



ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW TEAM

MEETING MINUTES

JUNE 30, 2016

ART Members and Designees: Vince Papsidero, Planning Director; Matt Earman, Director of Parks and Recreation; Colleen Gilger, Director of Economic Development; Jeff Tyler, Building Standards Director; Aaron Stanford, Senior Civil Engineer; and Tim Hosterman, Police Sergeant.

Other Staff: Logan Stang, Planner I; Nichole Martin, Planner I; Lori Burchett, Planner II; Claudia Husak, Senior Planner; Nick Badman, Planning Assistant; and Flora Rogers, Administrative Support III.

Applicants: Mandy Bishop, GDP Group (Case 1); Kevin McCauley and Matt Stavroff, Stavroff Land and Development, Inc; David Blair, Ford & Associates; and Robert Gamperl, Goodwill (Cases 2 & 3); and Scott Engbretson, Vineyard Columbus (Case 4).

Vince Papsidero called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm. He asked if there were any amendments to the June 23, 2016, meeting minutes. The minutes were accepted into the record as presented.

INTRODUCTION

**1. BSD R – Columbus Industrial
16-048MPR**

**4353 Tuller Road
Minor Project Review**

Mandy Bishop, GDP Group, said this is a request for the installation of a new site entrance at John Shields Parkway and modifications to the parking area located within the southern portion of the site for the existing development at the intersection of Tuller Ridge Drive and John Shields Parkway. She said this is a request for a review and approval of a Minor Project Review under the provisions of Zoning Code §154.066.

Ms. Bishop said they will relocate one drive from John Shields Parkway with a new drive with new asphalt and curb cut sufficient for truck turning radius and new parking. She said this is a complete repaving exercise and curbs are being replaced in kind.

Jeff Tyler asked if there are landscape requirements with the changes. Ms. Bishop answered no landscaping is being removed and they are not opposed to adding any because this is a City sponsored project.

Aaron Stanford said they have discussed this proposal and are not opposed.

Mr. Tyler asked if this project could be introduced and approved today.

Ms. Bishop said the proposal has been through an engineering review and it is ready for consideration.

Vince Papsidero asked if there were any further questions or concerns regarding this application. [There were none.] He confirmed the ART's recommendation of approval.

DETERMINATIONS

**2. BSD SCN – Goodwill, Toys R Us, Big Lots
16-041MSP-MPR**

**6525, 6547, 6569 Sawmill Road
Master Sign Plan/Minor Project Review**

Nichole Martin said this is a request for the installation of a sign package for an existing multi-tenant building in the Bridge Street District located on Sawmill Road north of the intersection with Village Parkway. She said today's request is for a review and recommendation of approval to the Planning and Zoning Commission for a Master Sign Plan (MSP) under the provisions of Zoning Code §153.065. She said the

Minor Project Review was approved at the June 16th meeting under the provisions of Zoning Code §154.066. She stated the applicant has indicated they have new materials for informal ART feedback after the ART makes a recommendation on the case and materials as submitted today.

Ms. Martin provided history on the application and site reporting the site was granted a variance for sign height on March 24, 1988, to permit signs to exceed 15 feet in height, at 18 feet above grade, with a condition that the sign background be the same material as the building façade. Additionally in 2008, she reported the Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed and approved a Corridor Development District application for 6525 Sawmill Road to permit a sign at 21 feet, 1 inch to the top of sign in order to allow the sign to be architecturally integrated within the sign band.

Ms. Martin stated as part of the MSP, the applicant has provided examples of the existing signs. She noted the proposed MSP generally follows the standards of the sign provisions within §153.150 with respect to size but provides additional allowances for ground signs and building mounted sign types, which generally follow the BSD Sign Code within §153.065(H). Additionally, she said the plan permits allowances for corporate colors and branding and places limits on sign design and materials, which do not reflect any of the City's existing standards. She provided details on the proposed allowances for Tenant Signs and Multi-tenant Ground Signs as well as additional detail on proposed colors, lighting, and sign design. She stated the proposal includes allowances for Corporate Brand Identities, which are not limited in color and are defined in the MSP as the way a business represents their brand to the public including company name, logo, colors, and font. She said these elements could represent the entire sign or part of the sign face.

