



Legislation Text

File #: 20-244, Version: 1

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM

ACTION REQUESTED:

Conduct the public hearing to consider a sign variance from Section 6-16-6:3.5.1 (Special Areas of Control: Development Identification Signage) for the Water Street Shops (PZC 19-1-136) located at 135 Water Street

DEPARTMENT: Transportation, Engineering and Development

SUBMITTED BY: Scott Williams, AICP

BOARD/COMMISSION REVIEW:

Official notice for the public hearing for PZC 19-1-136 as published in the Daily Herald on Monday, January 27, 2020.

BACKGROUND:

The subject property consists of approximately 0.65 acres and located within the boundaries of the North Phase of the Water Street District. It is zoned B4 (Central Business District) PUD. The subject property is located south of the West Branch of the DuPage River, west of Main Street and east of Webster Street. The size of both the North and South Phases of the Water Street District is approximately 1.2 acres excluding the Water Street Parking Garage. The development identification sign would apply to the restaurants and retailers located along both sides of Water Street.

DISCUSSION:

The petitioner, Carmela Menna (Omega Sign & Lighting), proposes to install a "Water Street Shops" sign on the north elevation at the top of the fourth story of the Theater Building. Per [Municipal Code Section 6-16-6:3.5.1](https://library.municode.com/il/naperville/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT6ZORE_CH16SI_6-16-6SPARCO) <https://library.municode.com/il/naperville/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT6ZORE_CH16SI_6-16-6SPARCO>, one development identification wall sign is permitted with a maximum area of 32 square feet. The proposed sign including the backer panel is 92 square feet.

As part of the special areas of control for the downtown, the West Branch of the DuPage River is considered eligible frontage and tenants in the North Phase of the Water Street District have constructed wall or awning sign facing this direction. The majority of these tenants are located on the first-floor which limits placing the signs higher up on the facade. The retail tenants located in the South Phase lack any visibility and business identification from north of the river. The intent of the proposed sign is to better convey the presence of a cohesive shopping center district to the rest of the downtown area. Due to physical attributes and distance from the rest of the downtown retailers, a larger sign area is required to overcome these visual obstacles.

Downtown design standards also apply for wall signage. Based on the overall North Phase frontage

length of approximately 250 feet (not including the proposed building at the north-west corner of Main Street and Water Street), the sign is appropriately scaled for its development identification purpose. Simple and legible lettering is proposed and does not cover important architectural details. The sign is placed in an appropriate manner to be complimentary with yet separate from the other signage to avoid crowding the North Phase facades. A backer panel is also incorporated to minimize the damage to the underlying facade. In terms of illumination, “halo lit” channel lettering is proposed with a singular white LED color. Staff finds the downtown design standards are followed with the proposed sign.

Findings of Fact

The petitioner’s responses to the Standards for Granting a Variance can be found in the attachments. Upon review, staff is in agreement with the petitioner’s Findings and recommends their adoption by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Key Takeaways

- The petitioner requests approval of a sign variance to install a larger development identification wall sign on the north elevation of the building located at 135 Water Street.
- Staff supports the variance due to the lack of visibility, physical separation from the rest of the Downtown area, identifying a shopping center district, and consistency with the Downtown Design Standards.