

APPROVED

MINUTES OF
THE VILLAGE OF ARLINGTON HEIGHTS
DESIGN COMMISSION MEETING
HELD AT THE ARLINGTON HEIGHTS MUNICIPAL BUILDING
33 S. ARLINGTON HEIGHTS RD.
FEBRUARY 14, 2017

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

Members Present: Ted Eckhardt, Chair
John Fitzgerald
Kirsten Kingsley

Members Absent: Anthony Fasolo
Jonathan Kubow

Also Present: Ryan Dunham, Oakley Home Builders for *815 S. Burton Pl.*
Thomas & Linda Petermann, Owners of *815 S. Burton Pl.*
Jon Kee, Owner of *2214 N. Palatine Rd-Lot 2*
Sam Salahi, AP&S for *2214 N. Palatine Rd-Lot 2*
Tony Petrillo for *Arlington International Racecourse*
Kevin Clarke for *Arlington International Racecourse*
Jim Bradford, Formetco for *Arlington International Racecourse*
Scott Lovell, All Steel Structures for *Arlington International Racecourse*
Charles Perkins, Director Planning & Community Development for *AH Police Station*
Nicholas Pecora, Deputy Chief for *AH Police Station*
Marc Rohde, Legat Architects for *Arlington Heights Police Station*
Steve Blye, Legat Architects for *Arlington Heights Police Station*
Steve Hautzinger, Staff Liaison

REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES FROM JANUARY 24, 2017

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER FITZGERALD, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER KINGSLEY, TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 24, 2017. ALL WERE IN FAVOR. THE MOTION CARRIED.

ITEM 3. SIGN VARIATION REVIEWDC#16-144 – Arlington International Racecourse – 2200 W. Euclid Ave.

Tony Petrillo & Kevin Clarke, representing *Arlington International RaceCourse*, Jim Bradford, representing *Formetco*, and Scott Lovell, representing *All Steel Structures*, were present on behalf of the project.

Mr. Hautzinger presented Staff comments. Arlington International Racecourse is proposing to install an electronic changeable LED billboard sign to face Route 53. The proposed sign will be double-sided, 60 feet wide and 20 feet tall, and 1,200 sf in size. The sign will be supported on a single steel column and will be 95 feet in overall height above grade. The petitioner is proposing to use the sign to advertise events at the racecourse, as well as to sell advertising space on the sign to off-premises businesses. The messages displayed on the sign are proposed to change every ten seconds (six messages per minute). The racecourse intends to utilize approximately 2 messages per minute for racecourse advertising, which may vary during racing season (April through September) versus off-season (October through March). The remaining message slots are intended to be sold to other businesses for off-premises advertising, approximately 4 messages per minute. Therefore, the sign would be used approximately 1/3 of the time for Arlington Racecourse advertising, and 2/3 of the time as a revenue generator.

The proposed sign is prohibited by code due to: the electronic changeable display is not permitted, off-premises (billboard) advertising is not allowed, size, height, and brightness. However, Arlington International Racecourse is a major tourism venue unlike any other business in Arlington Heights, and there are eight other existing billboard signs located in Rolling Meadows that face Route 53, directly adjacent to the location of the proposed sign. Three of the eight existing billboards are electronic as shown in the 'Map and Photos' of the existing billboards. The subject site is located in a B-3 Zoning District, and there are no adjacent Residential Zoning Districts.

Mr. Hautzinger gave the following background information on electronic signage in Arlington Heights. There are two electronic message board signs existing in Arlington Heights. One is located at the Daily Herald building near Arlington Heights Road and I-90 which received a sign variation for an electronic message board sign in. The other electronic message board sign is the Village of Arlington Heights' Civic Events Sign that was installed in approximately 2004. This sign is allowed by code as an exempt Municipal sign providing non-advertising information as a public convenience per Section 30-103.

Two other electronic message board signs were installed by School District 214 without Village approvals; one at Hersey High School and Forest View School, both of which are relatively small in scale, but with no Village approval.