Jeff Tyler asked about implications of a Corporate Brand Identity. Ms. Martin confirmed unlimited corporate colors and fonts could represent the entire sign or a portion of the sign.

Ms. Martin said the intent and purpose outlined in the Code for a MSP is: to allow a greater degree of flexibility and creativity in sign design and display; to ensure sign work is in a coordinated fashion to meet the general intent of signs in the District; and is not intended to permit larger signs, more visible signs, or additional signs than permitted, without any consideration for unique sign design and display. She stated the staff recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Commission is disapproval because the intent of the MSP provisions were not met.

Kevin McCauley, Stavroff Land and Development, Inc., said he understands the basis of denial is the creativity of the ground signs. He said he had not heard at previous meetings any objections to the rest of the sign package.

Ms. Martin provided additional clarification on the staff analysis stating the challenge is meeting the MSP intent of context-sensitive, creative signs while not simply permitting more signs or larger signs.

Vince Papsidero stated the broad definition of the Corporate Brand Identity is not consistent with existing regulations anywhere in the City.

Claudia Husak said the Code states internally illuminated channel or cabinet signs are permitted, provided that the sign is creatively designed with high quality materials and fabrication. She stated limiting the illumination and fabrication of signs without additional consideration for creative integration with the architecture does not meet the intent of the MSP provision. She stated that MSP's are to maintain the purpose and intent of the sign and graphic standards for the applicable Bridge Street District.

Mr. Tyler emphasized MSP's are required to be reviewed as an entire package.

Mr. McCauley said the applicant's intent is to continue the signs currently permitted, which includes channel letter wall signs, and adding ground signs. He added that their understanding from previous meetings was that ground sign design is the basis for a recommendation of disapproval. He stated he hopes they can go forward with the new ground signs as a condition for a recommendation of approval.

Mr. Papsidero stated that based on the timing of that day's submittal, he does not believe that the ART can make a recommendation with conditions on new materials without having the benefit of staff review and analysis.

Ms. Martin confirmed that materials are forwarded to Planning and Zoning Commission tomorrow and there is no time to review new materials or include new materials in the recommendation.

Mr. McCauley said he would like to get feedback on the new materials.

Ms. Martin said from a process standpoint, the ART needs to make a recommendation on the materials as presented or the applicant needs to request to table the case to allow time to submit revised materials.

Mr. McCauley asked to discuss the other items or other issues before they table the case.

Mr. Papsidero said the package is not consistent with existing signs in the City and as a whole it cannot be supported because it does not meet the Code's intent relative to creativity.

Mr. McCauley said he thought it was clear that it was the ground signs the ART had concerns with and that the wall signs provide for more square footage. He said he was a novice trying to write a MSP and wanted to know if there is an issue with two wall signs or the number of colors.

Mr. Papsidero said the broad definition of Corporate Brand Identity is a concern.

Ms. Martin stated from a staff perspective, it seems consistent with Code to allow two signs for a corner tenant and the reduction in number of proposed ground signs, from 4 to 3. She said the allowances for Corporate Brand Identity and limitations on sign design and materials do not seem consistent with the intent of the Code and BSD.

Mr. McCauley stated they tried to write the definition of a Corporate Brand Identity to be consistent with how corporations define it. He requested clarification on how it could be identified.

Mr. Tyler asked if their proposal meets the Code if the case would only need to be reviewed by the ART and would not be required to be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission. Ms. Martin responded in the affirmative. Mr. Tyler said since the applicant is requesting a sign package beyond Code they must pursue a MSP, which has Code requirements. Ms. Martin responded in the affirmative. Mr. Tyler stated it is incumbent upon the applicant to make the case that the intent of the Code requirements are met.

Matt Stavroff, Stavroff Land and Development, Inc., stated the ART is saying that this package is not creative and asked whether their submittal was meeting the checklist of requirements listed in the BSD.

