



Legislation Text

File #: 22-1183B, Version: 1

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

ACTION REQUESTED:

Pass the ordinance approving a variance related to the proposed ground sign at 1661 Aurora Avenue (Gerald Kia) - PZC 22-1-086

DEPARTMENT: Transportation, Engineering and Development

SUBMITTED BY: Adam Beaver, Assistant Planner

BOARD/COMMISSION REVIEW:

The Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) considered PZC 22-1-086 on October 5, 2022 and recommended approval of the request (approved 6-0). Staff concurs.

BACKGROUND:

The subject property is located at 1661 Aurora Avenue and consists of an approximately 3.35-acre dealership and associated parking lot with frontage along Aurora Avenue. The property is zoned B3 General Commercial District.

DISCUSSION:

The petitioner requests approval of a variance for a ground sign advertising the Gerald Kia dealership. Additional details regarding the sign proposed are outlined below.

Along Aurora Avenue, there is an existing 19 foot 1.5-inch-tall 166.7 square foot ground sign located near the westernmost entrance of the dealership. The existing sign is currently a non-conforming sign in terms of height and area. [Section 6-16-5:2.2](https://library.municode.com/il/naperville/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT6ZORE_CH16SI_6-16-5SICOINPR) [\(<https://library.municode.com/il/naperville/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT6ZORE_CH16SI_6-16-5SICOINPR> \(Ground Signs\)](https://library.municode.com/il/naperville/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT6ZORE_CH16SI_6-16-5SICOINPR) of the Naperville Municipal Code limits the maximum ground sign height to 10 feet and the maximum sign area to 45 square feet for this property. The proposed new sign will increase the dealership's sign height to 20 feet and decrease the area to approximately 130 square feet.

The petitioner proposes a new sign in the current ground sign's location to comply with the KIA Dealer Identity Program. The proposed sign features a wider base that complies with the code's requirements for a monument style sign as outlined in Section 6-16-2 (Definitions). The proposed sign will have the address number included at the bottom of the sign as indicated in the petition.

The average height of the surrounding dealerships' ground signs is 20 feet, and Staff calculates the average area to be approximately 210 square feet based on the information provided by the petitioner.

PZC and staff are supportive of the variance requested due to the aesthetic enhancements proposed for the sign, including the increased sign base width and the addition of landscaping. Prior to 2017, car dealerships were permitted to have signage that could be twice as tall as any other commercial establishment. Sign code amendments completed in 2017, which were aimed at creating a “content neutral sign code” per Supreme Court direction, eliminated these additional allowances, and car dealership sign regulations are now consistent with all other commercial establishments. Staff finds that the signage proposed for the subject property is generally consistent with the character of pre-existing car dealership signage in the Corridor and therefore supports the sign as proposed.

Findings of Fact

The petitioner’s responses to the Standards for Granting a Zoning Variance can be found in the attachments. Upon review, the PZC and staff are in general agreement with the variance findings and recommends adoption by the City Council.

Planning and Zoning Commission Action

The Planning and Zoning Commission conducted the public hearing to consider PZC 22-1-086 on October 5, 2022. No member of the public provided testimony. After limited discussion, the Planning and Zoning Commission closed the public hearing and voted to recommend approval of the petitioner’s request (approved 6-0). Staff concurs with the Planning and Zoning Commission's recommendation.

Key Takeaways

- The petitioner requests approval of a variance from Section 6-16-5:2.2 (Ground Signs) of the Naperville Municipal Code to permit a ground sign on the subject property to exceed permissible signage allowances in height and area. Staff supports the requested variance.