

APPROVED

**MINUTES OF
THE VILLAGE OF ARLINGTON HEIGHTS
DESIGN COMMISSION MEETING
HELD AT THE ARLINGTON HEIGHTS MUNICIPAL BUILDING
33 S. ARLINGTON HEIGHTS RD.
DECEMBER 8, 2015**

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

Members Present: Ted Eckhardt, Chair
Anthony Fasolo
John Fitzgerald
Jonathan Kubow

Members Absent: Alan Bombick

Also Present: Guy Dragisic, Olympic Signs for *Arlington Promenade*
Mike Faris, Owner of *Arlington Promenade*
Taso Siamantourat, Owner of *TNT Snack Shop*
Lee Ford, Hunzinger Williams for *TNT Snack Shop*
Steve Hautzinger, Staff Liaison

REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 24 , 2015

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER FITZGERALD, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER KUBOW, TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 24, 2015. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. THE MOTION CARRIED.

ITEM 1. SIGN VARIATION REVIEW**DC#15-133 – Arlington Heights Promenade – 305-349 E. Rand Rd.**

Mr. Guy Dragisic, representing *Olympic Signs*, and **Mr. Mike Faris**, owner of the retail center, were present on behalf of the project.

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

Mr. Hautzinger presented Staff comments. The petitioner is proposing to install a new, multi-tenant ground sign facing Arlington Heights Road to serve the existing “Arlington Heights Promenade” multi-tenant retail center. The retail center is located near the intersection of Arlington Heights and Rand Road. The center currently has multiple retail tenants such as The UPS Store, Tropical Smoothie Café, Domino’s Pizza, a shoe store, hair salon, and Family Christian book store. In addition to the proposed new ground sign, there is an existing, ground sign on the site facing Rand Road. The petitioner has indicated that the existing ground sign facing Rand Road will be replaced with a new ground sign to match the size and design of the current sign proposal, for a total of two ground signs on the property. The property is a through lot, which allows one ground sign facing each street frontage if a minimum separation distance of 600 feet is provided. The proposed new sign will be approximately 225 feet from the existing sign, thereby requiring a variation to allow the proposed second sign.

Staff reviewed the petitioner’s letter addressing the hardship criteria and then summarized a number of unique circumstances that support the request for a second sign, which Mr. Hautzinger reviewed as follows:

1. Through Lot (not a corner lot).
 - a. Gas station on corner blocks visibility and prevents the opportunity to have a single ground sign at the corner.
2. Building Orientation.
 - a. The existing retail building is perpendicular to the road with limited storefront visibility, whereas typical retail centers are parallel to the road with clear visibility of storefronts and wall signs.
3. Unique Street Angle & Site Layout.
 - a. The angle of the streets creates the unusual shaped property.
4. Located on Major Roads, away from Residential.
 - a. The proposed sign faces a major arterial road, and will not be visible from any residential neighborhoods.
5. Sign size.
 - a. The proposed sign is modestly sized at 48.3 sf which is proportionate to the size of the retail center as compared to the adjacent larger shopping centers.
6. Sign quality.
 - a. The proposed sign is very nicely designed which will enhance the overall appearance of this retail center.
7. Existing sign replacement.
 - a. The existing sign facing Rand Road has a poor and dated appearance, and currently exceeds the allowable sign size.

Staff feels that this sign variation request meets the criteria for granting a sign variation based on these

unique circumstances. Staff is in support of the variation request to allow two ground signs with a separation distance of approximately 225 feet where 600 feet of separation is required; a variation to allow a 12 foot tall ground sign where zero feet is allowed; and a variation to allow a 48.3 square foot ground sign where zero sf is allowed. As a condition of approval, it is recommended that the existing sign on Rand Road be replaced within approximately one year with a compliant sign not to exceed 49 square feet, and that the existing retaining wall along the west end of the parking lot be repaired, and the landscaping along the sidewalk be improved with a 3-foot high densely planted compact hedge designed to provide year round opacity.

The petitioner had no comments at this time.

Commissioner Kubow agreed with the need for a second ground sign and was in full support of the variation request. He asked if the petitioner agreed with Staff recommendations and **Mr. Dragisic** replied that the owner is in full agreement. **Chair Eckhardt** pointed out that the existing parking lot is depressed approximately 25 or 30 inches, and he questioned whether or not additional landscaping was necessary. **Mr. Hautzinger** replied that landscaping screening is a code requirement to screen the parking areas and it will help soften the edge of the parking area as well as contribute to the overall aesthetics of the area. **Commissioner Kubow** agreed with Staff that the existing ground sign on Rand Road be replaced and updated within one year to match the new ground sign on Arlington Heights Road. He also felt the landscaping along Arlington Heights Road needed to be cleaned up, but was unsure if adding a hedge along the sidewalk should be a recommendation or a requirement.