Mr. Stavroff said there are existing signs that have to remain and that there are trees that are dead, which not only block the signs but look bad for the property owners and the City. He asked how the site should then be improved.

Mr. Stavroff said what they have proposed are channel letter wall signs at a size that is appropriate given the setback from Sawmill Road. He said he is unsure how they can make that more creative while still meeting the branding requirements of each tenant.

Mr. Papsidero stated the combination of sign types, limitation on sign design and lighting, and allowances for color have moved further from accepted standards.

Ms. Husak read the MSP Code section whereas MSP's are not intended to simply permit larger or more visible signs or additional signs without any consideration for unique sign design and display.

Mr. McCauley noted this is a Code that was written without the property owners input or existing context.

Mr. Stavroff said the ground sign was the main topic of discussion at the last meeting and that the comments were that it needed to be more creative. He said as property owners they deserve the respect of the ART to outline all of the concerns including the issues presented today.

Mr. Tyler said they had talked about the corporate branding issue in great detail at the last meeting, especially as it pertained to Party City and said it would not be an acceptable proposal given its broad definition.

Mr. McCauley said they are located on Sawmill Road and not in the BSD. He said they need a larger sign – 80-square-foot signs and more than three colors to reflect Corporate Brand Identity. He said they have Big Lots and Billiards Plus as tenants, which are doing terrible as they need a fighting chance to compete with the retailers across Sawmill Road in Columbus.

Mr. Stavroff indicated they can just submit this one parcel for a permit instead of a MSP for the entire center. He said he loves corporate logos because they communicate to customers and were designed for that reason.

Robert Gamperl, Goodwill, stated the Goodwill logo consistently ranks as of the most recognizable and innovative logos in the nation.

Mr. Stavroff asked the ART members if they liked or disliked the proposals.

Mr. Papsidero said it is not about a personal opinion. He said the ART is charged with enforcing the Code and with implementing the directives and policies of Council.

Mr. McCauley inquired if there is support for the larger wall signs.

Mr. Papsidero stated to the extent that they are sensitive to the context of the site as well as the policies of the City, then there might be support. He stated it is not consistent with Dublin's history for the signs to be comparable to signs permitted in an adjacent jurisdiction.

Ms. Martin said the applicant has effectively communicated their priorities but further consideration should be paid to implementing signs in a Dublin way.

Mr. Stavroff indicated that even the ART struggles with defining the Dublin way.

Mr. McCauley requested additional feedback on all the outstanding issues, assuming they can appease the ART with new ground sign designs. He asked if it was not the colors, if it was the number of colors. He said they are trying to achieve the brand identity of each tenant. He asked how you get more creative with wall signs. He stated the BSD Code is for pedestrian scale and not Sawmill Road. He stated he is trying to determine if they can get approval of a wall sign that includes a Corporate Brand Identity.

Mr. Papsidero said the definition of a Corporate Brand Identity is too broad. He asked what the Code permits with regard to trademarked logos. Ms. Martin answered a trademarked logo can be an unlimited number of colors but counts as one of the three permitted colors.

Mr. Papsidero said the ART does not have the latitude to make a recommendation beyond that requirement.

Mr. Tyler added the ART is simply making a recommendation and are bound by the Code.

Mr. Papsidero said the ART has to be conservative in applying the Code. He stated as the final reviewing body, the Planning and Zoning Commission has more latitude to consider proposals and Council has the ultimate latitude as the policymaking body.

Mr. McCauley asked what the likelihood is that the Commission would approve an application the ART has recommended for disapproval.

Ms. Martin clarified that the PZC can have a different determination than the recommendation made by the ART.

Matt Earman said the goal of Staff is to help every applicant to get their projects approved as the best version.

Mr. McCauley asked Mr. Stavroff what their next step should be. Mr. Stavroff answered to table the case.

