

**CAUCUS PRIOR TO STRONGSVILLE BOARD OF ZONING &
BUILDING CODE APPEALS
Meeting of
January 11, 2023**

Board of Appeals Members Present: Ken Evans, Dustin Hayden, John Rusnov, David Houlé, Richard Baldin

Administration: Assistant Law Director Daniel Kolick

Assistant Building Commissioner: Steve Molnar

Recording Secretary: Kathy Zamrzla

The Board members discussed the following:

1) SEAFOOD SHAKE BOIL/Hangchun Zheng, Representative

Requesting a Wall Sign variance from Zoning Code Section 1272.12 (c), which permits one (1) Wall Sign and where two (2) Wall Signs totaling 61.55 SF are proposed; property located at 16532 Royalton Road, PPN 396-16-003, zoned Specialized *1 Zoning Map.

Mr. Evans stated that Mr. Molnar stated the applicant is permitted 222.5 SF in signage. The applicant is proposing 61.55 SF, which is well under the permitted amount. Mr. Rusnov stated that the location is not ideal and signage is important. Mr. Hayden stated that the Board has granted similar variances in the past. Mr. Baldin stated that the applicant could have asked for a larger size.

2) SWEETIES OLYMPIA/Matthew Ranallo, Representative

a) Requesting a 9' Ground Sign Height variance from Zoning Code Section 1272.12 (e), which permits a 5' Ground Sign Height and where a 14' Ground Sign Height is proposed;

b) Requesting a 79.5 SF Ground Sign Face Area variance from Zoning Code Section 1272.12 (e), which permits a 50 SF Ground Sign Face Area and where a 129.5 SF Ground Sign Face Area is proposed; property located at 11606 Pearl Road, PPN 392-26-001, zoned General Business (GB).

Mr. Rusnov stated that the proposed sign height is too tall and the applicant should build the sign according to Code. Mr. Evans stated that the sign is similar to the one on Brookpark Road but that property sits back very far from the road. Mr. Hayden stated he would like the applicant to reconsider cutting the size down to below half of 14'. Mr. Baldin stated that if the Board approves this then other businesses will want taller signs as well. Mr. Evans stated that he doesn't think that the proposed sign will meet the four reasons for granting a variance.

3) NANCEE HERWERDEN, OWNER

Requesting a 334 SF Floor Area variance from Zoning Code Section 1252.16 (b), which permits 120 SF Floor Area and where 454 SF Floor Area is proposed in order to install a

Concrete Patio; property located at 19703 Dell Drive, PPN 392-29-308, zoned Residential Townhouse Cluster (RT-C).

Mr. Evans asked Mr. Kolick about the setback requirements for Townhouse Clusters. Mr. Kolick stated that the owner owns the footprint of the building, not the space outside. Mr. Evans and Mr. Baldin both stated that the proposed patio will not adversely affect the neighborhood. Mr. Rusnov stated that the zoning for the property has changed since the home was built. Mr. Houlé stated that other units have the same situation.

The Board members approved the minutes from December 7, 2022 and stated that the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law will be approved during the meeting. In addition, during the meeting, there will be elections of officers for 2023. Mr. Evans welcomed Steve Molnar, Assistant Building Commissioner, who is Brian Roenigk's replacement.

**STRONGSVILLE BOARD OF ZONING & BUILDING CODE APPEALS
MINUTES OF MEETING
January 11, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 PM by Mr. Evans.

Present: Mr. Evans
Mr. Hayden
Mr. Rusnov
Mr. Houlé
Mr. Baldin

Also Present: Mr. Kolick, Assistant Law Director
Mr. Hurst, Assistant Building Commissioner
Mr. Molnar, Assistant Building Commissioner
Ms. Zamrzla, Recording Secretary

Mr. Evans – I would like to call this January 11, 2023 meeting of the Strongsville Board of Zoning and Building Code Appeals to order. May we have a roll call please?

ROLL CALL:	MR. EVANS	PRESENT
	MR. HOULÉ	PRESENT
	MR. HAYDEN	PRESENT
	MR. BALDIN	PRESENT
	MR. RUSNOV	PRESENT

Mr. Evans – I hereby certify that this meeting has been posted in accordance with Chapter 208 of the Strongsville Codified Ordinances. Tonight I would like to welcome Steve Molnar with the Building Department. We do have this evening election of officers for 2023. I would like to open nominations for Chairman of the Board.

Mr. Baldin – Mr. Chairman, I move to nominate Dustin Hayden for Chairman for the Board of Building Code and Zoning Appeals for the year 2023 and until a new Chairman is elected, and also request that the nominations for Chairman be closed and that this individual be unanimously elected.

