

Master Sign Plan

16-042MSP – BSD Sawmill Center Neighborhood

Party City – Dublin Village Center

6655 – 6665 Sawmill Road

This is a proposal for a Master Sign Plan for an existing multitenant building in the Bridge Street District located on Sawmill Road north of the intersection with Village Parkway. The applicant is requesting review and a recommendation of approval to the Planning and Zoning Commission for a Master Sign Plan under the provisions of Zoning Code Section 153.065.

Date of Application Acceptance

Tuesday, May 31, 2016

Date of ART Recommendation

Thursday, June 30, 2016

Case Manager

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PART I: APPLICATION OVERVIEW

<i>Zoning District</i>	BSD Sawmill Center Neighborhood
<i>Development Proposal</i>	A comprehensive Master Sign Plan for an existing multitenant building including standards and example ground signs
<i>Building Type</i>	Existing Structure
<i>Property Address</i>	6655-6665 Sawmill Road
<i>Property Owner</i>	Whittingham Capital LLC
<i>Representative</i>	Kevin McCauley, Stavroff Land and Development LLC
<i>Case Manager</i>	Nichole Martin, Planner I (614) 410-4635 nmartin@dublin.oh.us

Application Review Procedure: Master Sign Plan

The purpose of a Master Sign Plan (MSP) is to provide an opportunity for greater flexibility and creativity in sign design. The MSP provision of the Bridge Street District (BSD) Code accounts for the unique nature of commercial developments and provides a comprehensive and flexible approach for review and approval of appropriate sign plans that are consistent with the BSD Sign Guidelines and that may vary from the BSD Sign Code.

Application Summary

The existing one-story, multiple-tenant building is located northwest of the intersection of Sawmill Road and Village Parkway. The site's primary access point is located west of the structure off of Village Parkway. Additionally, there is a shared access point with the parcel to the north providing full access to Sawmill Road. The multiple-tenant building, which was developed in the 1980s, has a linear, suburban-style layout with parking located in front, and is set back approximately 175 foot from Sawmill Road.

The proposed sign plan allows signs in sizes and colors the applicant has indicated will allow the auto-oriented development to remain competitive in the Sawmill corridor. The submittal includes a MSP text that outlines the permitted sign types, standards, lighting and locations as well as drawings showing typical permitted multiple tenant ground signs. Generally, the MSP text follows the standards of the general 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, 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.

Tenant Signs

Each tenant is permitted a wall sign, which must be comprised of individually mounted letters affixed directly to the building above the tenant's space at a height no taller than 15 feet to the

top of the sign. A second wall sign is permitted for tenants with a second façade facing a street or parking lot. In this case, tenants will be permitted two wall signs at a size of 1 square foot per linear foot up to 80 square feet. The applicant is proposing to provide tenants with an option to allow the second wall sign to be substituted for an awning sign or a projecting sign, which would follow the Bridge Street District sign provisions within §153.065(H).

Multiple-tenant Ground Signs

The site is permitted two multiple-tenant ground signs; one located on Sawmill Road and one on Village Parkway west of the access drive.

In detail, ground signs are proposed to be up to 8 feet wide and 8 feet tall, with 24 square feet of graphic area. The sign base is to be constructed of brick, stone, metal/ aluminum, a material compatible with the principal structure, or a material approved by the required reviewing body. The sign panel backgrounds must all be the same color. The tenant's name and colors must be consistent with the tenant's primary wall sign. The tenants are permitted to include logos, which are not limited in the number of colors, as long as it is not greater than 20 percent of the sign area. Examples of permitted ground signs are included with the application. If approved, the depictions are one type of ground sign that would be permitted based on the permitted base materials.

Color

Signs are generally limited to three colors including white and black with the exception of Corporate Brand Identities and Trademarks which are not limited in color. A Corporate Brand Identity is defined as the way a business represents their brand to the public including company name, logo, colors, and font. These elements could represent the entire sign or part of the sign face.

Lighting

Wall signs are to be internally-illuminated or halo-illuminated. The plan provides additional standards for wall sign lighting to ensure that adjacent signs are affixed and lit in a consistent manner with like features. No direct or distracting lighting is permitted.

Ground signs are proposed to be internally or externally illuminated. If approved, the ground sign illumination requirements should be included as part of the Signage Illumination section.

Additional Details

The plan allows additional sign types, which are temporary in nature, do not require a sign permit, or are intended to provide information regarding hours of operation and accepted methods of payment. Respectively, these include Window Display Signs §153.057(K), Directional Signs §153.057(L), and Informational Window Signs §153.057(M).