Mr. Hautzinger reviewed the Design Commission's Position Statement & Recommendations regarding electronic signage that was presented to the Village Board on July 18, 2016, which for all applications at that time, was recommended to not allow electronic signs. However, the Position Statement did include a statement that major tourism venues represent a possible good application for an electronic sign and should be considered on a case-by-case basis as sign variations; and another statement that electronic LED signs should not be allowed I-90 and Route 53 due to a possible unfair advantage for businesses fronting on these highways and to avoid contributing to signage blight along these highways. At the conclusion of the July 18, 2016 Village Board meeting, Staff was directed by the Village Board to further research and draft a Special Use process to allow electronic signage that meets certain conditions. Mr. Hautzinger reported that, at this time, Staff has completed research of other communities' electronic sign standards, and has prepared a draft Conditional Review Process and Standards to possibly allow electronic signs for businesses located along primary commercial corridors. He presented a map that was included in the report to the Village Board showing the recommended major arterial roads and primary commercial corridors in the Village, indicating where electronic LED signs might be allowed.

Mr. Hautzinger reviewed the sign variation criteria for granting a sign variation. The petitioner submitted a letter addressing the sign variation criteria, stating that the hardship is that for the past decade, wagering on horse races

has declined 40%, which is their major source of revenue. In response to this decline, the racecourse has changed its business model from dependency on wagering to being dependent on income derived from various entertainment events hosted every weekend from May through September as well as a schedule of trade shows, ride and drive events, and holiday events from October through April. They report that their need for advertising and marketing multiple events with a changing message sign has increased ten-fold, and currently, there is no signage on the property to advertise the multitude of events conducted there.

The petitioner's letter also states that they currently spend approximately \$100,000 per year to advertise on three electronic billboards for two weeks to promote the opening of race season in May and the Arlington Million event in August, but that this is very limited and insufficient for a year round entertainment destination to adequately promote its brand and market its events. Furthermore, the billboards are located miles away from the property and do not provide the destination reference for Arlington Racecourse.

Finally, the petitioner's letter outlines how the proposed sign will not create a traffic hazard, a depreciation of nearby property values, be detrimental to the public, or alter the character of the locality because the proposed location of the sign is remote from any residents, and there are already many static and digital billboard signs in this location along Route 53.

Staff's analysis of the petitioner's sign variation request is that Staff agrees that the Arlington International Racecourse is an important, unique, one of a kind major entertainment venue in Arlington Heights, and that their current signage is inadequate to effectively advertise the various events hosted at their facility. The proposed location for the electronic billboard sign to face Route 53 is a good choice due to the remoteness from residential neighborhoods and due to the existing context of numerous other billboards that already face Route 53 in this general location. The size and height of the proposed sign is consistent with the existing billboards along Route 53.

However, Staff feels that the justification for using the billboard the majority of the time for off-premises advertising of other businesses as a source of revenue needs to be evaluated. The petitioner reports that other major entertainment destinations in the Chicagoland market have large digital billboard signs to prominently mark their destination and market their events. Staff agrees that other major entertainment destinations have large electronic signs, but venues such as the Allstate Arena in Rosemont, the Sears Center in Hoffman Estates, and Six Flags in Gurnee all have prominent permanent signage incorporated as part of their signs to establish their destinations. It should be evaluated whether the proposed sign should include permanent "Arlington International Racecourse" as a destination reference. Staff presented a couple of concept renderings to illustrate how this could look.

Staff concerns regarding off-premises advertising are as follows:

1. Would allowing off-premises advertising set a precedent for other businesses facing Route 53 and I-90 to request electronic billboard signs on their properties?
2. If the sign is used the majority of the time (approximately 2/3 of the time) as an off-premises billboard, it will be far less effective in promoting the Racecourse.
3. Is it acceptable to have other businesses that may compete with Arlington Heights' businesses promoted on a sign in Arlington Heights? For example, an advertisement for Schaumburg Ford would directly compete with Arlington Heights Ford.
4. Would promoting other businesses outside of Arlington Heights have a negative impact on Arlington Heights?

Ideally, Staff recommends that the proposed sign for Arlington Racecourse include permanent "Arlington International Racecourse" signage on the top of the sign, and that the sign be used only for on-premises advertising which would include promoting racing events, promoting other events hosted at the facility, and advertisements for other businesses and products sold on the premises such as Ditka's restaurant, Mr. D's Sports Bar, Miller Lite, and Pepsi.