Mr. Rusnov – I second the motion.

Mr. Evans – Thank you, Mr. Baldin, for the motion and Mr. Rusnov for the second. Can we have a roll call please?

ROLL CALL:	MR. EVANS – YES
	MR. RUSNOV – YES
	MR. HOULÉ – YES

MR. BALDIN – YES
MR. HAYDEN – YES

MOTION APPROVED

Mr. Evans – Should we transfer now?

Mr. Kolick – You should transfer now. We have a new Chairperson. Congratulations to our old Chairperson.

Mr. Baldin – Ken, you did a great job. You’ve been around for a long time.

Mr. Hayden – Thank you very much, gentlemen. I appreciate it. I would like to open nominations for Vice Chairman for 2023.

Mr. Baldin – Mr. Chairman, I move to nominate Dave Houlé for Vice Chairman for the Board of Building Code and Zoning Appeals for the year 2023 and until a new Vice Chairman is elected, and also request that the nominations for Vice Chairman be closed and that this individual be unanimously elected.

Mr. Rusnov – I second the motion.

Mr. Hayden – Thank you, Mr. Baldin, for the motion and Mr. Rusnov for the second. Can we have a roll call please?

ROLL CALL: MR. EVANS – YES
 MR. RUSNOV – YES
 MR. HOULÉ – YES
 MR. BALDIN – YES
 MR. HAYDEN – YES

MOTION APPROVED

Mr. Kolick – Congratulations.

Mr. Baldin – Congratulations again.

Mr. Hayden – Gentlemen, before us this evening we have approval of Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law on the decision of Anthony Schur on December 7, 2022. As discussed in caucus there were no corrections needed. Any other comments?

Mr. Baldin – No, I think we did the right thing.

Mr. Hayden – Can I have a motion to approve?

Mr. Houlé – Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a motion to approve Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law on the decision of Anthony Schur on December 7, 2022.

Mr. Evans – Second.

Mr. Hayden – Thank you very much for the motion, Mr. Houlé, and for the second, Mr. Evans. May I have a roll call?

ROLL CALL: MR. EVANS – YES
 MR. RUSNOV – YES
 MR. HOULÉ – YES
 MR. BALDIN – YES
 MR. HAYDEN – YES

MOTION APPROVED

Mr. Hayden – Before us we also have minutes to approve from our meeting on December 7, 2022. We discussed this in caucus and there were no other corrections or changes needed. We will file those accordingly. We also have three public hearings this evening, and if you are here this evening and you plan on addressing the Board, I would ask that you stand and be sworn in by our Law Director, as well as our Secretary and Building Department representative.

Mr. Kolick administered the oath to those standing.

1) **SEAFOOD SHAKE BOIL/Hangchun Zheng, Representative**

Requesting a Wall Sign variance from Zoning Code Section 1272.12 (c), which permits one (1) Wall Sign and where two (2) Wall Signs totaling 61.55 SF are proposed; property located at 16532 Royalton Road, PPN 396-16-003, zoned Specialized *1 Zoning Map.

Mr. Hayden – The first item on our agenda is Seafood Shake Boil signage. I would like to invite the representative for this item to come forward and state your name and address for the record.

Mr. Zheng – My name is Hangchun Zheng and the business address is 16532 Royalton Road.

Mr. Hayden – Thank you, Mr. Zheng. I'm not sure if you were here with us in caucus but we had a chance to discuss the request. If you could take us through what you would like to do.

Mr. Zheng – We want to put the sign in front of the building. It used to be a Rockne's. That has a logo in the middle and we intend to put the logo in the middle where they put the original. The sign will be right next to it because due to the elevation of it, it makes it look like two separate

1) **SEAFOOD SHAKE BOIL/Hangchun Zheng, Representative, Cont'd**

Mr. Zheng continues - signs but it should be only one. We didn't change much of the layout to the outside and the logo fits perfectly in the middle. So, we would like to ask for a variance to be approved to allow our signs.

Mr. Hayden – Thank you very much, Mr. Zheng.

Mr. Rusnov – The second sign would go on the back of the property, correct?

Mr. Zheng – It's right next to it on the front to be considered one sign due to the front door area.

Mr. Rusnov – Okay.

Mr. Baldin – The Seafood Shake Boil on the left, what is that material?

Mr. Zheng – I believe it's a typical sign like a channel letter sign.

Mr. Baldin – Illuminated?

Mr. Zheng – Yes.

Mr. Baldin – The words will be underneath that?

Mr. Zheng – Yes.

Mr. Baldin – The lobster in the center there, is that going to be lit up?

