# STRONGSVILLE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD MINUTES OF MEETING May 24, 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, May 24, 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:

**RAPID MORTGAGE:** The Board was concerned that the signage did not fit the Town Center District and did not compliment the building. The Board was in agreement that the signage should be individual letters. The signage is out of place for the Town Center District

Roll Call: Members Present: Mr. Serne, Chairman

Mr. Smerigan, City Planner Mr. Miller, Bldg. Commissioner Mr. Mikula, City Engineer Mrs. Milbrandt, Forester

Also Present: Carol Brill, Admin. Asst.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Serne– You have had a chance to review the minutes of May 10, 2022. If there are no additions or corrections they will stand as submitted.

#### **NEW APPLICATIONS**

#### **RAPID MORTGAGE/ Maan Yousef, Agent**

a) Recommendation of two (2)  $3' - 11" \times 13' - 3.45"$  (104.36 SF) Plastic Wall Signs having black, blue and red copy, white background and black and blue logo for the west and south sides of the property; and

**b)** Recommendation of two (2) 2' x 7' (14 SF) Plastic Wall Signs having white copy and blue background and red, blue and grey logo for the west and south sides of the property located at 13593 Pearl Road, PPN 396-10-006 zoned General Business.

Mr. Serne– Item Number One, Rapid Mortgage. Please give us your name and address for the record.

Mr. Yousef – Maan Yousef, 3450 West 140<sup>th</sup> Street, Cleveland, Ohio 44111. You have basically Architectural Justice, they requested specifically this type of sign. It is PVC routed letters with aluminum backing basically as it is depicted in here. I believe you all have copies. There is no lighting, it is simple, a routed letter that are not actually painted it is going to be vinyl because we need to fade it because that is their logo is goes from deep to lighter blue. We will be using 3M vinyl overlaid on letters that we will route out of ½ inch PVC. The whole building had these, I am basically putting signage up where the old signs were on the old building. I already took those signs off and we were repairing Square 22 next door and the bucket truck was already there so I told the guys to get them off of there. We knew eventually we were going to do something. That is basically it, there is no wiring, it is going to be in two pieces pre-made in our shop and mounted on the wall.

Mr. Smerigan – Is there some reason why they would not do individual pinned letters?

Mr. Yousef – They are stuck on their logo.

Mr. Smerigan – I have no problem with the two-house logo but the white background on here I don't think is going to look appropriate at that location. I think if you took the logo and the name . . .

Mr. Yousef – You are saying basically eliminate the background.

Mr. Smerigan – Yes and pin it to the brick.

Mr. Yousef – Whatever you guys suggest, I could probably call him right now and ask him, I am just trying not to get delayed another month or two. The reason being is that we went from holding off jobs because it was too cold to we are literally swamped. It just went nuts overnight and we are just trying to get jobs off the books.

Ms. Milbrandt – We just don't feel like the submission fits esthetically with the building so that is why we were thinking that if you went with their logo with just the white.

Mr. Yousef – That is fine, the thing is, it is nothing, as a matter of fact you guys make my life easier because the biggest the sheets come is 12 and this is 13 feet. I am trying to literally be allowed to move this a little bit so I can fit it on a 10-foot sheet so I am not having to piece it and they are like, "well if you can", I am just trying to make it two sheets butting up against each other, you don't see the seam, it is white on white and they are so stuck on their thing. If it is something like that it is still their logo.

Mr. Smerigan – You are still using the same colors but pinning the individual letters and doing away with the background, that would eliminate your whole sheet problem. Probably makes your life easier.

Mr. Yousef – It would but what I am saying now is I might . . .

Mrs. Milbrandt – This is what is on their website.

Mr. Smerigan – I think for me, doing that would resolve the main signage. The other issue I have is, this is, how many logos do they have?

Mr. Yousef – It is two, okay, there is a kitchen, like a full-blown fancy kitchen inside this place and one of them is a chef and does U Tube videos. He is not, its not going to be a service area. He does U Tube videos and he is the chef portion of that.

Ms. Brill – There are two businesses going in here?

Mr. Yousef – No it is all under Rapid Mortgage.

Ms. Brill – How does a chef and a mortgage company link together?