Mr. Hautzinger reviewed a summary of IDOT's (Illinois Department of Transportation) requirements for billboards that are applicable to the proposed sign as follows:

- **Size.** 30 feet maximum height, 60 feet maximum width, and 1,200 sf maximum size.
- **Display.** Static messages only. Oscillating, rotating, flashing, intermittent or moving lights are not allowed.
- **Frequency of Message Change.** 10 seconds minimum (6 messages per minute).
- **Spacing:**
 - Signs must be a minimum 1,000 feet from official traffic signs, signals, or devices and shall not obscure or interfere with a driver's view of such sign, signal, or device.
 - Signs must be a minimum 1,000 feet from approaching, merging or intersecting traffic and shall not obscure or interfere with a driver's view of such traffic.
 - Signs must be a minimum 500 feet from of another such sign structure
- **Moving Parts.** Signs cannot contain any animated or moving parts.

In addition to the IDOT requirements, Staff recommends the following restrictions:

- **Display.** The display shall be high resolution, full color. Video not allowed.
- **Brightness:**
 - Auto-dimming photocell technology is required to adjust the display brightness based on ambient lighting conditions.
 - Brightness shall be limited to .3 footcandles maximum above ambient lighting conditions at 150 feet from the sign face. (Brightness restrictions are based on IESNA, Illuminating Engineering Society of North America, standards.)
 - Written certification from manufacturer required to verify auto-dimming function, preset not-to-exceed .3 footcandles above ambient lighting conditions.
- **Sound.** Sound is not allowed.
- **Hours of Operation.** Unlimited.
- **Sign Removal.** If the proposed sign is approved, Staff recommends including a condition requiring the sign to be removed if Arlington Racecourse ceases operations (in accordance with Chapter 30, Section 30-109 "Removal of Signs for Businesses No Longer on Premises"), unless the Village approves a future request.

Options suggested by Staff are as follows:

Option 1. Approve as submitted (with restrictions as noted above).

Option 2. Require revisions to include permanent "Arlington International Racecourse" signage on the top of the sign.

Option 3. Require revisions to include permanent "Arlington International Racecourse" signage on the top of the sign and limit the use of the sign to on-premises advertising only (with restrictions as noted above).

Option 4. Deny the request.

Staff recommends Option 3, with the 11 conditions listed in the Staff report.

Mr. Petrillo said that he is the General Manager of Arlington International Racecourse and a resident of Arlington Heights for 30 years. He has been involved in the community for the past 30 years and the Racecourse has been in the Village for 90 years and has always been a good community neighbor, taking their responsibility very seriously. He acknowledged Steve Hautzinger, Charles Perkins and Diana Mikula of Village Staff, who have been fantastic to work with throughout this process, as well as Arlington RaceCourse Staff Kevin Clarke and Carol Coffee, who have

done a great job working with the Village. He also introduced Jim Bradford and Scott Lovell, who are here to answer questions regarding the proposed billboard sign and steel structure.

Mr. Petrillo commented on some of the points raised in the Staff Report. He stated that the main reason for the proposed new electronic billboard is that since 2009, revenue from racing has dropped 38%, with 70% of their revenue being derived from racing/wagering opportunities in 2009 and about 70% of their revenue today being derived from other sources of income. The proposed billboard will be a vital source of their income. They are operating on very thin margins, they have a very high tax base, and they are a very highly regulated organization that can only operate during certain times of the day and certain times of the year; they are very limited with their resources for revenue. He added that Arlington International Racecourse is a vital asset to Arlington Heights because it provides about \$1M a year in revenue to the Village and about \$300,000 a year in revenue to the Arlington Heights Library. This does not include the ancillary businesses in the Village that benefit from the Racecourse, which draws about 650,000 people a year, with about 85% of them not being from Arlington Heights, Rolling Meadows or Palatine. The uniqueness of the Racecourse, with 320 acres that touch on the border of 3 different municipalities, is unlike any other Arlington Heights business in the B-3 zoning that falls into this type of category. They are very cognizant of the position they took in selecting the proposed new sign; they want to have the least amount of impact on not only Arlington Heights residents, but Palatine and Rolling Meadows residents as well.

