

STAFF DESIGN COMMISSION REPORT

PROJECT INFORMATION:

Project Name: BMO Bank – Sign Variation
Project Address: 630 W. Northwest Highway
Prepared By: Steve Hautzinger

PETITION INFORMATION:

DC Number: 22-083
Petitioner Name: Tarcey Diehl
Petitioner Address: Expedite the Diehl
200 4th Avenue S
Nashville, TN 37201
Meeting Date: February 14, 2023

Date Prepared: February 2, 2023

Requested Action(s):

1. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-402.a Number, to allow four wall signs, where only two wall signs are allowed.
2. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-403.a Dimensions, to allow a 21.6 sf wall sign on the southeast wall of the building, where 0 sf is allowed
3. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-403.a Dimensions, to allow a 21.6 sf wall sign on the northwest wall of the building, where 0 sf is allowed.

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:

BMO Bank has a new building currently under construction near the intersection of Euclid Avenue and Northwest Highway. The subject property is a through lot with street frontages on both Northwest Highway and Euclid Avenue. The petitioner is proposing four wall signs (one on each side of the building), a code-compliant ground sign, and two small code-compliant directional ground signs. Per code, only one wall sign is allowed per street frontage, so variations are required to allow four wall signs where only two are allowed. All four wall signs will be internally illuminated, and they are identical in size and design.

Table 1: Proposed Wall Signs Summary:

SIGN	ELEVATION / FRONTAGE	SIGNABLE AREA	25% OF SIGNABLE AREA	SIGN SIZE	REMARKS
Sign S20. "BMO" with logo	Southwest Wall / Northwest Hwy	264 sf	66 sf	21.6 sf	Complies with code.
Sign S16. "BMO" with logo	Northeast Wall / Euclid Avenue	319 sf	48 sf (15%)	21.6 sf	Complies with code.
Sign S1. "BMO" with logo	Southeast Wall / no street frontage	144 sf	36 sf	21.6 sf	Variation required due to no street frontage.
Sign S2. "BMO" with logo	Northwest Wall / no street frontage	364 sf	55 sf (15%)	21.6 sf	Variation required due to no street frontage.
TOTAL				86.4 sf	

Surrounding Land Uses:

<i>Direction</i>	<i>Existing Zoning</i>	<i>Existing Use</i>
Subject Property	B-2, General Business District	BMO Bank (under construction)
North	P-L, Public Land	AHPD Arlington Ridge Center
South	M-2, Limited Heavy Manufacturing District	Arlington Collision Center
East	B-2, General Business District	Office Building Single-Family Residence Orthodontic Office
West	B-2, General Business District	BMO Bank

Zoning Map of Property:

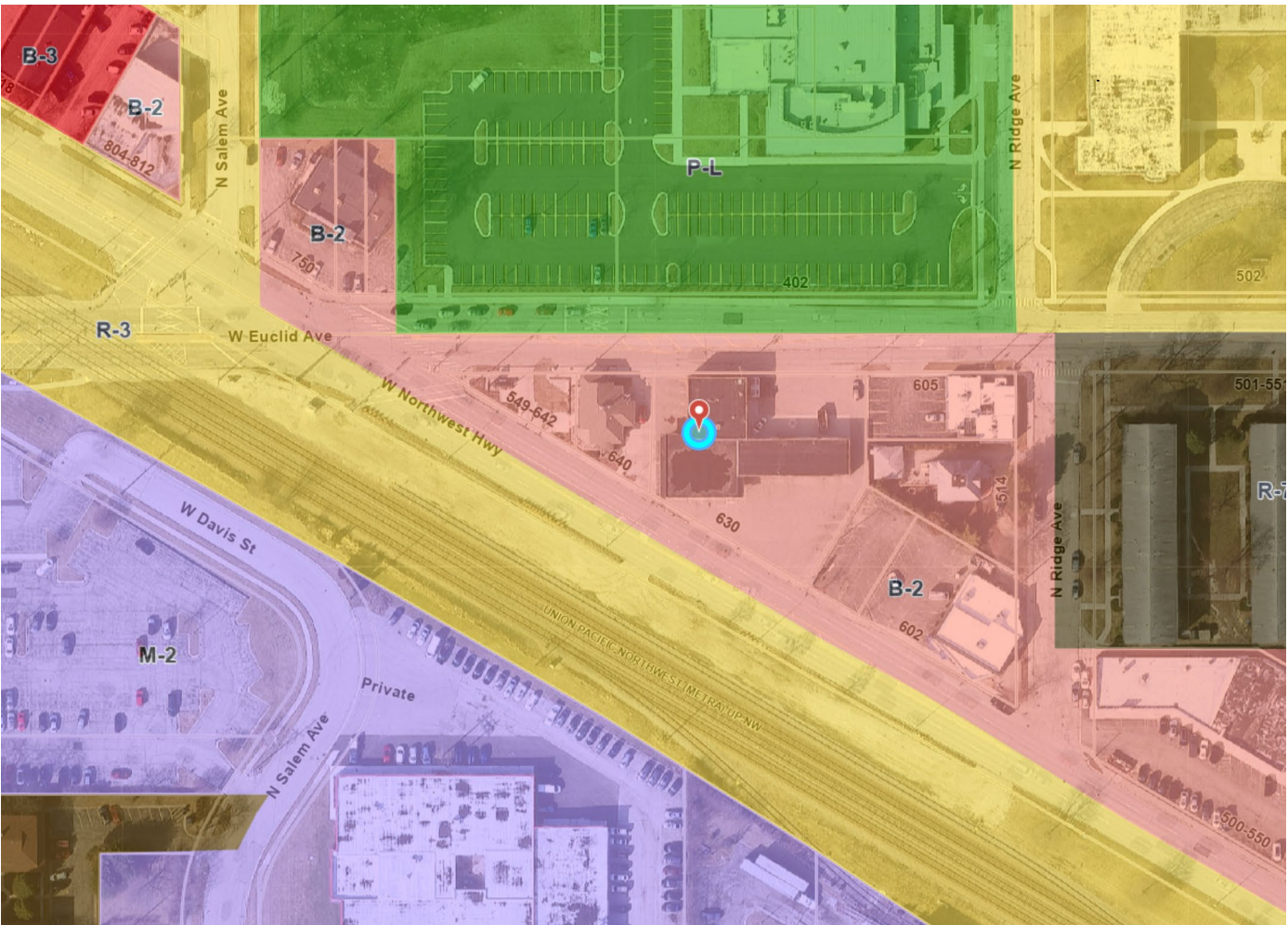


Table 2: Summary of Other Free-standing Banks' Wall Signage:

BUSINESS NAME, ADDRESS	STREET FRONTAGES / NUMBER OF WALL SIGNS PERMITTED	NUMBER OF WALL SIGNS APPROVED	TOTAL SQUARE FOOTAGE OF WALL SIGNAGE	REMARKS
Bank of America, 850 W. Algonquin Rd	1	2	103 sf	Variations Approved in 2008
Bank of America, 455 E. Rand Rd	2	2	168 sf	
PNC Bank, 19 W. Golf Rd	1	2	52 sf	Variations Approved in 2010
PNC Bank, 1800 N Arlington Heights Rd	2	2	93 sf	
Village Bank & Trust, 150 E. Rand Rd	2	4	213 sf	Variations Approved in 1999
BMO Bank, 215 E. Palatine Rd	2	2	49 sf	
BMO Bank, 1007 W. Euclid Ave	2	2	74 sf	
Chase Bank, 43 E Golf Rd	1	2	56 sf	
AAEC Credit Union, 1104 S. Arlington Heights Rd	2	0	0 sf	
CURRENT REQUEST				
BMO Bank, 630 W Northwest Hwy	2	4	86.4 sf	Variations required to allow 4 wall signs, where only 2 wall signs are allowed.

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 sign variation criteria. They feel that all of the proposed wall signs serve a purpose, with key points as follows:

- The subject property has a unique shape and multiple points of entry which is a disadvantage and hardship.
- Due to site constraints, the main building entrance is located on the side which needs a sign for identification.
- The drive-through is located on the side which needs a sign for identification.
- The ground sign is located on the north, so there is no ground sign on the south.
- The business cannot function without adequate visibility for customers trying to identify their destination.

Staff Comments:

Overall, the proposed wall signs are nicely designed, modest in scale, and they work well with the architectural design of the building. Staff acknowledges that this through lot site is a unique layout with access from Euclid Avenue on the north and Northwest Highway on the south. Since only one ground sign is allowed per code and the applicant has chosen to locate the ground sign facing Euclid Avenue, the driveway along Northwest Highway does have less visibility. Therefore, Staff does not object to the additional wall sign located above the building entrance on the southeast wall which works well to draw attention to both the building entrance as well as the driveway entrance.

However, Staff does not agree with the need for the fourth wall sign located on the northwest wall at the end of the drive through. The fourth wall sign has limited visibility due to the neighboring building to the west, and it is not necessary to identify the building. Furthermore, of the nine existing free-standing bank buildings in Arlington Heights, only one building has more than two wall signs (refer to Table 2 above). A fourth wall sign is unnecessary and excessive, and it would be an unfair advantage.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Design Commission recommend **denial** to the Village Board for the following sign variations for *BMO Bank* at 630 W. Northwest Highway:

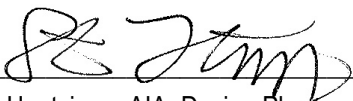
1. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-402.a Number, to allow four wall signs, where only two wall signs are allowed.
2. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-403.a Dimensions, to allow a 21.6 sf wall sign on the northwest wall of the building, where 0 sf is allowed.

It is recommended that the Design Commission recommend **approval** to the Village Board for the following sign variations for *BMO Bank* at 630 W. Northwest Highway:

1. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-402.a Number, to allow three wall signs, where only two wall signs are allowed.
2. A variation from Chapter 30, section 30-403.a Dimensions, to allow a 21.6 sf wall sign on the southeast wall of the building, where 0 sf is allowed

This recommendation is subject to compliance with the plans received 12/21/22, 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 2, 2023

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

c: Charles Witherington-Perkins, Director of Planning and Community Development, Petitioner, DC File 22-083