

**TOWN OF ELKTON
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
OCTOBER 17, 2019
MINUTES**

Present: Robert Olewine; Dawn Schwartz; Shirley Hicks; Chip Bromwell, Zoning Administrator; Lisa Blackson, Esq., Legal Counsel

Absent: Heather Mahaffey

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Olewine. He called for a motion to approve the minutes from the September 19, 2019 meeting.

ACTION: Motion was made by Ms. Schwartz to approve the minutes from the September 19, 2019 meeting as written. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hicks and unanimously approved.

CASE # 1550 – REQUEST OF KC SIGN COMPANY REPRESENTING PTV 1002, LLC (DOLLAR GENERAL) FOR THE FOLLOWING VARIANCES: 1) TO EXCEED THE ALLOWABLE SQUARE FOOTAGE FOR A WALL SIGN BY 57.5 SQUARE FEET; AND 2) TWENTY NINE (29) FOOT FRONT SETBACK VARIANCE FOR PLACEMENT OF A PYLON SIGN. THIS ACTION CONCERNS PROPERTY LOCATED AT 655 NORTH BRIDGE STREET, ELKTON, MARYLAND, TAX MAP 310, PARCEL 1698, ZONED C-2 (HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL)

Mr. Greg Feld of KC Sign Company was in attendance to address this request. He provided additional illustrations of the signage to the Board. He noted they are requesting variances for the wall sign and front setback for a pylon sign. He stated that in the past two days the building is underway and the steel framing is being placed.

He said when the building is completed it will be 70 feet wide by 130 feet long and will be situated parallel to N. Bridge Street. He noted that the pylon sign will be on the north side of the property. They are proposing placement of a 97.5 square foot wall sign which is approximately 7.5% of the total north elevation wall area. A 40 square foot wall sign would be approximately 3% of the wall area which he noted is not that different. He pointed out that the reason for requesting the additional square footage for the wall sign is that it will be beneficial to customers trying to locate the sign as they travel along Bridge Street.

He provided comparisons between the percent of wall sign coverage for other stores along Bridge Street. Other signage covers between 8-16% of the total area of the face of the buildings. He noted the entrance to the Dollar General is perpendicular to N. Bridge Street. The placement of the wall sign and the doors will not face the residential properties on the east side of Bridge Street.

He went on to address the pylon sign which will be turned so that the edge of the sign will face the residential properties. They are requesting to place the edge of the pylon sign one (1) foot from the property line at the north end of the property.

He stated that Bridge Street Liquors was granted a 2 ½ foot variance from their property line for placement of their pylon sign. The proposed sign for the Dollar General will be roughly the same size as the existing Bridge Street Liquors sign. He stated having the sign one foot from the property line will make it easier to see at a distance for potential customers driving on Bridge Street. He noted that if they were required to place the sign at 30' from the property line it would be up against the building and behind the Bridge Street Liquors sign.

Mr. Olewine asked if the Dollar General building takes up all of that lot. Mr. Bromwell mentioned that there will also be a mini storage building on the same site behind the Dollar General. Mr. Olewine said he is glad to see something going in at that location.

Mr. Olewine entertained questions or comments from the other Board members. There were no additional questions. He entertained questions or comments from the audience. There were no questions from the audience.

MOTION: Motion was made by Ms. Hicks to approve the variance request to exceed the allowable square footage for a wall sign by 57.5 square feet. The motion was seconded by Ms. Schwartz and unanimously approved.

MOTION: Motion was made by Ms. Hicks to approve the variance request for a twenty nine (29) foot front setback variance for placement of a pylon sign. The motion was seconded by Ms. Schwartz and unanimously approved.

CASE # 1551 – REQUEST OF KC SIGN COMPANY REPRESENTING SOUTHFIELD PARK CENTER (FAMILY DOLLAR) FOR A VARIANCE TO EXCEED THE SQUARE FOOTAGE FOR A WALL SIGN BY 50.6 SQUARE FEET. THIS ACTION CONCERNS PROPERTY LOCATED AT 305 AUGUSTINE HERMAN HIGHWAY, ELKTON, MARYLAND, TAX MAP 320, PARCEL 2459, ZONED C-2 (HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL)

Mr. Feld addressed the variance for the Family Dollar at Southfield Park Center. He provided additional illustrations of the signage being proposed for the Family Dollar. He noted they are proposing an additional 50.6 square feet over the allowed 40 square feet for a wall sign. He stated the front elevation of the Dollar General is 20' high by 180' long. The proposed sign will take up approximately 2.5% of the front elevation of the store. A forty (40) foot sign would be approximately 1% of the front elevation which he noted was a very small difference between the two sizes.

He stated the reason for the larger wall sign is to make more of a presence as an anchor store in the shopping center. He noted that the southern entrance to the shopping center has trees between the entrance drive and parking spaces in front of the Family Dollar. He pointed out that the front of the Dollar General is perpendicular to the highway just like the Dollar General. He referenced the illustrations he provided showing how the proposed sign would appear on the building. He stated it would give better visibility to customers trying to locate the store as they are coming into the shopping center.

Mr. Feld mentioned the wall sign for Redner's is larger than the proposed sign for the Family Dollar. What they are requesting is not out of proportion with any of the signage currently existing at the shopping center.

From the northern most entrance drive the signage would be able to be readily seen by potential customers.

There was discussion regarding which store used to be at this location. Mr. Bromwell stated there had been a Dollar Tree at that location which has since moved into the Big Elk Mall.

Ms. Hicks inquired as to what the difference between the two businesses might be. Mr. Feld said he believed they were competitor but sell many similar products. She asked if all of the items at these stores are \$1 each or higher. Mr. Feld said he believed the pricing for different products in both of the stores can be over \$1. Ms. Hicks asked if the sign for the Family Dollar had already been placed. Mr. Feld explained that the current sign has a permit but is only 40 square feet in size. That sign will be removed and the new wall sign placed if the Board approves it this evening.

Mr. Olewine entertained additional questions or comments from the Board. There were no additional questions. HE addressed questions or comments from the audience. There were no questions.

MOTION: Motion was made by Ms. Hicks to approve the variance to exceed the square footage for a wall sign for the Family Dollar by 50.6 square feet. The motion was seconded by Ms. Schwartz and unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS: There were no items of old business for discussion.

NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Bromwell informed the Board there are three cases for the November meeting, one special exception for a hotel in the C-3 zoned and two variances for signage.

There was discussion regarding previous variances which were approved for the property at Belle Hill and Muddy Lane which would be different than the submittals being requested at the November meeting for this same property. Mr. Bromwell mentioned a floor area ratio variance

had been approved which stays with the property and a height variance for a sign was also approved which would stay with the property as well.

Ms. Schwartz asked about the CASA sign on Main Street. Mr. Bromwell stated a letter had been sent addressing the sign but that he had not heard from them but would be following up with the owner of the property.

Ms. Hicks inquired about the sign by Bridge Street Liquors which advertises a dollar store. Mr. Bromwell stated the sign would need to be removed since that store is no longer open and that he would address it to the owner of the liquor store.

The next meeting will be on November 21, 2019.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brie Humphreys