Mr. Petrillo also stated that the new billboard is not intended to overpower or take anything away from other businesses in the Village; they hope that businesses in Arlington Heights will utilize the new billboard with their advertising, and they will receive priority over other businesses. In addition, businesses that are part of the Arlington Heights Chamber of Commerce will receive special offers to share their advertisement with other business in the Village.

Mr. Petrillo explained that the Racecourse is one of the largest employers in the Village, with over 11,000 people employed and an additional 3,500 people earning a living by conducting independent businesses on the backstretch such as owning/training horses, and taking care of the horses. Of the 320 acres, only 160 acres are used to drive revenue; the other 160 acres are expenses that they pay for the upkeep, repair and maintenance of the property, water, sewer, gas, electric, and taxes. This is important to show that even small amounts of revenue help to contribute to sustain the Racecourse.

Mr. Petrillo explained that the new electronic billboard is not intended to be a destination sign for the Racecourse. Although it will give some identity to the Racecourse, this could be accomplished without a static sign attached to the face of the billboard through graphics and advertising. The sign will be located the furthest distance from both entrances to the Racecourse; however, using a graphic that shows and provides direction to one of the entrances is a more effective way of using the billboard to communicate to the public. He reiterated that the justification for using the billboard for off-premises advertising is that it is projected to provide 5% of their EBITA (earnings before interest taxes and amortization expenses), and the sign differs a lot from the entities referenced in the Staff Report; Six Flags, Allstate Arena and the Sears Centre. Those entities have different price structures and drive much more revenue than Arlington International Racecourse, with the price of admission into their venues being 5 times that of the Racecourse. Many of these facilities have also been given various tax breaks.

He addressed 2 main issues raised in the Staff Report: the signage on top of the sign for the Racecourse, and the ability to sell off-premises advertisement. He explained that signage for the Racecourse on top of the sign would be included in IDOT's calculation of the maximum 1200 square feet allowed for a billboard, resulting in the video board being reduced to 14 feet x 48 feet, which is a much smaller size than the other billboards along this gateway of Route 53. This would also take them out of the market as having a sellable product, and cause confusion with the Racecourse name on top of the sign and advertisement for other businesses on the video board below.

In response to Staff's concerns regarding off-premises advertising, **Mr. Petrillo** said that allowing off-premises advertising would not set a precedent for other businesses to request electronic billboard signs because the Racecourse is surrounded by 3 municipalities, Palatine, Rolling Meadows, and Arlington Heights, and the property

sits out there like an island, which is very unique and unlike any other business in the Village. If the sign is used the majority of the time as an off-premises billboard, it would still be effective in promoting the Racecourse because advertising content exclusive only to the Racecourse could result in people paying less attention to the sign. **Mr. Petrillo** reiterated that they hope businesses in Arlington Heights will utilize the electronic sign as a way to bring more people into the Village, and they feel that promoting other businesses outside the Village would not have a negative impact on the Village because any business can advertise on the adjacent signs anyway. He added that Staff indicated that Hoffman Estates and Gurnee have both reported no complaints from their local businesses.

Mr. Petrillo also explained that the Racecourse has a lot of sponsors, and it is written into their larger sponsorship agreements that the Racecourse cannot have a brand affiliation; the Racecourse cannot use their brand with any of their non-sponsor brands that compete with the sponsors at the Racecourse. **Mr. Petrillo** concluded his comments at this time.

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

Chair Eckhardt clarified that Staff is recommending approval of the sign variation request with Option 3; a requirement for revisions to include permanent 'Arlington International Racecourse' signage on the top of the sign and limited use of the sign to on-premises advertising only (with restrictions). Staff also identified certain brightness issues, changes per minute, auto-dimming, and the foot candles.

Chair Eckhardt felt the petitioner gave a compelling presentation and he was not surprised to hear about potential issues with certain advertisements on the new sign. He pointed out that the proposed new electronic changeable LED sign would be the first approved by the Design Commission; and therefore, this is a benchmark matter before the commission. He felt the location of the proposed new sign was the least disruptive, and acknowledged the trend of electronic billboard signs along this corridor of Route 53. He could support the new sign; however, he was concerned about the fact that the sign is advertising off-premises businesses. He was curious to know how much revenue the new sign could generate in a year and **Mr. Petrillo** replied that the projection is between \$120,000 and \$190,000 a year, which **Chair Eckhardt** was surprised to hear was so low.