Mr. Yousef – They are friends. I will be honest with you, Mike Catan owns the building and he explained more to me than they did. He sent them to me because my company has been servicing their properties and he is trying to explain it to me but it is basically because there is a kitchen in there. The other guy does U Tube videos and he is going to be using that area.

Mr. Smerigan – Okay, here is my hang up with this, this blue background and boarder and stuff doesn't work at all. You have that dark background, if you were just putting letters on a dark background I would be okay but I can't see this swatch of blue on there to me doesn't really fit with the rest of the district.

Mr. Yousef – So you would want it, the only issue with this and I want to bring this up while we are discussing it. If it is dark blue on a darker backing would I be permitted to say do a secondary like an inch of a border around it in the back in a white?

Mr. Smerigan – You want to do dark blue letters?

Mr. Yousef – The way she just showed it to me but to put, meaning when you are doing a sign, you don't want to do dark colors on dark colors.

Mrs. Milbrandt – This is solid white.

Mr. Yousef – Yes but see if they wanted like this, for instance I would make company and what is called a cloud. So, you have the letter and then you router a secondary color around the back so that is what is making it stand out. Meaning, I can go back to my shop and have my graphic designer design what I am thinking, meaning it is not dark, some of this will be alright, the lighter colors but I think the darker colors will blend with the building a little too much.

Ms. Brill – Do you guys understand that this building is in our historic section? You are not finished here, when you finish here if you get an approval from here you will go onto Planning Commission. The whole concept of that historic portion of our City is that they have requirements on keeping things in a historic nature.

Mr. Smerigan – You did the stuff at Square 22 and there are individual letters there.

Mr. Yousef – Yes but that is neon.

Mr. Miller – Did you do the one on the Strong House?

Mr. Yousef – I bought the company a year ago, we did Square 22, we did some broken stuff and lights were out and we put new letters and bulbs.

Mr. Serne – What I don't understand with this is that you have a lit sign and you have lighting that is going to light the building.

Mr. Yousef – I don't have a lit sign.

Mr. Serne - This is not lit.

Mr. Yousef – No, the white would have been what is 040 or 050 aluminum that is painted white and comes that way and that would have been routed to go and the rest of the stuff would have been PVC.

Mr. Smerigan – I understand what you want to do is edge the letter.

Mr. Yousef – Yes, just something so that way they differentiate from the building. What ever you guys tell me that is what he is going to have to go with.

Mr. Smerigan – I am okay with maybe edging the letters, you can have yours guys do it and give it to us and we can look at it. I am willing to consider that.

Mr. Yousef – How do you want me to do those, route out the actual logo and letters?

Mr. Smerigan – This big square of blue does not do anything for me.

Mrs. Milbrandt – One suggestion would be to follow what they did at the Strong House. Do it in silver.

Mr. Yousef – I can do it out of 1/8" aluminum, just cut it out and paint it any color. I don't know if they want to go through that expense versus a piece of vinyl 2 x 2 but that is something they are going to have to live with.

Mr. Serne – It is not a cheap building.

Mr. Smerigan – This is a really visible building right in the heart of the district. You see what was there before.

Mr. Yousef – I don't know about that logo. I will tell them if we can change it, I am not doing the brass color. I can't do the sign, their sign is their sign, like I told you, they wouldn't even let me move it an inch to clear a straight line.

Mrs. Milbrandt – You can still do the sign but just do it in pin letters and spread it out.

Mr. Smerigan – The big sign I think you just have to go to individual letters. If you want to edge those then show us that, I am okay to look at that but having that big white board behind it just isn't doing it for me.

Mr. Yousef – Like I say, it is called a cloud and mainly it becomes one letter. We can do this and route these letters out and just take a piece of aluminum behind it or another PVC board that is ½ inch. I'll have my guy, as soon as I get back in this morning, I will

have my guy redo it and do an actual building layout. If not, like I say, if that is what you approve, that is what he has to live with.

Ms. Brill – Where is the Conrad.com coming from? Are they Rapid Mortgage? Are they Conrad Team?

Mr. Yousef – They are Rapid Mortgage.

Ms. Brill – So what is with the Conrad Team.com?

