

**STRONGSVILLE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
MINUTES OF MEETING
January 11, 2022**

The Architectural Review Board of the City of Strongsville met for Caucus in the Building Department Conference Room at the 16099 Foltz Parkway, on ***Tuesday, January 11, 2022 at 9:00 a.m.***

Present: Architectural Review Board Members: Dale Serne, Chairman; Mike Miller, Building Commissioner; Ken Mikula, City Engineer; Jennifer Milbrandt, City Forester; and George Smerigan, City Planner.

The following was discussed:

Staples Plaza: Mr. Miller stated that the signage did not meet Code and would need to be sent to the BZA for consideration of variances. The Board was in agreement that the esthetics of the sign were approvable.

Roll Call:	Members Present:	Mr. Serne, Chairman Mr. Smerigan, City Planner Mr. Miller, Bldg. Commissioner Mr. Mikula, City Engineer Ms. Milbrandt, City Forester
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Also Present: Carol Brill, Admin. Asst.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Mrs. Milbrandt – I move to nominate Dale Serne for Chairman and George Smerigan for Vice-Chairman for the Architectural Review Board for the year 2022 and also request that the nominations for Chairman and Vice-Chairman be closed and that these individuals be unanimously elected.

Mr. Smerigan – Second.

Mr. Serne – Secretary, please call the roll.

Roll Called:	All Ayes	APPROVED
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APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Serne– You have had a chance to review the minutes of December 7, 2021. If there are no additions or corrections they will stand as submitted.

Mr. Serne – We have received a revised site plan for the previously approved Encompass Health. They have moved the fencing which is required by the Pearl Road Corridor Architectural Review Board Minutes
January 11, 2022
Page 2

Guidelines because of site issues. I would entertain a motion for the revised site plan so that they can keep moving on to Planning Commission.

Mrs. Milbrandt – I motion to accept the recommendation of the revised site plan for Encompass Health with the addition of the fencing and the additional driveway.

Mr. Smerigan – Second.

Mr. Serne – Secretary call the roll.

Roll Called

All Ayes

Approved

NEW APPLICATIONS

STAPLES PLAZA/ Bob Kunzen, Agent

Recommendation of a 8'- 10" x 8' internally illuminated Ground sign between masonry columns and having 10 tenant panels; red background and copy stating Staples; black background, gold logo and white copy stating Howard Hanna Real Estate Services; white background with gold and white logo and white and blue copy stating Goldfish Swim School; white background with black copy and red logo stating AOK Fitness; white background with blue logo and copy stating Allstate; white background and red and blue copy stating Fast Signs for property located at 12421 Pearl Road, PPN 396-03-047 zoned General Business.

Mr. Serne – Please state your name and address for the record.

Mr. Kunzen – Bob Kunzen, Brilliant Electric Sign, 4811 Van Epps Road, Brooklyn Hts., Ohio 44131.

Mr. Rini – Dana Rini with Rini Realty.

Mr. Serne – Please tell us about your project.

Mr. Kunzen – As you can see in the drawing, this is an internally illuminated multi-tenant sign. They are all flat faces and they are leaving spaces for other tenants as it will also be representing tenants in the building to the south. Masonry base, sandstone caps. The

masonry base, the brick has not actually been chosen yet. We know you like to compliment the building. It is double faced.

Architectural Review Board Minutes
January 11, 2022
Page 3

Mr. Miller – There are a couple of issues that we have. Your dimensions exceed what our Ordinances permit. If you want to proceed with this, you are going to have to go to the BZA and get approval for that. Additionally your existing sign is currently in the right-of-way, half in and half out. I did a scale this morning, I am not going to make an issue with that but it is supposed to be set back 10 feet from the right-of-way by ordinance. You are proposing an 8-foot setback from the sidewalk so that is an additional variance that you are going to need, so two variances. My concern with that is, while I do not speak or vote for the Board, on the Board, I have seen these rejected. The size, you are at almost 9 foot with the base which is a 12-inch base permitted and 5-foot sign with a maximum height of 6 foot and you are at 8 foot 10 inches. So that is something you might want to think about and come up with an alternative plan but unless you revise it, you are going to have to go to BZA and request those variances and that will be up to you to do.