Commissioner Kingsley thanked both Staff and **Mr. Petrillo** for their informative presentations. She asked what the purpose of the proposed sign is, and **Mr. Petrillo** replied that the primary purpose of the sign is to provide a new source of revenue to the Racecourse, as well as advertise their product. **Commissioner Kingsley** felt the main reason for the new sign is to advertise and make money. This is a billboard and not anything to do with the Racecourse, except that the petitioner owns the property on which the pole is located. She felt the petitioner would prefer to have nothing on the sign and to think of it as just a billboard in their backyard that raises money, and **Mr. Petrillo** said that this was their preference. **Commissioner Kingsley** felt that she represented many long-time residents in the Village who have an affinity towards the Racecourse and want to support it because it supports them; everyone wants to see the Racecourse succeed; however, she wanted to see Racecourse signage on the new sign, not just a billboard. She understood the petitioner's concerns that Racecourse signage on the sign could cause confusion because the sign is not located at the entrance to the Racecourse; however, she wanted to see the Racecourse celebrated on the new sign if the sign is allowed to go up.

Mr. Petrillo reiterated that adding the name of the Racecourse at the top of the sign causes a problem because it reduces the size of the sign and takes them out of the product line, as well as an additional cost. He pointed out the 3-foot apron underneath the billboard sign where the owner of the sign is indicated, which would give the Racecourse the opportunity to establish ownership of the sign. Their main concern is not having a usable sign for advertising and they do not want to be categorized as just a Racecourse because of the negative stigma associated with the word. In fact, he preferred not to use 'Racecourse' at all on the sign and instead use 'Arlington International'.

Commissioner Fitzgerald agreed with the direction that Commissioner Kingsley was going in. Since he has been on this commission he has never been in favor of electronic signs, never been in favor of billboards for Arlington Heights because he thinks of Arlington Heights as a nicer community than that, and felt that billboards in general did

not add anything to the aesthetics of a community. He acknowledged the existing billboard signs along Route 53, which he was not in favor of and came here tonight with an open mind, but he is opposed to off-premises portion of the sign. This is just a billboard, and if the Village allows this billboard, someone else will then get a billboard, and so on and so on. He was trying to see the hardship, but he was having a really tough time with it and did not like the selling of the billboard space. He was opposed to the new sign as currently proposed and he was opposed to the size. It is a billboard, a money-making billboard, which he understands, but once this sign goes up then someone else will want one. He appreciates that he lives in Arlington Heights, who in his mind is always trying to create exceptional standards, which is what he loves about living in Arlington Heights. This sign to him, is taking a step back.

Chair Eckhardt referred to Staff's previous exhibit showing a map of major arterial roads and primary commercial corridors. He remembered when the Design Commission saw the electronic sign for the Daily Herald adjacent to I-90, which he recommended making bigger at that time; however, that sign was only advertising the Daily Herald. Although he appreciated the petitioner's honesty about the sign request and what the sign is for, he questioned Staff where the next for-profit billboard would be located in the Village if this sign is allowed. **Mr. Hautzinger** referred to the map exhibit and indicated the areas along I-90 that are zoned B-2 and M-2 where other requests for electronic billboard signs could potentially be located, as well as the area further north along Route 53 where there are other possible opportunities with M-1 and M-2 zoning districts.

Chair Eckhardt questioned the intent and direction of the new electronic sign ordinance: is it to provide for advertising billboards in the Village, or is it an opportunity for businesses to advertise in a contemporary hi-tech manner. He was concerned that tonight's action might be putting the cart before the horse, although he understood the petitioner's decision to move forward before an electronic sign ordinance is created. **Mr. Petrillo** said that they were encouraged to go through this process, which **Chair Eckhardt** appreciated; however, he reiterated the importance of tonight's review. He asked if the petitioner was opposed to Staff's recommendation for Option 3; requiring revisions to included permanent "Arlington International Racecourse" signage on top of the sign and limit the use of the sign to on-premises advertising only. **Mr. Petrillo** replied that they could not go forward with this option.