Mr. McCauley requested to table this case so they can revise the sign package. He asked if they can have an informal review of the ground signs [see Informal Review section below]. Mr. Papsidero responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Papsidero asked if there were any further questions or concerns regarding this application. [There were none.] He confirmed the applicant's request to table the case.

**3. BSD SCN – Party City
16-042MSP**

**6655 Sawmill Road
Master Sign Plan**

Nichole Martin said this is a request for the installation of a monument sign for an existing multi-tenant building located at the intersection of Sawmill Road and Village Parkway. She said this is a request for review and recommendation of approval to the Planning and Zoning Commission for a Master Sign Plan under the provisions of Zoning Code §153.066.

Kevin McCauley, Stavroff Land and Development, Inc., said given the similarity to the Big Lots, Toys R Us, Goodwill proposal they would like to table this case as well and will return with a revised sign package in the next few weeks.

Vince Papsidero asked if there were any questions or concerns regarding this application. [There were none.] He confirmed the applicant's request to table the case.

**4. BSD OR – Vineyard Church
16-047ADMC/CU**

**4140-4150 Tuller Road
Administrative Request – Code Amendment**

Claudia Husak said this is a request for an amendment to the Zoning Code to allow "Religious or Public Assembly" as a conditional/size limited use in the BSD-Office Residential District and a proposal for an existing 17,000-square-foot tenant space to be used as a "Religious or Public Assembly" use located on the north side of Tuller Road, approximately 200 feet west of Village Parkway. She said this is a request for a review and recommendation of approval to City Council for an Administrative Request - Code Amendment under the provisions of Zoning Code §153.232 and §153.234.

Ms. Husak said the Planning and Zoning Commission is simultaneously considering a Conditional Use request for a 17,000-square-foot tenant space to be used as a church. She said the ART is not required to make a recommendation on the Conditional Use application.

Vince Papsidero asked if the Conditional Use piece will move forward with this Code Amendment request.

Ms. Husak answered the ART recommendation would be forwarded to City Council for their review and the Conditional Use will be conditioned to be effective after the Code Amendment.

Ms. Husak said approval is recommended to City Council for an Administrative Request - Code Amendment.

Mr. Papsidero asked if there were any questions or concerns regarding this application. [There were none.] He confirmed the ART's recommendation of approval to City Council.

Informal Review

Note: The following conversation was intended to only address the conceptual designs for ground signs at the Big Lots, Toys R Us, Goodwill site, but veered back to the Master Sign Plan that was discussed and tabled earlier in the meeting.

Kevin McCauley, Stavroff Land and Development, Inc., said they have prepared a few options for ground signs for the Big Lots, Toys R Us, Goodwill site and wanted to get the ART's feedback.

Matt Stavroff, Stavroff Land and Development, Inc., asked for clarification on why the larger wall signs are an issue. He said there are a number of properties within the BSD that have larger signs or sign packages that do not meet the Code.

Vince Papsidero said there have been examples of existing shopping centers that have reestablished sign packages with larger signs than permitted in the BSD and Dublin Plaza is one example. However, he said they had a limited color palette and consistent sign panels, which differs from this application.

Nichole Martin added that Dublin Plaza had a pre-existing sign package prior to adoption of the BSD, which they were seeking to reestablish concurrent with a new tenant. She added they did not include more signs or more visible signs than would have been permitted previously, just continuing the pre-approved standards.

Mr. Stavroff asked how this body recommended approval of that application.

Jeff Tyler said it was a comprehensive Master Sign Plan (MSP) that met the intent of the District, but was context sensitive to the structures and the setback from West Bridge Street.

Ms. Martin noted the Dublin Plaza applicant had requested heights greater than 15 feet, which the ART recommended as a condition to not permit. She said the Planning and Zoning Commission did not allow for the increased height.

Mr. Stavroff said he cannot follow the logic of what the ART and staff had just presented.

Mr. Tyler emphasized the Dublin Plaza MSP was consistent and did not simply permit larger or more visible signs.

Mr. Stavroff said the PZC is going to be tough on them and tell them how they feel on each sign and so they are entitled to some respect for where the ART is not going to support their proposal. He asked if the ART was going to support the 80-square-foot wall signs.

