

Central Business District zoning to the south, east and west. He stated that the petitioner is specifically requesting approval of a variation from Section 4-5-12(C) of the Sign Code to allow a wall-mounted sign with a height of 40.5 feet in lieu of the maximum sign height of 25 feet permitted. He stated that the DuPage Medical Group was previously granted variations from the Glen Ellyn Sign Code in 2006, per Ordinance 5461, allowing two primary signs in lieu of the one permitted by the Sign Code and allowing the total primary signage area to be 75 square feet in lieu of 60 square feet permitted. As the project involves a substantial change to the previously approved sign plan, the petitioner is also requesting approval of amendments to the variations granted by Ordinance 5461 to allow the proposed change. The proposed sign area would be within the area of the previously granted variation. However, it would still exceed code with a total area of just over 63 square feet. He stated that the proposed wall-mounted sign would consist of internally illuminated painted black letters with white acrylic lenses. He stated that the Appearance Review Guidelines encourage the use of external lighting for wall signs in the downtown area and the Downtown Strategic Plan recommends that only externally illuminated signs be allowed in the downtown area.

Mark Pomnitz, of Eckenhoff Saunders Architects at 700 S. Clinton Street; Chicago, Illinois, was sworn in and began by stating that their hardship with the current monument sign is that the sign is prone to being blocked by vehicles and pedestrians entering and exiting the parking lot and has small lettering. He stated that the proposed wall-mounted sign on the east elevation would be 38.2 square feet in area and would help to ease confusion for patients arriving from the south and east. He stated that the maximum sign height permitted is 25 feet; however, if they put the sign 25 feet up, it would hang over the 2nd floor windows and would be partially blocked by a tree, which is why they are asking to put the sign at a height of 40 feet.

Commissioner Wilson asked why there would only be a sign on the east elevation to which Mr. Pomnitz responded that the proposed location is where the sign would be most visible. Mr. Pomnitz stated that when they performed the original construction of the building, they were told to avoid wall signage in order to alleviate any potential conflicts with neighboring residents. Commissioner Wilson stated that he is concerned that the tree in front of the sign will block it within a year or two as it grows to which Mr. Pomnitz stated that he understands this, but thinks it would take longer than a year or two for the tree to pose any threats to the sign visibility.

Acting Chairperson Wussow asked if there was a plan for the ground where the monument sign would be removed to which Mr. Pomnitz stated that they will remove the existing concrete platform to a depth of 12-18 inches in order to landscape the area and remove the current electrical lighting.

Mr. Pomnitz stated that many surrounding buildings have wall-mounted signs that are internally illuminated and their proposed sign would match what already exists in the neighborhood.

Commissioner Mulvihill asked if they could scale the sign down to which Mr. Pomnitz stated that the capital letters are 22 inches in height, and if they go much smaller, it would be harder to see the sign. Mr. Pomnitz stated that the new DuPage Medical Group facility in Lisle has the same wall-mounted sign on the Warrenville Road side of the building. Mr. Pomnitz stated that

one would be able to see the proposed Glen Ellyn facility sign from Main Street and Pennsylvania Avenue.

Dennis Fine, Chief Operations Officer for DuPage Medical Group at 1100 W. 31st Street; Downers Grove, Illinois, was sworn in. Commissioner Draths asked if the DuPage Medical Group is open in the evening to which Mr. Fine answered that they offer after-hour services for both pediatrics and internal medicine practice until 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. He stated that they are thinking of putting an Immediate Care facility in the west portion of the building, which would be open until 10:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Mr. Fine stated that they are adding more physicians and primary care groups to the practice and are relocating these new physicians into this building.

Commissioner Thompson stated that she was having a hard time seeing the hardship in the situation and wondered if the sign needed to be that size and so brightly lit. She noted that motorists passing by the Warrenville facility are traveling at higher speeds which justifies larger sign letters, but that traffic on Pennsylvania travels at much slower speed and that there are nearby stop signs. She was also concerned about establishing a precedent that had a hardship existed if a car blocked a freestanding sign. Mr. Pomnitz stated that any sign lighting has to be turned off by 10:00 p.m. via ordinance, and the parking lot lights are turned off at 11:00 p.m.

Commissioner Wilson asked about how the other internally illuminated signs in the area came to be. Village Planner Stegall responded that the Appearance Review Guidelines were updated in 2006 and the Downtown Plan was adopted in 2009 both of which discourage internally illuminated signs in the downtown. She also noted that there is no prohibition against internally illuminated signs in the Sign Code. Commissioner Wilson asked if there was another way to design this sign so it can be seen. Mr. Pomnitz stated that their options are limited as the monument sign does not work and an updated sign cannot exceed the permitted primary signage area.

