

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS MEETING  
JUNE 22, 2021  
7:00 P.M.

I CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Chairman Anderson

II ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jeffrey Anderson, Dave Nienaber, Tom Hall, Carolyn Ghantous, Douglas Stahlgren, Michelle Miller, David Gleaves

Staff Present: Carl Lamping

III PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF NOVEMBER 17, 2020

Motion to approve the minutes presented by Mr. Nienaber and seconded by Mrs. Ghantous.

(Voice vote taken and the minutes were approved with a vote of 7 to 0).

V CORRESPONDENCE - None

VI REPORTS

Report on City Council

Mrs. Ghantous provided a report on City Council meeting held on June 16, 2021. The new hires from the past year in the Police Department were introduced. There were 6 ordinances and 5 resolutions. 4 ordinances passed with a 7-0 vote, and the other 2 were a 1<sup>st</sup> reading. All resolutions passed with a 7-0 vote.

Report on Planning Commission

Mr. Hall provided a report on the Planning Commission for June 8, 2021. There were 3 cases that were scheduled for the meeting. All 3 cases passed.

VII CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

Chairman Anderson read the Chairman's Statement.

Two members of the audience were sworn in.

VIII OLD BUSINESS

- I Ms. Neoma Gardner, 519 W. Kemper Road, Springdale, Ohio, is requesting a variance from the Zoning Code Section 153.252 (F) (14), which allows only one detached garage and one detached shed.

**WITHDRAWN** (BZA Application 38198)

## IX NEW BUSINESS

A. Sweeney Automotive Properties – Jeep, 95 W. Kemper, Springdale, Ohio, is requesting a variance from the Zoning Code Section 153.459 (C) (4), which allows pole signs with provisions.

**PUBLIC HEARING** (BZA Application 20211054)

Mr. Lamping provided an overview of the application describing the work that the applicant wants to do that would require a variance.

Steve Weeks, Tri-State Signs, present to represent Jake Sweeney Jeep. Mr. Weeks stated that providing the variance be approved, both signs will come down. The existing Mazda sign, currently covered by a Jeep banner that will come down to grade and be completely removed. The old pre-owned sign, currently covered by an Alfa Romeo banner, that will come down to grade and be completely removed. The 85 W. Kemper which is the adjacent property, that sign will have the Jeep removed, along with the Jeep on the building once the new dealership is opened. The setback on the signage will be 30 feet, and the existing signage was never going to be refaced. That may have been an original drawing that was missed. Mr. Weeks stated he used the Civil Engineers drawings and must have overlooked the items stated. He stated he understands the landscape plan is in the code, but currently where the Mazda sign sits (and the Jeep signs will sit), it is in the middle of an asphalt parking lot. Mr. Weeks stated he does not know how they will put a planter in the middle of an asphalt parking lot. He stated Coby Sweeney could speak more on that and see about coming up with a solution.

Coby Sweeney, Jake Sweeney Automotive, stated this sign is the final sign in their plan in the vision of what is now 95 W. Kemper. He stated he is open to suggestions for the sign. The sign is a spec sign for Jeep with their new exclusive building. Mr. Sweeney believes it is very upscale and will compliment the site. BMW is right across the street, and what they plan to do with the Dodge, Chrysler, Ram showroom will make it look as nice. He stated he is flexible with landscaping or planters, but restated it is in the middle of an asphalt parking lot. He believes the current sign has been there since the late 70's. Mr. Sweeney stated they are trying to develop the property into the next generation. He mentioned that work has started on the old Atrium hotel, now Jake Sweeney corporate headquarters. He stated they will probably be back to ask for help with signage at this property as well.

Mrs. Ghantous stated she was verifying she followed along with the request. She stated that Anne McBride, City Planner, made 3 recommendations; two existing pole signs will be removed, the new pole sign will be 30 feet from the public right of way, and we are flexible on the landscaping.

Mr. Sweeney stated they would prefer to not tear up the asphalt. He said the way the topography is there's a storm sewer that they put up a high curb to catch the water. Prior to this it was running into the grass.

Mrs. Ghantous verified they would be willing to work with staff to come up with something to make this work.

Mr. Sweeney restated that they are flexible.

Mr. Lamping stated he believes there is an issue with the 30 feet back according to the site plan. He believes the existing sign is closer to the Right of Way. He believes the intent is to put the new sign were the existing sign is. He stated that if they agree with the 30 foot setback, because that is the height of the new sign and what code says, it would be back in the middle of the parking lot. He does not believe that is what they are looking to do.

Mr. Sweeney stated that is not where they want it to end up. They are wanting to place the new sign in the same place as the existing sign. He is willing to landscape in the area between the current grass and around the base.

Mrs. Ghantous questioned the 30 feet being workable. She stated that is something that needs to be discussed.

Mr. Anderson asked if there was an idea on what the current setback on the existing sign is.

Mr. Lamping stated he did not have adequate plans to answer that question.

Mr. Weeks stated he installed the Mazda sign years ago, and he believes it is 26-28 feet overall height. He does not remember if they got a variance for that specific sign.

Mr. Lamping stated he would expect that it met the code at that time, and the code has changed since then.

Mr. Anderson stated that the sign setback was in the last set of changes which was not in the 70's. He believes it was about 8 years ago.

Mr. Weeks asked to be able to keep the sign at the same distance as the current sign.

Mr. Anderson stated it is now walls and not a pole that is being installed and that makes it more intrusive inside the Right of Way.

Mr. Lamping stated it is a wide wall and not a post. He stated it is close to the existing sign width, just filled.

Mr. Stahlgren asked if the new sign is a requirement from Jeep, he mentioned an exclusive build.

