



City of Oakbrook Terrace  
Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting  
Tuesday, March 17, 2015  
Case #15-13

The meeting continued and called to order by Chairman Noble at 6:40 P.M.

Present: Chairman Noble, Commissioner's Schneider, Ventura, Myszkowski, Donoval, Smurawski

Absent: None

Also Present: Building and Zoning Administrator Mihaela Dragan, City Attorney Peter Pacione, Building and Zoning / Planning and Zoning Secretary Janice Coglianese, John Menze, Managing Broker of Wesland Partners, Inc., for Terrace Executive Center, and Donald B. Garvey, Attorney for Terrace Executive Center

Chairman Noble said the third order of business was to consider a request by Terrace Executive Center Office Condominium Association for a variation from Section 156.043 (B) (1) of The Zoning Ordinance of the City of Oakbrook Terrace to increase the total permitted area of all signs for the property from 166 square feet to 256 square feet.

Chairman Noble asked all who would be speaking to stand and be sworn in.

Petitioners John Menze and Attorney Donald Garvey were sworn in by Building and Zoning / Planning and Zoning Secretary Coglianese.

Chairman Noble asked the Petitioners to state their case.

Attorney Garvey took the floor and stated he was appearing here this evening not only as the attorney for Terrace Executive Center, but also has a tenant. Attorney Garvey said he was here this evening requesting additional signage on the vacant side of the existing signage. When the sign was originally built the amount of verbiage was limited to the amount of frontage that was issued in the permit. The members of the association were concerned about the blank space which is on the north side of the sign since the sign is facing the west side of Summit Avenue and the building is south of Ascension Church. People passing by on the north have no idea which businesses are actually at the association. They are asking for a variance to increase the signage on the north side by roughly 80 square feet. The ordinance states that the total area of all signs shall

not exceed two times in square feet the total building frontage expressed in linear feet and up to a maximum of 300 square feet for a building with one (1) street frontage. Attorney Garvey stated that their building is 85 linear feet and they are limited to 177 square feet as a result. If the Commission allows them to increase the signage to 256 square feet this would bring them to a 50% increase in signage.

Attorney Garvey mentioned if you are driving from Roosevelt Road to 22<sup>nd</sup> Street you will see a half a dozen or so signs with verbiage on both sides. The character of the sign when finished will not be much different than the existing sign.

Petitioner Menze stated basically the problem stems from the design of the building which entries are made through courts and even though people may have the address of the building, they usually forget the court number. Through the years the Board of Directory try to come up with an area they could erect a directory sign. The building was built in two (2) phases in 1980 and 1982 with a directory sign; however, on the functional side it was too small. Over the years they tried to look at different types of signs, even monument signs for the multiple courts, which would cause people to drive slower to look at each additional sign.

Petitioner Menze continued to say that they came up with the idea to keep incorporate the institutional sign and directional sign in to one (1) sign. They received ideas from Parvin-Clauss Sign Company, but it came to their attention that the calculations of a double-faced sign, as seen in the drawings, due to the linear frontage of the building, they would only be able to place the directory on one side, so they decided to go for a variance. They thought they could landscape the sign on the north face, but found it difficult to come up with a landscape plan.

Petitioner Menze indicated that one (1) thing hurting them with the calculation of the sign is the narrow frontage and deep lot size of 165 x 620 and the actual building is 85 for the frontage by 471 feet in depth. Even though there is over 39,000 square feet of building area, there is only 85 square feet of street frontage. Petitioner Menze concluded that they were her tonight to add verbiage to the north front of the existing sign.

Chairman Noble asked Building and Zoning Administrator Dragan if she had any comments.

Building and Zoning Administrator Dragan stated that due to the narrow building frontage of 83 feet, all signs for the property shall not exceed 166

square feet and the request presented this evening is for 256 square feet of signage. Due to the narrow building frontage and building configuration they are only allowed to have 166 square feet. If the other building frontage would face the road then it would be two times the building frontage and they would be allowed to have 300 square feet of signage. If this were a corner lot rather than an interior lot and if they had roads on both sides then they would be allowed to have 500 square feet of signage; so their hardship is actually the building configuration with a very narrow building frontage along Summit Avenue. In the past major sign variations were approved for similar buildings on the east side of Ardmore Avenue (Ardmore Plaza), and for Chipotle center also with small building frontage along 22<sup>nd</sup> Street. Building and Zoning Administrator Dragan considers this a reasonable request by the Petitioner due to the building configuration and numerous business owners.

Chairman Noble asked for any comments from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Donoval asked if they ever considered two (2) smaller signs, one (1) on the north and one (1) on the south side of the building.