Mr. Smerigan – The location is probably not as big of deal because you already have power out to that location. I am sure the Board will be willing to be somewhat flexible on the location.

Mr. Mikula – You already have a sign in that spot.

Mr. Rini – Yes, that was one of our thoughts as well as refreshing it and bringing it up to more of a modern look it is also extraordinarily on the wide side that was permitted at the time. That is kind of shrinking it back down and bringing in a little bit closer to the property as well as giving us some more room for our tenants, right now there is only room for about 4 tenant panels.

Mr. Miller – Again, those are items you need to tell the Board so that they can understand your thought process of where you are going but as I tell everybody, ask for what you want but have an alternative plan in case they won't approve it.

Mr. Kunzen – The base restriction is 12 inches?

Mr. Miller – Yes, 12 inches by Ordinance.

Mr. Kunzen – The height was only?

Mr. Miller – Five foot on the sign and one foot on the structure so a total of six feet. They do measure the entire structure because your sign face, the sign face alone is within

Ordinance but the overall signage as this is, you are about almost 13 SF larger than what is permitted. You are at 62.64 SF and only permitted 50 SF. The sign face they include the columns, its outside that outside within a rectangle or square. That is the way the Ordinance is written. Then one other additional item that you will need and actually before Architectural Review Board Minutes
January 11, 2022
Page 4

you go to BZA, is that the landlord has to sign off on this because there is a Master Sign Program. So we need a letter from the landlord saying that this is acceptable to them.

Mr. Rini – It is acceptable.

Mr. Miller – But I need it in writing.

Mr. Kunzen – So 10 feet from right-of way is.

Mr. Miller – Is what our Ordinance states. But again, because you have the sign there and because you are back near the edge of your, the eastern edge of the grass there. We are not going to make you go into your parking lot and the Board wouldn't do that either. That is a viable argument where they could grant that variance and they've done that in the past.

Mr. Kunzen – Is the 8-foot width over?

Mr. Miller – It is over the square footage and that is the problem, the overall square footage.

Mr. Smerigan – You could shorten it and widen it but then you are going to run into the issue of coming back into your parking lot with it so you are kind of stuck.

Mr. Kunzen – Well I know this is for the BZA and this is your hardship, you have more tenants.

Mr. Miller – And again, that is a valid argument to have with the BZA.

Mr. Kunzen – Another good part in my opinion is it doesn't interfere with the visibility triangle. You are far away from that.

Mr. Smerigan – In terms of the design of the sign I don't think we have any serious issues with it.

Mr. Miller – The fact that you are going forward with the fencing and the landscaping you are bringing it up to current standards for Pearl Road so that is an improvement that you want to bring to the Board. Say I am trying to improve the streetscape. Let them go from

there. That is where I am at as far as the signage goes. We will get you the package for the BZA and all the requirements for that.

Architectural Review Board Minutes
January 11, 2022
Page 5

Mr. Kunzen – Well this is how it was explained to us very well, come to this meeting, let it be denied and go to the BZA.

Mr. Miller – So that is where we are at.

Mr. Kunzen – Once we go to BZA and we get approved just like it is, where do we go from there?

Mr. Miller – I am hoping we are going to resolve this today so you won't have to come back here. That would be my preference. The other Board members can speak but not that I don't want to see you again, but I don't need to. If the BZA approves and resolve any landscaping issues or fencing issues then I am good. Then we would go to permitting and you know that BZA permit is issued 20 days after their approval because City Council does have the right to review it in all variances. That really shouldn't be an issue.

Mr. Smerigan – I am certainly willing to approve it subject to the BZA granting the variance if for whatever reason they don't and you need to make substantial changes to sign then obviously you would have to come back so that we could look at how you adjusted it. I would be willing to go forward with it.

Mr. Miller – I am in agreement with that.

Mr. Kunzen – So if we would make concessions for the BZA, I would just send it to Carol.

Mr. Miller – Yes.

Mr. Kunzen – You can administratively look at it.

