

West Innovation District

Sign Approvals

14-025WID – DP/SP

**Ohio University Heritage College of
Osteopathic Medicine-Signs**

6775 and 6785 Bobcat Way

This is a proposal for wall signs for existing buildings at this 14.85 acre college campus at the southwest corner of the intersection of Eiterman Road and Post Road. This is a request for review and approval of a Development Plan Review application under the provisions of Zoning Code Section 153.042(D).

Date of Application Acceptance

Friday, March 28, 2014

Date of Original ART Determination

Thursday, April 17, 2014

Date of PZC Action

Thursday, May 1, 2014

Date of Revised ART Determination

Thursday, June 5, 2014

Date of PZC Determination

Thursday, June 19, 2014

Case Manager

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PART I: APPLICATION OVERVIEW

<i>Zoning District</i>	ID-1 Research Office District
<i>Review Type</i>	Administrative approval for wall sign heights. Recommendation for Site Plan to the Planning and Zoning Commission approval for wall sign area.
<i>Development Proposal</i>	Wall signs
<i>Administrative Departures</i>	None
<i>Property Address</i>	6775 and 6785 Bobcat Way
<i>Property Owner(s)</i>	Ohio University
<i>Applicants</i>	Teri Umbarger, AIA, LEED AP, BHDP Architects
<i>Case Manager</i>	Claudia D. Husak, AICP, Planner II (614) 410-4675 chusak@dublin.oh.us

Application Review Procedure: Development Plan Review

The purpose of the Development Plan Review is to provide an efficient and predictable review process for development projects within the West Innovation District. The Development Plan Review is necessary to ensure that applications for development meet the requirements of Chapter 153 of the Dublin Code. Following acceptance of a complete application for Development Plan Review, the Administrative Review Team shall approve the Development Plan application when all of the requirements of the Innovation Districts and the intent of the West Innovation District Plan (formerly EAZ Plan) is met, including Administrative Departures if applicable, as required by §153.042(D)(5)(e)1. The Administrative Review Team may alternatively issue a decision that the application should be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission as a Site Plan Review, based on the criteria of §153.042(D)(5)(e)2. A determination by the Administrative Review Team is required not more than 28 days from the date the request was submitted.

Update

The Commission tabled, as requested by the applicant, this request for review and approval of this site plan in accordance with Zoning Code Sections 153.042(D) and 153.042(E)(7) for three wall signs to exceed the permitted size and number per building for existing buildings for a college campus, located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Post and Eiterman Roads. Some Commissioners were concerned about the request to increase the sign size four times and setting a precedent for future sign applications. The Commission was also concerned about the ART approval of sign heights that exceeded the 15-foot limit to permit a height of up to 42 feet for wall signs.

The applicant has revised the proposal to decrease the number, height and area of the signs.

Summary

The application is for approval of wall signs to identify the buildings to the general public, students and staff. The wall signs are a component of a larger, campus-wide sign system of building identification signs and directional signs that will help every user of the campus to find their way around the campus and to individual buildings. The sign system works with the architecture to present a sense of place for the campus. This application focuses on the eastern portion of the campus where students are expected to start attending classes in July of this year.

The application is for two existing buildings, now addressed as 6775 and 6785 Bobcat Way, in the West Innovation District southwest of the intersection of SR 161/Post Road and Eiterman Road. Previously, the ART approved architectural modifications to these two buildings and an addition to the anatomy lab on the 15 acre site. In addition to the architectural improvements, this approval included site modifications for the removal of a portion of the existing parking lot and the addition of landscape enhancements to create a campus green between the existing buildings.

The application requires two actions by the ART. First is an administrative approval of wall sign heights, the second is a recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Commission for Site Plan approval of larger areas for wall signs than permitted by the Zoning Code.

Zoning Code Analysis

The Ohio University campus falls within the ID-1 Research Office zoning district. The proposed signs subject to this review include a wall sign facing north on the 6785 Bobcat Way building and one wall sign on the 6775 Bobcat Way building. These signs will require review and approval by the ART of a Development Plan, and review and approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission of a Site Plan as described below.

All other signs proposed as part of the University's Master Sign Plan for the Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine (HCOM) portion of the Ohio University campus are considered internal to the site and not for the purposes of identification from public rights-of-way or adjacent properties and therefore are not regulated by the Zoning Code. The Code does not include specific sign regulations for College campuses and Planning is working on Code revisions to address this need.

§153.040(L) – Site Development Requirements - Signs

Wall Sign Height - §153.040(L)(1)

School uses are permitted walls signs at a height of 15 feet, however, §153.040(L)(4) permits the ART to administratively approve higher signs, "based upon the specific architecture of buildings." Two identical signs are requested for approval. Both are 60-square-foot wall signs to be installed at a height of 28 feet. The sign copy will read *Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine* using two lines and white, internally illuminated channel letters. A green and white Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine Logo will be installed in front of the copy.

6775 Bobcat Way: One wall sign is proposed for the east elevation of the building.

6785 Bobcat Way: One wall sign for the north elevation of the building.

Wall Sign Area - §153.040(L)(1)

Code allows a maximum of 30 square feet for wall signs. Both signs are identical with a proposed size of 60 square feet. The sign copy will include the Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine Logo and read *Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine* using two lines and white, internally illuminated channel letters.

6775 Bobcat Way: One wall sign proposed for the east elevation of the building.

6785 Bobcat Way: One wall sign for the north elevation of the building.

PART II: ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW TEAM COMMENTS

Planning

Administrative Approval for Wall Sign Height

Planning recognizes the unique needs for identification as applicable to a college campus. Effective methods of wayfinding include a variety of sign types and the proposed wall signs are appropriately designed given the architecture and location of the existing buildings. Based upon the specific architecture of buildings, wall signs may be administratively approved by the ART at a greater building height, not to exceed the primary roof line. This proposal includes sign heights above the Code permitted 15 feet.