Petitioner Menze specified that there were actually two (2) issues, the first there is only curve cut into the property and secondly multiple signs on the narrow lot would be confusing for a person passing by it. They considered different ideas, but left it up to Parvin-Clauss to come up with a design.

Building and Zoning Administrator Dragan stated it was a better idea to have one (1) sign rather than multiple signs from a traffic safety perspective, also they would still require a variation for more than one (1) freestanding sign for the property.

Commissioner Ventura commented that it looks like a lot of printing on both sides of the sign so when a car is southbound on Summit Avenue there could potentially be a situation where the driver will slow down to look at all the names and questions the safety for adding verbiage to the north side of the sign.

Attorney Garvey mentioned they will be slowing down to turn in, so there will be slowing of the traffic nevertheless.

Commissioner Ventura said she realizes the design of the sign isn't the issue, but the verbiage on both sides.

Building and Zoning Administrator stated it was the verbiage.

Commissioner Ventura commented that the verbiage is actually taking away from the size of the sign itself.

Petitioner Menze said once the sign was built, the writing looked great and was very functional, however on the south side of the face, it looks like a blank billboard for people driving past. It is unattractive and a nuisance for vandalism and graffiti. If they mound it up and landscape it, people will see that there is a sign there and that they are going in the right direction.

Commissioner Ventura asked if the businesses owners get many calls where people cannot find them.

Attorney Garvey replied with a firm yes and that it was very common for people to walk into the wrong office and even harder for a handicap person.

Petitioner Menze said that people might remember the address, but have difficulty with the court number.

Commissioner Ventura asked if the business names were on the court.

Petitioner Menze said all that was written on the sign is Courts A, B, C, D, & E which causes confusion to the person driving in who end up stopping for direction at one of the courts.

Commissioner Smurawski commented that he went to the location to view the sign and thought it was a very big sign. The conflict is that people want big signs then others want bigger signs and as he drove around the City he noticed sign abuses. Commissioner Smurawski says he doesn't see a problem with verbiage on the north front of the sign, but he sees the scenario as North and South Korea each erecting bigger flags.

Chairman Noble asked if there were any other comments or questions from the Commissioners. There were none.

Chairman Noble opened the floor for public participation.

Resident Dennis Greco took the floor and asked if the sign was back-lit.

Petitioner Menze stated that the sign was exterior-lit.

Chairman Noble asked for positive testimony. There was none

Chairman Noble asked for negative testimony. There was none.

Chairman Noble asked for additional comments from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Schneider said he cannot understand how businesses at these locations cannot give clear directions to their customers instructing them to come to a certain court. Commissioner Schneider commented that the only reason he will consider their request is that the sign already exists, if the Petitioners were asking for a larger sign, he would be against it. Commissioner Schneider thinks the businesses should be responsible for giving clear instructions to their customers which would get the driver off of the road faster versus slowing down to read a sign.

Commissioner Ventura pointed out that Commissioner Schneider is for the printing, but what they were asking for is a larger sign.

City Attorney Pacione stated the actual sign is not going to be larger; it is the verbiage on the reverse side that increases the square footage of the sign.

Commissioner Ventura commented that the request was to increase the total permitted signage from 166 square feet to 256 square feet.

City Attorney said currently the only sign calculated is the side with the writing on it and when verbiage is placed on the other side it will double the square footage.

Chairman Noble asked if there were any comments from the City Attorney.

City Attorney Pacione had no comments.

Chairman Noble asked for a motion.

**MOTION**

Commissioner Schneider entertained a motion to approve the request by Terrace Executive Center Office Condominium Association for a variation from Section 156.043 (B) (1) of The Zoning Ordinance of the City of Oakbrook Terrace to increase the total permitted area of all signs for the property from 166 square feet to 256 square feet.

Commissioner Myszkowski seconded the motion.

Ayes: Chairman Noble, Schneider, Myszkowski, Donoval,  
Smurawski  
Nays: Ventura  
Absent: None

**MOTION PASSED WITH A VOTE OF 5-1**

Chairman Noble asked Building and Zoning Administrator Dragan when the petition would be presented to the City Council.

Building and Zoning Administrator Dragan stated that the Letter of Recommendation will be placed on the April 14, 2015 City Council meeting agenda and the next meeting is scheduled for April 7, 2015 in which Janice will notify the Commissioners when the packets become available.

Chairman Noble closed Case #15-13 which ended at 7:07 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janice Coglianese".

Janice Coglianese  
Building and Zoning / Planning and Zoning Secretary