Mr. Zheng – No. The logo, yes.

Mr. Baldin – Are things moving along there pretty good? You've been there awhile. Everyone has been waiting for this.

Mr. Zheng – We came from another location. Ever since COVID, I can't get contractors to go in there. It's been tough.

Mr. Baldin – You're not the only one in that business. Everyone is facing that. Where is your other location?

Mr. Zheng – Cleveland Heights.

Mr. Baldin – I've heard good things. Good luck.

1) **SEAFOOD SHAKE BOIL/Hangchun Zheng, Representative, Cont'd**

Mr. Zheng – Thank you.

Mr. Evans – Mr. Chairman, I think it would be helpful if we ask Mr. Molnar what the allowable square footage is for the sign. That's part of our determination process.

Mr. Molnar – That would be 222.5 square feet.

Mr. Rusnov – And we are at 61.55 square feet, which is well under City Code.

Mr. Baldin – You can ask for more.

Mr. Zheng – More sign, more money.

Mr. Rusnov – I have no further questions.

Mr. Hayden – Thank you very much. This is a Public Hearing so is there anyone in the audience who wishes to speak against the granting of the variance? Is there anyone who wishes to speak for the granting of the variance? Hearing none and seeing none I will close the Public Hearing and entertain a motion.

Mr. Rusnov – Mr. Chairman, requesting a Wall Sign variance from Zoning Code Section 1272.12 (c), which permits one (1) Wall Sign and where two (2) Wall Signs totaling 61.55 SF are proposed; property located at 16532 Royalton Road, PPN 396-16-003, zoned Specialized *1 Zoning Map.

Mr. Evans – Second.

Mr. Hayden – Thank you for the motion, Mr. Rusnov, and Mr. Evans for the second. May we have a roll call please?

ROLL CALL: MR. EVANS – YES
 MR. RUSNOV – YES
 MR. HOULÉ – YES
 MR. BALDIN – YES
 MR. HAYDEN – YES

MOTION APPROVED

Mr. Hayden – Mr. Zheng, the variances have been approved by this Board. There is an opportunity for City Council to review our decision. You will hear from the Building Department after twenty days if City Council doesn't review the decision.

1) SEAFOOD SHAKE BOIL/Hangchun Zheng, Representative, Cont'd

Mr. Kolick – Mr. Chairman, for the applicant, you will need to reappear before the Architectural Review Board. You need to contact Carol Brill to tell her you've been approved.

Mr. Zheng – Thank you.

Mr. Hayden – You're all set for tonight. Thank you, Mr. Zheng.

2) SWEETIES OLYMPIA/Matthew Ranallo, Representative

- a) Requesting a 9' Ground Sign Height variance from Zoning Code Section 1272.12 (e), which permits a 5' Ground Sign Height and where a 14' Ground Sign Height is proposed;
- b) Requesting a 79.5 SF Ground Sign Face Area variance from Zoning Code Section 1272.12 (e), which permits a 50 SF Ground Sign Face Area and where a 129.5 SF Ground Sign Face Area is proposed; property located at 11606 Pearl Road, PPN 392-26-001, zoned General Business (GB).

Mr. Hayden – Item number (2) is Sweeties Olympia. If the applicant could step up to the podium and we will need your name and address.

Mr. Ranallo – My name is Matthew Ranallo, 2044 Euclid Avenue representing Sweeties Candy and Olympia Chocolate.

Mr. Hayden – Thank you, Mr. Ranallo.

Mr. Ranallo – We have a tricky one here. I've been working with Tom Sheiman with Sweeties Candy for about ten years. He has a lot of stores, not only here but also one in Arizona. He's branching out with Campbells Sweet Factory and buying a lot of stuff to bring in house. So, I've been to every one of his properties. I have been contracted to make it look better for bringing his brand to life. When we originally did this for Cleveland I redid it seventeen different ways. One for the Board, one for the Mayor and they agreed the design was beautiful and they allowed us in on that. They were taking into account that this is an art piece with signs mounted on it. For that particular case we have a Sweeties logo on the top and we have this big sign. A lot of stuff goes on there. In this particular application we have gotten rid of all that except for the logo on the bottom. Technically this is just an art installation with an eleven-foot sign on it. Again, it's attached so it's considered signage. We've tried to brighten up the property. It looks like a warehouse. There's a vacant bank next door. So, when you pass that area, you really don't get the sense that there's anything there. You see this big, beautiful lit up car lot and after that intersection it's like a dead zone. We cut down some trees. The sign is not too far from the street, I think 30' from the street. So, the electrical is in place but I'm having a hard time transferring this down to a size that

2) **SWEETIES OLYMPIA/Matthew Ranallo, Representative, Cont'd**

Mr. Ranallo continues - is going to work. We're putting this sign at four other stores and I'm really having a problem. I don't know how we could adjust it any better and he created the sign branding package after we did the Cleveland store and everyone loves it. People come from miles around to take pictures with the sign. There are 50,000 pictures taken per year with the sign. It's really a nice sign. I understand that you have your limits. I've been trying to bring that store to life. The sign on the building that we're proposing is 33" x 120". That sign we have pretty of room left over. Is it 1.5 SF for every linear foot?