Mr. Yousef – I think that is the Chef guy.

Ms. Brill – Is he renting space in there? Where is the need for advertising for him?

Mr. Yousef – I hate to come to a meeting unprepared but I am unprepared to answer that question. When I called I was doing a few projects for Mr. Catan and I am like okay so I am going to Architectural Review Board and this is the issue, this is the issue, there is one thing about and I was speaking to Mike Miller.

Mr. Miller – That is me.

Mr. Yousef – There is one thing, they have gone through this before. As far as variances and signs etc. I am just trying to be as honest as I can I don't know much about the building, I don't know much about them. They called me because Mr. Catan told them to call me.

Mr. Mikula – Looking at it on the internet it is Lindsey Conrad of the Conrad Team or the Conrad Team is lead by Lindsey Conrad, Branch Manager of Rapid Mortgage.

Mr. Smerigan – It is a local operation.

Mr. Mikula – It makes sense to me.

Mr. Miller – I have an issue with this blue block for sure. I am going to vote against that, I will tell you that right now, that is not going to go and this blue and white is not going to go on a black, you can spread it out on that space in white channel letters, I am okay with that; The Conrad Team.com in there, I am okay with that on the black but that knife deal and the house, my vote is no. That little logo absolutely not because that is a business district there and this thing with the Chef doing U Tube videos I am just saying, there is no approval for that.

Mr. Smerigan – He does not have an occupancy permit to be in that building so putting signs up for him when he doesn't have an occupancy is going to be a problem. I understand they may be friends, they may have some deal. It would be difficult anywhere in this City but here in this Town Center District, this stuff is pretty sensitive. Take another shot at it. I think, give us what we talked about on the big sign and I think you are going to have to adjust this. We are trying to work with you, try to get it done.

Mr. Yousef – As far as these letters, obviously I can try to spread it out as one word and go straight across and this logo has got to go. Would you like this to be a particular color? You said you are okay with white.

Mr. Miller – I am okay with white but it could contrast into something else because that is a black band there. Justice had the gold or bronze color for his gallery and café sign.

Mr. Smerigan – You are going to have to go with a light color because of that black band.

Mr. Yousef – It is actually more of a bronze, this one would have been a backing I was putting up. It is more like a window bronze.

Mr. Smerigan – Whatever color, I realize it has to be a light color because of the dark background.

Mr. Miller – White would stand out more.

Mr. Yousef – PVC comes in white and black.

Mrs. Milbrandt – Or an aluminum just like the Strong House would look very classy.

Mr. Yousef – I don't know how we can get passed this portion of it and then I guess I will call you and you can let me know where I need to go from there.

Ms. Brill – You are going to have to revise all of these drawings and resubmit.

Mr. Yousef – Do I need to come back to Architectural Review again?

Ms. Brill – Yes.

Mr. Serne – Plus you have a sign here and a sign here but you don't show . . .

Mr. Yousef – I did them individually, I think I got with all four and then my copier decided to guit.

Mr. Smerigan – Well let's do that, have your guys redo it and get it to Carol and we will try to get it through in the next meeting.

Mr. Yousef – When is the next meeting?

Mr. Smerigan – Two weeks.

Ms. Brill – June 7<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Smerigan – We can go from there, you need to get it the way need to get it so that we can get it approved.

Mr. Yousef – What are we talking about as far as Planning?

Ms. Brill – All the Boards are twice a month, every two weeks.

Mr. Yousef – I'll call you, I will email it to you. I will get my guy on it as soon as I get back there and I am going to call him so that he understands so basically the knife and the chef is out of the picture and has to stay out of the picture. I am going to explain to him that he doesn't even have an occupancy permit so you better forget about that for now. They wanted to know what that was and I couldn't really explain it. They were asking what does that have to do with mortgages, if you think you can explain what a knife has to do with mortgages, you call them.

Mr. Serne- Okay we will table this matter until the next meeting. Is there any other business to come before the board?

Hearing no further business. The Chairman adjourned the meeting.

Dale Serne 1	<u>./</u>
Dale Serne, Chairman  Carol M. Brill Isl	
Carol M. Brill, Administrative Boards & Commissions	Assistant
Approved	