 petitioner submitted a letter addressing the hardship criteria, which in summary states that the angled building orientation and mature trees along Rand Road create a substantial visibility issue for the store, and visibility has been an issue with every potential retail tenant for this location. The new sign is a contingency for At Home to join the shopping center. They feel that the proposed sign will not create a depreciation of nearby property values, but At Home's presence in this location will likely increase surrounding property values. The petitioner feels that the proposed sign is in character with the locality because it is similar to the existing Floor & Décor sign. However, it should be noted that the Floor & Décor sign was originally installed for Cub Foods which was the original building on the property, prior to the Southpoint Shopping Center development.

Staff acknowledges that At Home will be an important major tenant in the Southpoint Shopping Center. However, other major retail centers along Rand Road, including Town & Country, Northpoint, the Annex of Arlington, and Arlington Plaza, do not have separate ground signs for any of their major tenants such as Best Buy, Dick's Sporting Goods, Jewel-Osco, Binny's Beverage Depot, Petco, and Burlington. All of the retail centers utilize multi-tenant ground signs to provide equal signage for all of their tenants. If separate ground signs were allowed for every major tenant, the Rand Road shopping corridor would become overly cluttered with signage.

However, Staff acknowledges the extended vacancy of this large retail space at Southpoint, and Staff agrees that the lack of visibility may be the issue. Due to this unique circumstance and hardship, Staff is not opposed to a dedicated ground sign for At Home. Overall, the proposed sign is nicely designed with a stone base similar to the existing Southpoint Shopping Center sign design. For a cohesive appearance, Staff recommends a requirement that the stone for the new sign be selected to match identically the stone used on the existing Southpoint signs.

Chair Kubow asked if the petitioner had any comments at this time. **Ms. Looff** said that visibility is their biggest concern here, and she is not aware of the status of IDOT approval for the new driveway. **Mr. Fertitta** did not have an update on that matter either.

The commissioners summarized their comments. **Commissioner Kingsley** said the proposed new monument sign was nicely designed and she liked the colors and the stone that matches the existing Southpoint signs. It made sense to her that if the name of the store will be on the 3 existing multi-tenant signs, that this new monument sign be contingent upon IDOT approval for the new entry off Rand Road. She had no further comments and agreed with Staff's recommendations. **Commissioner Eckhardt** agreed with Commissioner Kingsley's comments as well as Staff's recommendations that the new monument sign be contingent upon IDOT approval for the new driveway entrance. **Commissioner Fitzgerald** agreed with the other commissioners. **Chair Kubow** agreed as well, and said that looking up and down Rand Road reminded him of how expansive this area is with a lot of trees and coverage. He was hopeful for IDOT approval of the new driveway, and he agreed with Staff that approval of the new ground sign should be contingent upon this.

Mr. Hautzinger asked the petitioner what they plan to do about the new ground sign if IDOT denies the request for the new driveway. **Mr. Fertitta** said that while they hope for IDOT approval of the new driveway, they still want to pursue the new ground sign to face Rand Road, and they would offer landscaping and any other changes to the sign so it does not look odd without the driveway.

Commissioner Eckhardt said that while he supports Staff's recommendation that approval of the new ground sign be contingent upon IDOT approval of the new driveway, he felt the ground sign was appropriate in this location and he would not be opposed to it. He also reiterated the large amount of distance between the building and Rand Road, which he felt was a definite hardship, and he also pointed out how long it could take IDOT to make a decision, and he did not want to hold things up for the petitioner. **Mr. Fertitta** reiterated that if IDOT denies the new driveway, they would like the opportunity to come back before the commission with a variation request to show how this new ground sign was needed. **Mr. Hautzinger** commented that all sign variations require Village Board approval after a recommendation from this commission.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER KINGSLEY, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER FITZGERALD, TO RECOMMEND TO THE VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING SIGN VARIATION REQUEST FOR THE AT HOME STORE TO BE LOCATED AT 750 E. RAND ROAD:

1. A VARIATION FROM CHAPTER 30, SECTION 30-302.A, TO ALLOW 7 GROUND SIGNS, WHERE 6 IS THE MAXIMUM ALLOWED PER THE 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.

THIS RECOMMENDATION IS BASED ON THE PLANS RECEIVED 4/6/22, FEDERAL, STATE, AND VILLAGE CODES, REGULATIONS, AND POLICIES, THE ISSUANCE OF ALL REQUIRED PERMITS, AND THE FOLLOWING:

1. A REQUIREMENT THAT THE STONE FOR THE BASE OF THE SIGN SHALL BE SELECTED TO MATCH AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE THE STONE USED ON THE EXISTING SOUTHPOINT MULTI-TENANT SIGNS.
2. A REQUIREMENT THAT APPROVAL OF THE NEW MONUMENT SIGN IS CONTINGENT UPON IDOT AND VILLAGE APPROVALS FOR THE NEW DRIVEWAY.
3. 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 PETITIONER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO INCORPORATE ALL REQUIREMENTS LISTED ON THE CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS INTO THE PERMIT DRAWINGS, AND TO ENSURE THAT BUILDING PERMIT PLANS AND SIGN PERMIT PLANS COMPLY WITH ALL ZONING CODE, BUILDING CODE AND SIGN CODE REQUIREMENTS.

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