Mr. Molnar – Two point five square feet.

Mr. Ranallo – So that puts us at 225 SF. We're pushing 36 SF there. All our signs are limited. I don't want to blow up the building and make it look terrible and have this huge sign on the building and a monument sign in the yard. We also looked at awnings, paint and things like that and make it look like an actual boutique store instead of a warehouse.

Mr. Rusnov – The original design was a Tractor Supply place and then they switched over to Olympia.

Mr. Ranallo – They are still keeping the Olympia name and branding it a little different as a Sweeties.

Mr. Rusnov – What we are concerned about is creating a precedent. Our former Chairman, Mr. Evans, stated that everybody that would follow you would want a bigger and better sign. Every time a new operation comes in, they want a bigger and better sign. This is why we have a Code.

Mr. Ranallo – I have a question, if I was to take the ground sign off and put it on the ground, it's at about 36" elevation with the base. If I was to take that off and put it somewhere else on the property, would it be considered a sign? Would it be allowable?

Mr. Kolick – No, under our definition in the City Code it's still a sign. We don't have a separate classification for a work of art. It's a sign. That is the way our Code reads.

Mr. Ranallo – Are there any suggestions that you have because I don't know....

Mr. Rusnov – This is, kind of, a unique situation. What I would suggest is that you table this, meet with the Building Department and the powers to be and see what kind of accommodation you would come to so we don't have a 15' sign in the front.

Mr. Ranallo – That sounds great. I would like to meet the officials.

Mr. Rusnov – We are not designers by any stretch of the imagination.

2) **SWEETIES OLYMPIA/Matthew Ranallo, Representative, Cont'd**

Mr. Ranallo – I've tried to accommodate.

Mr. Rusnov – We understand your predicament but we're dealing with the Code and the City Council could overrule us. Even if we approve a 25' sign with a red chicken on the top, they could still overturn it. So, if you would like to table this you can ask the Chairman.

Mr. Ranallo – Would you allow me to table this to the next meeting?

Mr. Kolick – We can do that but understand we have never granted a variance for a sign this high.

Mr. Rusnov – You can get all the principles in the room together and keep us happy too.

Mr. Ranallo – Thank you very much.

Mr. Evans – Mr. Chairman, Mr. Kolick, if the artwork displays Sweeties or Olympias name on the artwork then it does become a sign, which is what we have here.

Mr. Kolick – Even separately, it would still be a sign under our Code because we don't control the content. We aren't allowed to control the content. We can only control the structure so it doesn't matter whether the name is or isn't on it. It's still a sign and there are sign Codes that limit it to the 5'. This Board might consider some variance but 14' is almost three times what the sign Code permits. You can tell them that the Board, I'm not speaking for them, said it's not going to work.

Mr. Ranallo – I appreciate your time.

Mr. Hayden – Thank you, Mr. Ranallo.

Mr. Kolick – Do you think you'll be back for our next meeting? Right now, we don't have anything scheduled for January 25 or will you need more time?

Mr. Ranallo – I think we can make that deadline for January 25.

Mr. Kolick – We will need your plans for the new design before the meeting so we can get it out to the Board members. Kathy, when do you usually send out the packets?

Ms. Zamrzla – The Wednesday before the meeting.

Mr. Ranallo – As long as we can meet with someone next week I think we can get that taken care of.

Mr. Baldin – Is the sign lit up?

2) **SWEETIES OLYMPIA/Matthew Ranallo, Representative, Cont'd**

Mr. Ranallo – The sign is back lit. He does have three spot lights in there. I don't think it needs it. We are going to use them but I don't think he's going to turn them on. So, it's exterior illuminated, face lit and then interior illumination on the signage on both sides.

Mr. Kolick – Do you know what the hours of operation are?

Mr. Ranallo – Not offhand. I believe he's going to change the outside patio area.

Mr. Kolick – Maybe it would be helpful for him to bring that information with him.

Mr. Ranallo – The other store is open until 9 p.m. so I would imagine they would stay open the same amount of time.

Mr. Baldin – I think it's open later in the summer.