Acting Chairperson Wussow stated that she thinks this is a reasonable request as the proposed sign is appropriate in size, placement and illumination; however, she is concerned that the petitioner will be back to ask for another sign on the other side of the building.

Commissioner Wilson made a motion to close the Public Hearing at 8:01 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dickie and carried unanimously by a vote of 6-0.

Commissioner Dickie stated that he agreed with Acting Chairperson Wussow and thinks that the sign is appropriate and not distracting. He stated that there is nothing to suggest the sign would not be keeping with what is in the vicinity. He also stated that if an immediate care facility is opened up on the site that it would be important to be able to readily identify the building.

Commissioner Mulvihill stated that she agrees that the purpose would be served with the sign at the requested height. She stated that the proposed sign would be tastefully placed. She stated that she would like the sign to be smaller.

Commissioner Draths stated that she agrees the sign is appropriate. She stated that the letters on the sign are large, but the building is also large. She stated that she hopes that the sign will fulfill the needs of the petitioner.

Commissioner Thompson stated that she is having a hard time seeing the hardship in the situation and if there was an Immediate Care currently, that would be a different issue.

Acting Chairperson Wussow reminded the ARC that the requested sign variation is for the sign height and that the proposed sign would be within the total signage area allowed by Ordinance 5461.

Commissioner Draths made a motion to recommend approval of the requested amendments to the sign variations previously granted for the DuPage Medical Group including a new variation to allow a wall sign with a height of 40.5 feet in lieu of 25 feet based on the following findings of fact.

1. The request complies with the purpose of the Glen Ellyn Sign Code because the wall sign at 40.5 feet will maximize the visibility of the sign for motorists and pedestrians approaching the facility and will be appropriately scaled to the size of the building.
2. If granted, the request will not alter the essential character of the locality because the building's neighbors to the east and south each have clearly visible wall-mounted signs that cannot be blocked by traffic and the proposed sign would be appropriately-scaled to the building.
3. The petitioner has demonstrated a practical difficulty in adhering to the strict regulations of the Sign Code because the current freestanding sign is frequently blocked to motorists and pedestrians approaching from the east by vehicles waiting to exit the facility parking lot onto Pennsylvania Avenue and the proposed wall sign height is needed to alleviate the visibility issue.
4. The plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances because the existing freestanding sign is susceptible to being blocked by vehicles entering and exiting the site, which creates traffic slowdowns on Pennsylvania Avenue and impacts traffic on Prospect Avenue.

The motion was made subject to the condition that the signage is installed in substantial conformance with the plans and testimony presented at the meeting.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dickie. The motion failed by a vote of 3-3, with Acting Chairperson Wussow, Commissioner Draths and Commissioner Dickie assenting and Commissioners Mulvihill, Thompson and Wilson dissenting. Village Planner Stegall stated a tie vote is a recommendation of denial and the proposal would go before the Village Board in April.

5. Public Comments

None

6. Chairman's Report

None

7. Trustee's Report

Trustee Hartweg sat in for Trustee Ladesic. Trustee Hartweg stated Al Stonitsch, Assistant Village Manager, has started his new position and is acting Village Manager this week as Village Manager Franz is on vacation. Trustee Hartweg stated the Village Board is continuing budget meetings and the reading of the budget will be in April

8. Staff Report

Village Planner Stegall stated that the Village property inspector is looking into the Gearheads property maintenance issues that were mentioned at the March 13, 2013 meeting. She stated the ARC would be tentatively reviewing three draft signage and wayfinding designs at the April 24, 2013 meeting.

9. Other Business

Commissioner Thompson asked about the new Bike Route signs on Fairview and Park Boulevard. Village Planner Stegall said that she would look into it.

Acting Chairperson Wussow asked about possible sign variations for 2 signs she has seen: the large Keller-Williams sign on a building south of the intersection of Park Boulevard and Roosevelt Road as well as the new Cadence Healthcare sign.

10. Adjourn

As there was no other business to discuss, Acting Chairperson Wussow asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Dickie moved, seconded by Commissioner Wilson to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 p.m. The motion carried unanimously by a vote of 6-0.

Submitted by: Debbie Solomon, Recording Secretary

Reviewed by: Michele Stegall, Village Planner