

**CITY OF WIXOM
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEETING
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
_MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 2018**

APPROVED

4.9.2018

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Caplan of the Zoning Board of Appeals at 7:30 p.m. at which time allegiance was pledged to the American flag.

BOARD: Jeff Caplan (Chairman), Joe Barts, Michael Schira, Steve Winters, Peter Behrmann, Ray Konchel and Tom Marcucci (7:32 p.m.)

ABSENT: David Berry (Excused)

OTHERS: Carmine Avantini (CIB Planning) and Nancy Fisher (Recording Secretary)

Determination of a Quorum:

A quorum of the Zoning Board of Appeals was present for this meeting.

Agenda:

No additions or changes were made to the agenda.

Approval of the December 11, 2017 Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Minutes:

MOTION and seconded by Board members Konchel and Winters to approve the December 11, 2017 Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Minutes.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

Correspondence:

City Manager's Update – December 12, 2017

City Manager's Update – December 19, 2017

Call to the Public:

There were no comments made by the public.

Unfinished Business:

There was no unfinished business listed on the agenda for this meeting.

New Business:

1. **PUBLIC HEARING FOR ZBA #010-17: HILLSIDE APARTMENTS, 31071 LAKE VIEW BLVD., WIXOM, MI, 48393:** The applicant is requesting to replace the existing entryway sign for Hillside Apartments located at 31071 Lakeview Boulevard, off Pontiac Trail. The Ordinance currently requires entryway signs to be located at least 15' back from the existing road right-of-way. The existing sign is roughly 1-2 feet from the right-of-way located in an entrance island (shown on the attached site plan). The property is zoned RM-2, Multiple-Family Residential, where apartments are permitted in that district. The parcel number is 96-22-05-126-004.

Chairman Caplan informed the applicant that it will need to secure a majority of the Boardmembers' votes in order to obtain its request for variance.

Sue Grissim. Ms. Grissim, Principal, GMA Associates, 300 E. Cady Street, Northville. She stated that she is the landscape architect for this project. Also present tonight is George Mann, Director of Facilities, representing the owner, Ed Rose & Sons, and Steve Nunn, Regional Manager. The applicant would like to replace the existing sign in order to update it. The hardship is that they want to put it back where it is. The Ordinance has changed since the sign's original installation 25-30 years ago. The setback is 1-2 feet

back. However, the topography diminishes the sign's visibility. The proposed sign is high quality. The Zoning Board of Appeals had a situation similar to this a couple years ago involving the Village Apartments at Beck Road and Pontiac Trail. In that case, a rendering was provided and work was done on the landscaping and lighting. She believes that turned out well and was a benefit to the apartment complex and the community. She showed a depiction of the existing 'Hillside' sign to the Boardmembers. It is wood with polycarbonate lettering. They want to improve the light posts with LED lighting and replace the landscaping. Last year they replaced the lights as indicated. She showed two aerial shots of the entryway. The first was 300 feet from the westbound approach. The existing sign to the left of the utility pole is 10 feet long. Today's setback is 15 feet. The sign would be moved to the right which is the hardship. Coming from the west, only half the sign is visible which is the hardship as well as the landscaping and grading. She proposes replacement using a stone base with a metal cabinet that is aluminum and a metal finish using pin-mounted letters. The applicant wants a nautical look using ground-mounted lighting with LED's which meets the Ordinance. There is a box around the word 'Hillside' which meets the size requirements.

Chairman Caplan confirmed with the applicant that the sign's size meets the Ordinance requirements. He asked whether that takes the sign base into account. The applicant said that she discussed this with Messrs. Avantini and Sprague who felt that it meets the Ordinance. Mr. Avantini noted that there is some interpretation involved when there are architectural features built into the signage. He looks at it as an architectural element. Chairman Caplan likes it but wants to make sure there are no issues with the size. It is 1-2 feet so would it be a 14-foot variance? The applicant said that it would be close to that near the right-of-way sign and that a 14-foot variance would be sufficient.

Boardmember Behrmann asked whether the new proposed sign is comparable to the existing signage. The applicant said that the lettering is a little bigger. The existing sign is 10 feet, 4 inches. The new one is 18 feet long but portions of the sign do not have a sign body. Boardmember Behrmann asked about the height. The applicant said that it is 4 feet tall; however, it is propped up on a boulder wall. It is only 5 feet but that will be diminished and lowered. Boardmember Behrmann asked whether the new sign will block the view of cars exiting. The applicant said that it will not and that was verified by someone from the City's Police Department. Chairman Caplan noted that the right-of-way is so far back.

Boardmember Barts noted that there was a statement regarding the visibility in the application. What about bicyclists on the sidewalk? What about the 1-2 feet for the cars exiting? Everyone should slow down. However, in looking at the pictures, that sign is 4 feet back from the right-of-way. The applicant said it is proposing to place the sign in the same spot. They looked to see where the sidewalk is. It will be at least 1-2 feet behind the right-of-way. Boardmember Behrmann asked how many feet there are between the sign and the sidewalk. The applicant said it is 1-2 feet and that it will stay that way. Chairman Caplan noted that any motion should clarify that the sign needs to stay in its current location.

Boardmember Konchel asked about the case number on tonight's agenda and why it starts with '17' as opposed to '18'. Mr. Avantini said that the case numbers are assigned in the year when the application is received and not necessarily when the case comes up for hearing.

Boardmember Barts noted that the same company has done other signage which has turned out fine. Chairman Caplan said that this company has a history of showing what it can do. Boardmember Behrmann said that he supports the applicant's request.

MOTION and second by Boardmembers Behrmann and Barts to approve ZBA #010-17, Hillside Apartments' request for a 14-foot variance to replace the existing entryway sign for Hillside Apartments; hardship being existing visibility and site line with traffic so long as the sign is not placed any closer than

the current sign's location. The property is located at 31071 Lake View Boulevard, Wixom, Michigan 48393, is zoned RM-2, Multiple-Family Residential and the parcel number is 96-22-05-126-004.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

Call to the Public:

None.

Staff Comments:

Mr. Avantini noted that the Boardmembers should have received an email from the City Manager's office regarding One Stop Ready training. Since the Boardmembers have already undergone rudimentary and advanced training, they may not feel the One Stop Ready training is necessary; however, it is being made available to them. He will also explore offering specialized training to the Boardmembers on topics of relevance including signage per the recent *Gilbert* Supreme Court case, which will necessitate the need for some minor updates to the Sign Ordinance. Mr. Avantini will be presenting Zoning Ordinance amendments soon after they are reviewed by Planning Commission.

Board Comments:

Boardmember Konchel reminded everyone that there is a Joint Board meeting scheduled for January 29, 2018. Mr. Avantini noted that a topic of discussion at that meeting will be alternative housing types, which are in demand, and how communities are just starting to reconsider the implementation of this. He noted that the new project will include a variety of these housing types and a presentation by Oakland County.

Adjournment:

This meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals was motioned and adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Nancy Fisher
Recording Secretary