Mr. Hayden – Appreciate it. Mr. Ranallo, I just want to make sure we clarify because you had mentioned you are going to try to meet with them. The Building Department would need to receive the revised plans by next Wednesday.

Mr. Ranallo – I'll see if I can get them there if I move some things around.

Mr. Hayden – Mr. Ranallo, we also need to conduct the Public Hearing since it was advertised. This is a Public Hearing so is there anyone in the audience who wishes to speak against the granting of the variance? Is there anyone who wishes to speak for the granting of the variance? Hearing none and seeing none I will close the Public Hearing and you are free to leave now.

Mr. Ranallo – Thank you.

Mr. Kolick – Thank you.

3) **NANCEE HERWERDEN, OWNER**

Requesting a 334 SF Floor Area variance from Zoning Code Section 1252.16 (b), which permits 120 SF Floor Area and where 454 SF Floor Area is proposed in order to install a Concrete Patio; property located at 19703 Dell Drive, PPN 392-29-308, zoned Residential Townhouse Cluster (RT-C).

Mr. Hayden – That will bring us to item number (3), Nancee Herwerden. If you would come up to the podium and state your name and address for the record and why you need this variance.

Ms. Herwerden – Nancee Herwerden, 19703 Dell Drive, Strongsville.

3) NANCEE HERWERDEN, OWNER, Cont'd

Mr. Hayden – Thank you very much. I see that you’re applying for a variance for a concrete patio. Why don’t you tell us about your improvement and why you need the variance?

Ms. Herwerden - I had removed the wood decking that covered the entire fenced enclosed area there and I was going to put a patio in in its place. Then I found out that the Code is 120 square feet and it’s actually about 416 square feet, including the side walk up to the front door. I’m asking for a variance for the difference for about 335 square feet. That way it’s no care inside the fence for me because it’s part of an HOA.

Mr. Rusnov – That was the original decking from when the house was built.

Ms. Herwerden – Yes, it was.

Mr. Rusnov – This is a vast improvement over rotted wood and termites.

Ms. Herwerden – I’m not changing the space, I’m just replacing it with a different product.

Mr. Rusnov – You’re modernizing it so you can more adequately utilize it.

Mr. Houlé – Some of the fence looks like it’s starting to rot.

Ms. Herwerden – I had the contractor put the fence back up when I realized we had this delay, just for the protection of the neighbors and for looks.

Mr. Houlé – Your HOA has granted approval to it.

Ms. Herwerden – Yes. There should be a letter.

Mr. Houlé – Yes, we have the letter.

Ms. Herwerden – Once the cement is done then the HOA is going to repair the fence rotted wood.

Mr. Houlé – Very good. Brand new then. I have no other questions.

Mr. Baldin – It will look good.

Mr. Hayden – Thank you very much, Ms. Herwerden. This is a Public Hearing so is there anyone in the audience who wishes to speak against the granting of the variance? Is there anyone who wishes to speak for the granting of the variance? Hearing none and seeing none I will close the Public Hearing and entertain a motion.

3) **NANCEE HERWERDEN, OWNER, Cont'd**

Mr. Baldin – Mr. Chairman, I would like to request a 334 SF Floor Area variance from Zoning Code Section 1252.16 (b), which permits 120 SF Floor Area and where 454 SF Floor Area is proposed in order to install a Concrete Patio; property located at 19703 Dell Drive, PPN 392-29-308, zoned Residential Townhouse Cluster (RT-C) be approved.

Mr. Houlé– Second.

Mr. Hayden – Thank you, Mr. Rusnov, for the motion and Mr. Houlé for the second. May we have a roll call please?

ROLL CALL: MR. EVANS – YES
 MR. RUSNOV – YES
 MR. HOULÉ – YES
 MR. BALDIN – YES
 MR. HAYDEN – YES

MOTION GRANTED

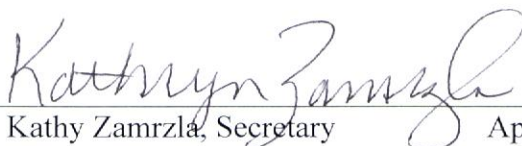
Mr. Hayden – Ms. Herwerden, your variance has been approved. There is a twenty-day wait because City Council has an opportunity to review our decision. You will hear from the Building Department after twenty days if City Council doesn't review the decision. You are all set for tonight.

Ms. Herwerden – Great. Thank you so much, everybody.

Mr. Hayden - If there is no other business to come before this Board, we are adjourned.



Mr. Hayden, Chairman



2/22/23

Kathy Zamrzla, Secretary

Approval date