Mr. Papsidero stated the biggest issue is the Corporate Brand Identity and the number of colors.

Mr. McCauley asked if there is any way the ART would support what they are proposing today.

Mr. Papsidero said the ART would have to look at the proposal as a comprehensive package.

Mr. McCauley asked for an informal poll on who from the ART would support the larger signs. Mr. Stavroff asked Tim Hosterman what he thought of the proposal.

Officer Hosterman said he would need to see the entire sign package. He said that staff and members of the ART have more knowledge on this subject than he does, but he is familiar with this property and the setback from Sawmill Road. He said he can understand the need for larger signs but would still need to see the comprehensive package.

Mr. Stavroff said they will follow through with what they have said and that the ART is going to win and they are going to honor what they and Goodwill have agreed upon. He asked for Greg Jones, Code Enforcement Supervisor, to come out and enforce this site as is required by the Code. He said they will get this approved and will do what the City would like in order to obtain a recommendation of approval from the ART.

Mr. Stavroff asked for specific details from the ART as to what they want from this proposal.

Mr. Tyler said they are supporting staff's review of the Code requirements.

Mr. Stavroff asked if there is something that the ART wants to see for the next meeting.

Ms. Martin said there are requirements in the Code for a MSP submittal that she would be happy to provide. She said that an application is only accepted once a complete application has been submitted and that the term "complete" is codified.

Mr. Papsidero summarized his issues that: the Corporate Identity is too broadly defined; the ART can support the 80-square-foot wall sign if it allows for more creativity; and the ground signs can be addressed based on their proposals today.

Mr. McCauley asked if the ground signs were removed for a moment if they could discuss only the wall signs as proposed at 80 square feet at the existing height with only three colors. He asked if that was creative enough. He asked if the ART would recommend approval.

Mr. Papsidero said if the proposed text permitted more than just channel letter signs and removed the corporate identity provision then the sign package would be more appropriate.

Mr. Tyler said his biggest concern is the language regarding the corporate identity.

Claudia Husak asked Mr. McCauley to reaffirm whether they will be postponing their cases from the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting on July 7th. Mr. McCauley responded in the affirmative.

Mr. McCauley presented four proposals for the ground signs, each with slight variations on colors and design.

David Blair, Ford & Associates, explained options A & B consist of white lettering placed on a gray metal sign cabinet. He said the letters would be internally illuminated but have the option of being halo-lit, which may be more interesting during the daytime. He said option C contains the branding colors of each tenant but on the proposed background looks more "cartoonish" and is not as appealing as some of the other options. He said option D also contains the white lettering but on a metal grate, which may be difficult to read and could have long term maintenance issues.

Mr. Tyler asked whether the brick on the existing building should be incorporated into the ground sign. Mr. Blair responded that the existing brick color would take away from the overall design of the ground sign. Members of the ART agreed. Mr. Blair said he prefers option B, which has the white lettering on a solid gray metal cabinet.

Mr. Tyler asked if they have thought of how this sign design could influence future building modifications. He said to start looking at incorporating colors or materials from this sign into modifications to the main structure. Mr. Papsidero offered the concept of awnings on the shopping center that matched one of the colors of the ground sign.

Mr. McCauley said they had a number of variations that incorporated materials and colors from the existing building but that these four were the best overall.

Mr. Tyler said that they could match colors from the sign with the proposed modifications to the Goodwill building and that he agrees adding colored lettering to the ground signs makes them look "cartoonish". He said the white lettering and gray background are much more appealing.

Mr. McCauley said they are looking to finalize a design soon and will work to have everything meet the regulations outlined in their proposal.

Mr. Blair asked if the ART would like to see materials and color samples at the next meeting. Ms. Martin responded affirmatively.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Vince Papsidero asked if there were any additional administrative issues or other items for discussion. [There were none.] He adjourned the meeting at 3:15 pm.

As approved by the Administrative Review Team on July 7, 2016.