6775 Bobcat Way: The higher bay above the principal entrance to the building limits the locations to the two higher bands at this end of the building. Therefore, there is no location at the main entrance where a 15 foot sign could be placed. Given the configuration of the building and the intent of identification across the campus for drivers as well as pedestrians, the proposed 28 foot sign height is appropriate and may be approved as permitted in Code Section 153.040(L)(4).

6785 Bobcat Way: The applicant is proposing a wall sign facing Post Road. This building has 3 identical bands framing rows of windows. While the design of the building would permit the signs in lower locations, they would largely be visible only from the parking lot. As this is likely to be the only means of identification for this building for traffic traveling to the campus on Post Road, the 28 foot sign height seems appropriate.

Site Plan Approval for Wall Sign Area

The ART is required to submit a recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Commission with respect to the applicant's requests.

6775 Bobcat Way: This building is well set back from both the parking area related to the building, as well as from Eiterman Road. A larger sign area is appropriate to ensure some degree of visibility and identification. To some extent, the specific sign copy of the higher sign tends to dictate a larger sign area at 60 square feet to have sufficient letter size to make the sign legible from any significant distance.

6785 Bobcat Way: This sign will be the only one visible from the principal navigation route to the campus from Post Road. As with 6775 Bobcat Way, the copy of the sign tends to dictate a greater sign area than the 30 square feet permitted by the Code.

Engineering

No comments regarding the proposed walls signs. The applicant should be aware of concerns regarding sight triangles and easements should ground signs be proposed in the future or as part of the western portion of the campus.

Building Standards, Parks and Open Space, Police, Fire, Economic Development

No comments.

PART III: APPLICABLE REVIEW STANDARDS

The Administrative Review Team shall review this application based on the Innovation District requirements and the West Innovation District Plan, including Administrative Departures as may be applicable. The full text of the Review Standards of Section 153.042(D)(8) are provided at the end of this Report.

Administrative Approval

§153.040(L)(4) permits the ART to administratively approve higher signs, “based upon the specific architecture of buildings.” Based on the discussion of Part II, approval of the higher signs for 6775 and 6785 Bobcat Way is appropriate.

Site Plan Standards of Approval

A Site Plan application shall only be approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission, following a recommendation from the ART, if the following relevant criteria are met.

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| (a) Site Design Characteristics | <i>Criteria Met with Site Plan Approval</i> |
| (b) Purpose and Spirit of this Chapter and Adopted Plans | <i>Criteria Met</i> |

PART IV: PROPOSED ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW TEAM ACTIONS

Administrative Approval – Wall Sign Height

Approval of sign heights of 28 foot wall sign heights for 6775 Bobcat Way and 6785 Bobcat Way.

Recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Commission

Recommendation of Site Plan approval to the Planning and Zoning Commission for wall sign area and number:

- 1) 153.040(L)(1) – Sign Size – Waiving requirements to the size of wall sign of 30 square feet. The applicant is proposing two wall signs, each of which exceeds the sign size. Specifically: Approval is recommended for 6775 Bobcat Way and 6785 Bobcat Way for wall signs 60 square feet. Given the unique use of this site as a college campus and the height and location of these buildings coupled with the need to identify each building as a part of the campus to the users and the community as a whole.

SITE PLAN STANDARDS OF APPROVAL

In addition to meeting all other requirements of the District, a Site Plan application shall only be approved by the ART or Planning and Zoning Commission, as applicable, if the requirements of the District and the following criteria are met:

- A. Site Design Characteristics.
 1. All elements of the site design shall be harmoniously and efficiently organized in relation to topography, the size and type of lot, the character of adjoining property, and the type and size of buildings.
 2. The site shall be developed so as not to impede the normal and orderly development or improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted by the District.
 3. All buildings or groups of buildings shall be arranged so as to permit emergency vehicle access by some practicable means to all vehicles.
 4. Every structure or dwelling unit shall be provided with adequate means of ingress and egress via public streets and walkways.
- B. Environmental Standards.
 1. The landscape shall be preserved in its natural state, insofar as practicable, by minimizing tree and soil removal, alteration to the natural drainage courses, and the amount of cutting, filling and grading. Natural features and the site topography shall be incorporated into the proposed site design to the maximum extent practicable.
 2. Landscaping buffers and/or greenbelts may be required beyond those otherwise required in the District to ensure that proposed uses will be adequately buffered from one another and from surrounding public and private property.
- C. Vehicular and pedestrian circulation.
 1. The expected volume of traffic to be generated by the proposed use shall not adversely affect existing roads and the circulation thereon.
 2. Driveways shall be located to minimize conflict with traffic operations on the adjoining road. The number of driveways shall be the minimum needed to provide reasonable access to the site.
 3. The arrangement of public or common ways for vehicular and pedestrian circulation shall respect the pattern of existing or planned streets and pedestrian or bicycle pathways in the area.
 4. Safe, convenient, uncongested and well-defined vehicular and pedestrian circulation within and to the site shall be provided. Drives, streets and other elements shall be designed to promote safe and efficient traffic operations within the site and at its access points.
- D. Public Services. The scale and design of the proposed development shall facilitate the adequate provision of services currently furnished by or that may be required of the city or other public agency including, but not limited to, fire and police protection, storm water management, sanitary sewage removal and treatment, recreational activities, traffic control, and administrative services.
- E. The general purposes and spirit of this chapter and the various provisions and components of the Community Plan, including the EAZ Plan.