

SIGN CODE BOARD OF APPEALS
Meeting Minutes of December 3, 2009 – 6:30 p.m.

Members present: Kimball, Blaufuss, Lane, Lowe, von Tersch
Members absent: Bowman, Carpenter
Staff present: Parker, Miller, Walthall

ITEM NO. 1: MINUTES

There were no past meeting minutes that required approval action.

ITEM NO. 2: COMMUNICATIONS

No communications to come before the Board.

ITEM NO. 3: 4910 CORPORATE CENTRE DRIVE

SV-11-2-09: A request for variances from the provisions of Chapter 5, Article 18 (Signs), of the Code of the City of Lawrence, Kansas, 2009 edition. The variances are from the provisions of Section 5-1828(A) of the Sign Code which allow no more than two (2) directional signs on a property limiting the size and height of the directional sign to not exceed 4 square feet of surface area and 4 feet in height; and allow generic names and entrance-exit information only to be displayed on the directional sign. The applicant's request is for two (2) directional signs. Each sign is 37 square feet in size and 9'-7" tall. Both signs will display specific business names of the tenants in the office building. The property is generally known as 4910 Corporate Centre Drive, (also on the northwest corner of West 18th Street and Wakarusa Drive). Submitted by The Bristol Groupe for Bristol Partners III, LLC, the property owner of record.

STAFF PRESENTATION

Mr. Walthall presented the item.

Lowe asked Mr. Walthall if the current size of the sign would be changed.

Mr. Walthall stated the size of the sign would not change. He said this type of sign was not in the sign code.

Lane asked Mr. Walthall if the East Hills Business Park had this type of sign.

Mr. Walthall said the East Hills Business Park had only one sign advertising the business park.

Lane asked if the City of Lawrence had considered modifying the sign code to allow this type of sign.

Mr. Walthall stated the code had been modified some but this issue was not the main focus.

APPLICANT PRESENTATION

Greg DiVilbiss, Bristol Group, stated the sign had been there as long as the building had been on the property. He said the sign company had designed the sign. He said when a tenant moved into the building they had applied to have their name added to the sign. Mr. DiVilbiss stated the sign type

was common in campus corporate settings. He said each building had directional signs and as the campus was completed the next sign would be put up. Mr. DiVilbiss stated Corporate Woods in Kansas City had the same type of sign.

Blaufuss asked if there would be a total of ten signs in the area.

Mr. DiVilbiss stated the campus drive was like a horseshoe with an island that ran between the street. He said the signs would be double faced.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No member of the public spoke on this item.

BOARD DISCUSSION

There was no Board discussion.

ACTION TAKEN

Motioned by Lowe, seconded by Kimball, to approve the variances to allow two directional signs at 4910 Corporate Centre Drive, based upon the findings of fact in the staff report and expressed by the Board and their discussion.

Motion carried unanimously, 5-0

ITEM NO. 4: 2300 RANCH WAY

SV-11-3-09: A request for variances from the provisions of Chapter 5, Article 18 (Signs), of the Code of the City of Lawrence, Kansas, 2009 edition. The variances are from the provisions of Section 5-1827(A)(5) of the Sign Code pertaining to the type of materials an area marker can be made from. The Code permits the use of wood, stone, brick or combinations of those materials. The applicant's request is to permit the area marker to be constructed of aluminum and painted with baked enamel finish with 3M Scotch vinyl graphics. The property is generally known as Ranch Way Townhomes, located south of Clinton Parkway frontage road and east of Ranch Street. Submitted by Tammy Moody with Luminous Neon, Inc. KEA Holdings, LLC, the property owner of record.

STAFF PRESENTATION

Mr. Walthall presented the item.

Lane asked Mr. Walthall if Staff recommended denial because of the material being used.

Mr. Walthall said the main reason for denial of the sign was the material being used. He said there could be signs in the City that had metallic elements and the applicant stated the phone number could be taken off of the sign. He stated there had been issues in the past where the sign material had been an issue, but that was one of many issues.

Blaufuss asked how the Western Hills sign ended up the way it did. She said the variance had been denied for the sign and asked Mr. Walthall if the sign was metal.

Mr. Walthall said the sign was not installed.

Mr. Miller stated the sign was not metal. He said Staff had looked at multiple versions of the sign code that could be presented to the City Commission in the future.

Mr. Walthall said his concern was with community expectation. He said he did not feel like this sign had met the criteria to make a positive recommendation.

Blaufuss asked if there were area markers within the City that were not incorporated within stone.

Mr. Walthall stated he was not aware of area markers that were not incorporated within stone.

APPLICANT PRESENTATION

Tammy Moody, Luminous Neon Art & Sign, said the proposed sign was within code except for the product that was requested. She said visibility was an issue with the placement of the sign. She said a dark background with lighter graphics works the best. Ms. Moody stated metal letters were hard to read and aluminum with a matted type paint worked the best and it would not rust. She stated many townhomes had phone numbers on signs but it would not be an issue if the phone number needed to be removed. She stated she would like to see the sign code changed to incorporate metal into the code because it was a superior product.

Kimball asked if the letters would be stamped on the material.

Ms. Moody stated she used a 3m scotch vinyl product for the signage. She said vinyl had a five to seven year life span. She said eighty percent of commercial tenant panels were vinyl application.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No member of the public spoke on this item.

BOARD DISCUSSION

von Tersch said she did not believe the application was unique.

Blaufuss said the Sign Code should be changed to allow metal but not allow one sign at a time through variances.

von Tersch said the code should be changed to allow metal and there should not be a variance.

Lane asked what the time frame would be to get the code changed.

Mr. Walthall stated the code would not be changed in 2009 and possibly 2010.

Mr. Miller said Staff had worked on a comprehensive review of the current Sign Code. He said the Board could ask that section of the code be amended.

Blaufuss said it would take a long time to change the code and said she did not see anything unique about the sign.

Lowe said it was an attractive sign and metal was a better material than wood. He said there would be other for rent signs to draw attraction to the property.

ACTION TAKEN

Motioned by von Tersch seconded by Blaufuss, to deny the variances to allow the sign to be constructed of aluminum and painted with baked enamel finish, based upon the findings of fact in the staff report and expressed by the Board and their discussion.

Motion carried, 4-1

Kimball stated the sign would be perceived differently if there was masonry included.

Lane stated wood would be a less quality material.

ITEM NO. 5: MISCELLANEOUS

No other business to come before the Board.

ACTION TAKEN

Motioned by Kimball, seconded by Lowe, to adjourn the Sign Code Board of Appeals meeting.

Motion carried unanimously, 5-0

ADJOURN – 7:30p.m.

Official minutes are on file in the Planning Department office.