The plan prohibits changeable copy signs, and stipulates that in the event of conflicting standards, the more restrictive of the two standards shall apply.

PART II: ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW TEAM COMMENTS

Planning, Building Standards, Economic Development

§153.065(H)(e) – Master Sign Plan

A MSP for properties located in the Sawmill Center Neighborhood District must meet the intent and purpose outlined in BSD Sign Code §153.065(H)(e) and BSD Neighborhood Standards §153.063(C)(5)(b). The Sawmill Center Neighborhood standards require that the sign and graphics standards contribute to the vibrancy of district and contribute to the creation of a high quality environment. The applicant is seeking a sign plan that allows greater flexibility than the BSD sign provisions permit; however, the code clearly states that MSPs are not intended to permit larger or more visible signs or additional signs that may not be permitted, without any consideration for unique sign design or display.

ART encouraged the applicant to apply a more creative approach in their proposed sign standards, taking into consideration the scale of the center. The applicant received feedback that a MSP is the appropriate tool to address the interim development condition, but that careful consideration should be paid to signs along Sawmill Road to ensure such signs are consistent with the intentions of the BSD sign standards and not just responsive to the standards of surrounding jurisdictions.

The proposed standards allow signs that are more colorful and more visible, and some signs that would be larger while still permitting combinations of multiple sign types. ART determined the proposed MSP text does not meet the intent of the MSP provisions and instead incorporates the upper limits of each set of sign provisions (previous code and BSD), as well as reduces sign creativity, which conflicts with the codified intent of a MSP; therefore the provisions of §153.065(H)(e) are not met.

Proposed Wall Signs		
Permitted BSD		Proposed Requirement
Size	½ sq. ft. per lineal foot max. 50 sq. ft.	1 sq. ft. per lineal foot max. 80 sq. ft.
Number	2 building mounted signs of different types (1 permitted to be wall sign)	1 per tenant space; 2 if second façade faces public street or private parking lot
Height	15 ft.	15 ft.
Colors	Max. 3 (including unlimited Registered Trademark/Logo)	Max. 3 <u>OR</u> Corporate Brand Identity: Unlimited Trademark: Unlimited
Illumination	Internal or external	Internal or Halo
Proposed Ground Signs		
Permitted BSD		Proposed Requirement
Size	24 sq. ft.	24 sq. ft. graphic area; not to exceed 8 ft. wide
Number	1 per building or parcel, per street frontage not to exceed 2	2
Height	Max. 8 ft. tall	Max. 8 ft. tall
Location	8 ft. from ROW, if multiple signs must	8 ft. from ROW, if multiple signs must be

Proposed Wall Signs		
Permitted BSD		Proposed Requirement
	be located on different frontages	located on different frontages
Colors	Max. 3 (including unlimited Registered Trademark/Logo)	Max. 3 <u>OR</u> Corporate Brand Identity: Unlimited Trademark: Unlimited
Construction	Masonry base or base clad in material compatible with the structure	Brick, stone, metal/ aluminum, a material compatible with the principal structure, or one approved by the required reviewing body
Illumination	Internal or external	Internal or external

Parks & Open Space, Fire, Engineering, Police

No comments.

PART III: APPLICABLE REVIEW STANDARDS

Applicable Master Sign Plan Criteria

The Administrative Review Team has reviewed this application based on the intent and purpose outlined in the Code for a master sign plan, as follows:

- a) Allow a greater degree of flexibility and creativity in sign design and display.
- b) Ensure sign work is in a coordinated fashion to meet the general intent of signs in the District.
- c) Not intended to permit larger signs, more visible signs, or additional signs than permitted, without any consideration for unique sign design and display.

The Bridge Street District Sign Guidelines provide a variety of examples of one-of-a-kind, context-sensitive, memorable, and forward thinking signs that are appropriate for the Bridge Street District. The guidelines also emphasize the following for Master Sign Plans:

- a) Signs and graphics should contribute to the vibrancy of the area
- b) Placement of signs and graphics should assist with navigation, provide information, and identify businesses
- c) Sign locations and designs should be properly coordinated with architectural character

PART IV: PROPOSED ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW TEAM RECOMMENDATION

Disapproval is recommended for a Master Sign Plan permitting standards that do not meet the intent of a Master Sign Plan to allow for creative and integrated sign design, and not additional signs or larger sign.