Chair Eckhardt suggested tabling the discussion tonight until all 5 commissioners are in attendance, as it appeared as though there would not be a favorable vote tonight, since a majority vote was necessary from all 3 commissioners. **Mr. Petrillo** understood, but said that they are unfortunately in a position that they have an April 15th deadline; otherwise construction of the new sign cannot happen until after the racing season when the horses are gone. **Chair Eckhardt** asked for clarification on the percentage of time that the sign would be advertising strictly for the Racecourse versus other businesses. **Mr. Petrillo** explained that an ad is not bought for a certain time of day, it is sold for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for as long as the ad is purchased for. An accommodation could be made for certain businesses and the Racecourse to share their slate with the Village; there could be 2 slates for the Racecourse, 1 slate for the Village of Arlington and 2 slates for a business, which would result in a 3 minute rotation, which can be managed by the Racecourse.

Chair Eckhardt asked what percentage of time the sign would be used for profit, versus advertising for the Racecourse. **Mr. Petrillo** replied that during racing season, they anticipate approximately 2/3 of the time would be for-profit advertising and 1/3 of the time for the Racecourse and/or other. This could vary because they can control both slates of the sign; however, during the off-season, 2/3 of the time would definitely be used for-profit advertising. They anticipate the Racecourse having one slate of advertisement every minute of every day, of every week, of every month. In addition, they would offer use of the electronic sign to the Village for Amber alerts or any other type of community news the Village might want to alert residents to. **Chair Eckhardt** asked Staff if other communities offer this type of community activity on their billboard signs and **Mr. Hautzinger** replied that the communities he spoke with did not indicate whether or not they use their billboard signs for community alerts or advertisements.

Mr. Petrillo said that they were approached by a number of billboard companies to establish a billboard on their property and get paid rent for it, which would have been the easiest thing for them to do if it was approved; however,

they want to be able to control the sign and the graphics on the sign on their property. **Commissioner Kingsley** was concerned about how the Village would be assured that inappropriate advertising and graphics are being controlled by the Racecourse and **Mr. Petrillo** explained that they would control the loading of all the graphics into the system for each advertisement, as opposed to how the Daily Herald controls the ads on their sign that do not fit with their product. **Commissioner Kingsley** commented that there is no zoning with the Daily Herald and they are selling their ads as product. She is concerned about assurance from the Racecourse with inappropriate ads, because what is appropriate for one may not be appropriate for others. **Mr. Petrillo** said that he was not opposed to establishing safeguards similar to the City of Rolling Meadows' permit process for billboard signs.

Chair Eckhardt referred to a previous request from an elementary school for an electronic sign, which resulted in the commissioners struggling through three meetings and still not being able to come up with a solution. Some of the commissioners are sympathetic to the need for electronic signs, and some are completely opposed to them, and two commissioners are not here tonight.

Mr. Hautzinger said that off-premise signage is prohibited in Arlington Heights for any business, and all signage must be used to promote the goods and services offered by the business on that property. If the proposed sign is approved for off-premises, the content of the sign would be open to any advertisement; however, given that this sign is not allowed by code, if the commission felt it was appropriate, they could make a recommendation for approval with certain restrictions or conditions built in, such as a minimum 2 out of 6 messages per minute are required for the Racecourse. **Mr. Hautzinger** also explained that the sign code prohibits offensive and profane signage.

Based on the comments made by the 3 commissioners here tonight, **Chair Eckhardt** felt there would be no second if a motion was made tonight, and no unanimous approval for the variation requests. He understood the petitioner's timeline and said that a vote tonight would allow the petitioner to continue this discussion with the Village Board; however, without a recommendation for approval from this commission.

