

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES *APPROVED*
5151 MARSH ROAD, OKEMOS, MI 48864-1198
(517) 853-4000
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 28, 2021
TOWN HALL ROOM**

PRESENT: Chair Mansour, Members Field-Foster, Kulhanek, Newman, Opsommer

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Community Planning and Development Director Kieselbach; Assistant Planner Chapman

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Mansour called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MEMBER FIELD-FOSTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS SUBMITTED.

SECONDED BY MEMBER OPSOMMER

ROLE CALL TO VOTE:

YEAS: Members Field-Foster, Opsommer, Newman, Kulhanek, Chair Mansour

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 5-0

3. CORRECTIONS, APPROVAL & RATIFICATION OF MINUTES

A. April 14, 2021 Meeting Minutes

MEMBER OPSOMMER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14, 2021 AS SUBMITTED.

SECONDED BY CHAIR MANSOUR.

ROLE CALL TO VOTE:

YEAS: Member Opsommer, Chair Mansour, Members Field-Foster, Newman, Kulhanek

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 5-0

4. COMMUNICATIONS – NONE

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS - NONE

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. ZBA CASE NO. 21-04-28-1 (Allied Signs, Inc.), 33650 Giftos, Clinton Township, MI, 48035

DESCRIPTION: 2090 Grand River Avenue
TAX PARCEL: 21-226-003
ZONING DISTRICT: C-2 (Commercial)

The applicant is requesting a variance from the following section of the Code of Ordinances:

- Section 86-687(3)(c), Wall signs. In the case of multitenant structures, one wall sign shall be permitted for each tenant having an individual means of public access up to a size equivalent to one square foot for each one lineal foot of building frontage occupied.

Allied Signs, Inc., is requesting a variance to install a second wall sign.

Assistant Planner Chapman outlined the case for discussion.

Chair Mansour asked the applicant or the applicant's representative if they would like to address the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA).

James Nutly, Athletico Physical Therapy, 4815 W 138 Court, Crestwood, IL, director and project manager, stated they are asking for a sign on the east side of the building they are leasing on Grand River Avenue. The current signage on the pedestal sign and on the building is blocked by trees. It is difficult to see the building when a client is traveling west on Grand River Avenue. The driveway is on the east end of the property and the request would assist from a safety standpoint.

Member Field-Foster voiced concern there was no access from the west side of the building. She stated there was not safety, practical difficulties or a unique circumstance for the request.

Chair Mansour stated she did not see that there was a visual blockage of the site. There have been three other similar wall sign requests and the issue is being considered by the Planning Commission. She stated she could not find a practical difficulty.

Member Newman stated he did understand the request from a business stand-point but the request could not meet the review criteria.

Member Opsommer stated there was a request for a second wall sign on the west side of the building in 2014 and asked if this request was different.

Assistant Planner Chapman replied there was a similar request from Payless Shoes.

Member Opsommer asked if there was a pedestal sign for the three tenants or could there be a monument sign.

Assistant Planner Chapman replied there is an existing pedestal sign at the corner of Grand River Avenue and Okemos Road for the tenants.

Member Opsommer asked if the pedestal sign could be moved.

Director Kieselbach replied he pedestal sign could be moved. The leading edge of the sign must be setback ten feet from the street right-of-way line. The pedestal sign could be a maximum of 25 square feet in size and a maximum height of 16 feet.

Member Opsommer stated there are other business with the same site conditions. The Township is working on traffic calming methods to slow the traffic.

Chair Mansour stated replacing the pedestal sign might be a minimal action but is not the request before the ZBA.

Jim Fields, Allied Signs, 33650 Giftos, Clinton Township, representing the tenant, stated the signs are block by the trees and the speed of the roadway cause the visibility issues.

Chair Mansour asked if the applicant had explored moving the pedestal sign with the property owner.

Mr. Nutly stated he did not believe the landlord would be interested in spending more money since he has the building relatively full.

Chair Mansour asked if the applicant could have a window sign.

Director Kieselbach replied the tenant can have a window sign. A window sign cannot cover more than 40% of the surface area of the window.

Chair Mansour asked if the applicant could have a sign on the eastern facade and in the window on the south facade and not require a variance.

Director Kieselbach replied the applicant currently has an existing wall sign on the south facade facing Grand River Avenue. If the applicant wanted to install a window sign that would be allowed. The applicant does not have an entrance on the eastern side and a variance would be required for a sign.

Chair Mansour read review criteria one from Section 86-221 of the Code of Ordinances which states unique circumstances exist that are peculiar to the land or structure that are not applicable to other land or structures in the same zoning district. Chair Mansour stated there were no unique circumstances for the request. It is a multi-tenant building without a secondary means of access.

Chair Mansour read review criteria two which states these special circumstances are not self-created. Chair Mansour stated the circumstances were not self-created and they are not unique.

Chair Mansour stated if one of the review criteria could not be met than going through the other review criteria was not necessary and the variance should not be approved.

MEMBER FIELD-FOSTER MOVED TO DENY A VARIANCE ZBA CASE NO. 21-04-28-1 (Allied Signs, Inc.), 33650 Giftos, Clinton Township, MI, 48035

SECONDED BY MEMBER OPSOMMER

Member Kulhanek stated he agreed that the applicant cannot meet the criteria.

ROLE CALL TO VOTE:

YEAS: Members Field-Foster, Opsommer, Newman, Kulhanek, Chair Mansour

NAYS: None

Motion carried: 5-0

7. OTHER BUSINESS- NONE

8. PUBLIC REMARKS

Chair Mansour opened public remarks and seeing none, closed the floor for public remarks.

9. MEMBER COMMENTS

Chair Mansour offered congratulations to Member Hendrickson and his family on the new arrival to their family.

Chair Mansour asked to have these recurring issue with signage be considered by the Planning Commission and Township Board.

Chair Mansour offered congratulations on Director Kieselbach's retirement which will occur at the end of May.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted.

Robin Faust, Administrative Assistant II