Mr. Miller – We would at least look at it to see what you are going to do. I don't think you are going, even if BZA makes you shrink it down, is the sign going to look that much different than it does today?

Mr. Rini – The goal is to keep it the same as it is on paper.

Mr. Miller – We will address it once we see what BZA does. Just make sure you have a good argument when you go there and you do, you have some valid arguments and hardships and that is what they look at.

Mrs. Milbrandt – I do have one comment, in reference to you planting plan, that schedule here, those trees that are already existing in front of your building are street trees that

Architectural Review Board Minutes
January 11, 2022
Page 6

were planted by the City. So I am anticipating that you are not going to cut those down and then replace them with what you have spec'd on the plans.

Mr. Kunzen – No anything that is existing we do not intend tearing out.

Mrs. Milbrandt – Okay, I just wanted to make sure and then you are going to put together a landscape plan, it says to be determined. You'll submit that at a later date?

Mr. Rini – I believe so, I think we were also looking for direction from the City as well, the Code is a little bit open as far as the Corridor work so we were also looking for input and willing to do what the City would need us to do.

Mrs. Milbrandt – Okay, what you can do is you can put together a landscape plan and just submit it to me and I can review it and give you advice.

Mr. Rini – Sure.

Mrs. Milbrandt - Would we like to make an approval pending BZA?

Mr. Smerigan – I would be okay with that. Its either that or we end up tabling it then we hear it again.

Ms. Brill – No, you have to deny it to go to BZA.

Mr. Miller – Oh, that's right.

Ms. Brill – You can't grant it. Now if BZA grants we can administratively put it back through and after you look at it would not require them to come back again but right now you don't have a choice you have to deny it.

Mr. Rini – Our intention is to match part of the streetscape planning to match the brick we would use for the sign to that so that it is all one cohesive project.

Mr. Miller – I think when you do get your approval, just submit that to us so we can see if you chose the brick so we can look at those colors and see that we are good because that is what we would approve through the permitting process anyway.

Mrs. Milbrandt – I motion to accept the recommendation of a 8'- 10" x 8' internally illuminated Ground sign between masonry columns and having 10 tenant panels; red background and copy stating Staples; black background, gold logo and white copy stating Howard Hanna Real Estate Services; white background with gold and white logo and white and blue copy stating Goldfish Swim School; white background with black copy and

Architectural Review Board Minutes
January 11, 2022

Page 7

red logo stating AOK Fitness; white background with blue logo and copy stating Allstate; white background and red and blue copy stating Fast Signs for property located at 12421 Pearl Road, PPN 396-03-047 zoned General Business.

Mr. Smerigan – Second

Mr. Serne – Secretary call the roll.

Roll Called

All Nays

DENIED

Ms. Brill – Your plans have been denied and your next step would be to go to the Board of Zoning Appeals. Kathy Zamrzla is right there at the counter, you will want to get a packet from her so that you can submit and keep that moving.

Mr. Kunzen – The fencing where would that be?

Mr. Miller – That would be a part of the sign permit. That is a different contractor obviously, you are not doing the fence.

Mr. Kunzen – No.

Mr. Miller – We would like to see that too. BZA is probably going to want to see something on that too.

Mr. Rini – We at least have drawn so . . .

Mr. Miller – You have to submit that as part of your package to BZA so that they are looking to see what it actually is going to look like overall. That is what they want to see and then based on BZA's decision you want to bring all of that to us for the review after the BZA decision, have that whole streetscape thing squared away so that we can issue the permit. We will issue a permit for the signage and an additional permit for the streetscape. Brilliant is not doing that so have your contractor submit for that. See Kathy and get your packet she will have all of what you need. You want to get that in as soon as possible there is a 20-day lead time to get to BZA so you are probably looking at the first meeting in February.

Mr. Serne- Is there any other business to come before the board?

Hearing no further business. The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

Architectural Review Board Minutes
January 11, 2022
Page 8

Dale Serne /s/

Dale Serne, Chairman

Carol M. Brill /s/

Carol M. Brill, Administrative Assistant,
Boards & Commissions

Approved