Commissioner Fasolo was in support of a second ground sign, which he felt was appropriate for this retail plaza, and he agreed that the existing ground sign on Rand Road should be updated and replaced. He was in favor of the sign color as well, which would fit in well with the building. He was unsure if hedges were necessary along the parking lot; however, at a minimum, he felt that new grass and flowers were necessary.

Commissioner Fitzgerald agreed with everything said so far, and he expressed that a salt tolerant landscape hedge should be added along the parking lot, which would give a consistent look from the street without blocking the building.

Chair Eckhardt was concerned that the lowest tenant panel sign could become blocked by a 30-inch hedge if it was not consistently maintained, and he questioned the appropriate height for the new plant material. He was in support of the variation request and he agreed with Staff recommendations and the comments made by the commissioners.

Mr. Dragisic said that the owner would agree to add a hedge of 24-inches in height so that the sign will not be blocked. **Mr. Hautzinger** clarified the code requirement for 36-inch high parking lot screening, but noted that code allows the screen height to be reduced to 18-inches at driveways to not obscure visibility. He reiterated that landscaping be provided along the edge of the parking area to comply with code.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER KUBOW, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER FITZGERALD, TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL TO THE VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, A SIGN VARIATION REQUEST FOR ARLINGTON HEIGHTS PROMENADE LOCATED AT 305-349 E. RAND ROAD. THIS RECOMMENDATION IS SUBJECT TO COMPLIANCE WITH PLANS DATED 7/31/15 AND RECEIVED 10/12/15, FEDERAL, STATE AND

VILLAGE CODES, REGULATIONS AND POLICIES, THE ISSUANCE OF ALL REQUIRED PERMITS, AND THE FOLLOWING:

1. A VARIATION FROM CHAPTER 30, SECTION 30-302a, TO ALLOW TWO GROUND SIGNS WITH A SEPARATION DISTANCE OF APPROXIMATELY 225 FEET, WHERE 600 FEET OF SEPARATION IS REQUIRED BETWEEN GROUND SIGNS ON A THROUGH LOT.
2. A VARIATION FROM CHAPTER 30, SECTION 30-303a, TO ALLOW A 12 FOOT TALL GROUND SIGN, WHERE ZERO FEET IS ALLOWED.
3. A VARIATION FROM CHAPTER 30, SECTION 30-303c, TO ALLOW A 48.3 SF GROUND SIGN, WHERE ZERO SF IS ALLOWED.
4. A REQUIREMENT THAT THE EXISTING GROUND SIGN FACING RAND ROAD BE REPLACED WITH A 49 SF CODE COMPLIANT SIGN TO MATCH THE NEW GROUND SIGN DESIGN NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 31, 2016.
5. A REQUIREMENT THAT THE EXISTING RETAINING WALL ALONG THE WEST END OF THE PARKING LOT BE REPAIRED, AND THE LANDSCAPING ALONG THE SIDEWALK BE IMPROVED WITH A 3 FOOT HIGH DENSELY PLANTED COMPACT HEDGE DESIGNED TO PROVIDE YEAR ROUND OPACITY.
6. A REQUIREMENT THAT THE PETITIONER WORK CLOSELY WITH STAFF AND FOLLOW LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES.
7. THIS REVIEW DEALS WITH THIS REVIEW DEALS WITH ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN ONLY AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED TO BE AN APPROVAL OF, OR TO HAVE ANY OTHER IMPACT ON NOR REPRESENT ANY TACIT APPROVAL OR SUPPORT FOR THE PROPOSED LAND USE OR 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.

Mr. Hautzinger pointed out that the drawing submitted by the petitioner shows blue sign panels with white letters for each tenant. He asked the petitioner if it is their intent for all tenants to have the same blue sign panel as shown in the drawing, or for each tenant to have their own individual color/logo/font. **Mr. Faris** replied that logos would not be allowed on the sign, and the sign panels would be consistent in font; however, the panel color may vary.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER KUBOW TO AMEND THE MOTION AS FOLLOWS:

8. THE FONT COLOR ON THE GROUND SIGN WILL BE CONSISTENT, BUT THE BACKGROUND COLOR COULD CHANGE FOR EACH TENANT SIGN PANEL.

COMMISSIONER FITZGERALD SECONDED THE AMENDED MOTION.

Chair Eckhardt felt it was important that each tenant be allowed to use their own individual logo on their sign panel, which he felt the commission should not have an issue with. **Mr. Hautzinger** stated that the design of sign panels on a ground sign are not typically restricted. If the requested ground sign is allowed, then the Design Commission should decide if the tenant panels can be designed as desired by each tenant. **Chair Eckhardt** suggested amending the motion again to allow the color, font and style of each sign panel to be determined by each tenant.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER KUBOW TO AMEND THE AMENDED MOTION AS FOLLOWS:

8. THAT THE PETITIONER ALLOW EACH TENANT TO SELECT THEIR OWN SIGN PANEL DESIGN, FONT AND COLOR.

COMMISSIONER FITZGERALD SECONDED THE MOTION.

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