Mr. Petrillo said that if the commissioners are concerned about the proliferation of digital signs in the Village, there are a lot of variances, nuances and unique pieces to Arlington Heights that can be specifically carved out in an approval such as the property being bounded by three different communities, along with the existing Sign Code prohibitions of profanity or offense. Also, the Sign code states that if an entity ceases business, the sign would cease as well and must be removed. **Mr. Hautzinger** clarified that sign variations typically carry over to the next business; however, there could be a condition to prohibit a sign from continuing with the next entity. If the commissioners were to consider the petitioner's suggestion to carve out specific language for approval of this sign, it should not be done geographically by the boundaries of other communities; it should be done by the fact that this is a major tourism venue of a certain size; that is the uniqueness here. **Mr. Petrillo** replied that they would hope to someday be able to not rely on the revenue for this sign, and he reiterated his previous comment that some of the events at the Racecourse are like picking off low hanging fruit; this revenue is helping the Racecourse sustain its viability, help sustain its employment, help sustain revenues that are driving to the Village, etc. It has a uniqueness and importance to not just the long term viability of the Racecourse, but to the Library and the Village as well.

Chair Eckhardt asked for clarification from Staff on the Design Commission being advisory to the Village Board for sign variations. **Mr. Hautzinger** explained that a sign variation recommendation from the Design Commission to the Village Board is only a recommendation, and the Village Board can agree or disagree with that recommendation. The Village Board has final approval.

Chair Eckhardt asked the petitioner whether or not he wanted to table the project or move forward with a vote tonight. **Mr. Petrillo** asked if there was a timeframe for seeking a subsequent variation if the Village Board denies this request, and **Mr. Hautzinger** said there is a one year waiting period. **Mr. Petrillo** understood that the commissioners have high concerns over the proliferation of digital signs in the Village and will utilize this electronic billboard sign as a 'model' by which the Village will judge others on, find ways to apply this to the sign code, and determine whether or not a permit process requires a full action of the Board; however, can all that be considered in

order to be able to approve this variation tonight. **Chair Eckhardt** said that the first step is a motion, and he asked if the other 2 commissioners wanted to make a motion, either to approve or deny.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER KINGSLEY, TO RECOMMEND DENIAL OF THE SIGN VARIATION REQUESTS TO ALLOW AN ELECTRONIC CHANGEABLE LED SIGN FOR *ARLINGTON INTERNATIONAL RACECOURSE* LOCATED AT 2200 W. EUCLID AVENUE. THIS DENIAL IS BASED ON THE PLANS RECEIVED 1/5/17, AND THE FOLLOWING:

1. THAT THE PROPOSED ELECTRONIC CHANGEABLE LED SIGN IS A MOVING SIGN AND ANOTHER FORM OF INCOME FOR THE RACECOURSE.
2. A PREFERENCE FOR THE ELECTRONIC SIGN TO BE ABOUT THE RACECOURSE, WITH MORE SIGNAGE FOR THE RACECOURSE ON THE SIGN INSTEAD OF HAVING OTHERS BEING PROMOTED ON THE SIGN.

Commissioner Kingsley appreciated all the work that went into the sign variation request.

COMMISSIONER FITZGERALD SECONDED THE MOTION.

Chair Eckhardt asked if the petitioner was willing to only advertise the Racecourse and other philanthropic entities on this sign until such time as the matter of electronic signs can be visited by the larger bodies in the Village, to basically approve a beta which would allow a regular billboard sign along the 2 or 3 primary commercial corridors established by Staff. **Mr. Petrillo** said that unfortunately, the Racecourse does not allow him to make a decision that does not drive revenue on the sign that they are investing \$750,000 in, unless the timeframe was only one month. He could not agree to a timeframe longer than that.

Chair Eckhardt said that the petitioner has the right to go forward to the Village Board and make the same presentation, although the Village Board could come up with something and send the petitioner back to the Design Commission, since this is such a big issue in the Village. For the record, the petitioner has a compelling presentation with existing billboard signs all around them and the proposed sign is for the economic benefit of the Racecourse; however, he is concerned about other land owners that have the same kind of exposure who will also want a billboard sign. **Mr. Petrillo** pointed out the difference between the other billboards and the one they are proposing is that 99% of those billboards are leased, whereas they will own and operate this billboard, which **Chair Eckhardt** felt was a benefit in the petitioner's presentation, although it was not compelling enough to the commissioners tonight. **Mr. Petrillo** reiterated that there is a huge difference between the Racecourse and other entities.

There was no further discussion.

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