Mr. Sweeney stated he was asked to promote an exclusive Jeep store. Certain markets have been designated because of the volume to have a standalone exclusive Jeep store. Jeep wants to not confuse the customers and separate, and with that they are completing a separate look. It's the same franchise but Jeep wants the brand that is growing. In 2008 Jeep sold 600,000 units in the United States, and in 2020 they sold 1.6 million. Mr. Sweeney stated it will be nice for the City of Springdale because this will be the only standalone exclusive Jeep facility in the Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky market. He stated with the additional parking at the atrium building, there are 500 additional parking spots.

Mr. Stahlgren stated this is a requirement, logo size and height. He stated the current height is 26-28 feet and the new sign will be 30 feet. The landscaping on the north side which would be street side they could put something there. He questioned the south side (parking lot) impeding on parking and/or traffic.

Mr. Sweeney made comments that were not audible due to not being near the microphone.

Mr. Nienaber questioned if there isn't any landscaping around the sign, how they will keep people from backing their cars into it.

Mr. Sweeney stated they would put a few bollards around it. They have never had an issue. He stated there is usually inventory parked in that area. It would be hard for someone to back into it.

Mr. Nienaber stated he was just exploring if it would make sense to have a little landscaping.

Mr. Sweeney stated he is not opposed to planters around it. He would just like to keep it in the same place as the existing sign.

Mr. Lamping showed an exhibit highlighting the existing layout of the site with the location of car inventory. He showed the location of the existing sign with nowhere to park around it.

Mr. Anderson stated the car lengths could help with measuring how far back the sign is.

Mr. Lamping stated the measurement starts at the back of the sidewalk not the edge of the asphalt.

Mr. Anderson stated it would probably be closer to 15-20 feet.

Mr. Lamping stated he would recommend the same distance as the existing sign and that will give the dimension they are looking for without an exact number.

Mr. Anderson asked if the sign will impede on the traffic turning on to Kemper, or if it was back far enough.

Mr. Sweeney stated he feels it is far enough back. The intention is to have all Jeep customers to enter off of Sweeney place and not Kemper. They would like them to turn at the light.

Mr. Nienaber asked Mr. Lamping about the Jeep mountain being considered another sign, and if that creates another zoning question.

Mr. Lamping stated it is not currently here for the board to consider, but it is technically a sign because it has the word Jeep on it. It has already been approved.

Mr. Anderson stated they are not considering changes to the other signs. In the variance that is being requested, it was mentioned removal of things from other existing pole signs. He questioned Mr. Lamping regarding whether the board needed to deal with also.

Mr. Lamping stated the new work on the "flag" sign should comply with code requirements as they are. They are not putting up a new sign, they are re-facing an existing sign.

Mr. Anderson asked if putting the landscaping as a condition of the variance to work with staff would be sufficient.

Mr. Lamping stated his concern is the area of the landscaping and that should be direction from the board. The size of the landscaping is determined by the size of the sign, and that is 85 sq. ft. There has been no design to the existing area around that would be 85 sq. ft. Mr. Lamping stated the question is how much should the landscaping be reduced to in order for the board to act on it.

Mr. Anderson stated the current requirement would be 85 sq. feet.

There is a lot of side talk that is inaudible.

Mr. Anderson stated there has to be a number with the variance because it lives with the property forever, and it cannot be left at 0.

More talk that is inaudible.

Mr. Weeks asked for 27 sq. ft. to be landscaping. That would go from the front of the sign approximately 3 feet both ways, and 4 feet projecting out to the Right of Way.

Mr. Lamping asked if there was an option to put the sign in a landscaped area all the way around it and use that as the bollard.

Mr. Weeks and Mr. Sweeney were speaking, but it was inaudible.

Mr. Anderson stated the curb is not a permanent fixture so there needs to be a footage.

Mr. Nienaber made note from the exhibit in the white area, stating that is approximately an 8 foot wide parking spot and at least 15 foot long. He stated you use that area of 120 sq. ft. and you have beat your 85 sq. ft.

Mr. Lamping stated he agreed and he totaled up his recommendation and it is 112 sq. ft. He believes they should agree to the 85 sq. ft. which is code requirement and they can make it bigger if they would like.

Mr. Sweeney responded and it was inaudible.

Mr. Lamping stated it would be in a landscape bed to meet the code.

Mr. Anderson stated he doesn't feel they need to put a statement in the variance for landscaping because they will be able to encircle the existing space. They will be meeting code.

There is a lot of side talk that is inaudible from Mr. Weeks and Mr. Sweeney.

Mr. Anderson stated he is a little concerned about the site line. The monument signs feel like they are blocking and he wouldn't want it any closer to the street. He questioned lowering the sign a few feet to deal with the setback.

There was response that was inaudible.

Mr. Stahlgren made a motion to grant a variance to property owner Sweeney Automotive Properties Inc., 95 W. Kemper Road, regarding BZA Application 20211054. The applicant is requesting a variance from Springdale Zoning Code Section 153.459 (C) (4) which allows pole signs with provisions. The request is to allow for construction of a new sign that will be 30 feet high with 80.51 sq. ft. of sign area. Addition to the requirement would be removal of the two existing pole signs. The placement of the sign would replace the existing sign.

Mr. Nienaber seconded the motion.

Mr. Anderson asked for questions or comments on the motion. He asked if the lighting was an issue that needed to be added.

Mr. Lamping stated the sign is backlit that is not an issue with the code.

Secretary Hall took a voice vote and the variance was approved with a 7-0 vote.

## X DISCUSSION

Mr. Nienaber wanted to take a moment to extend a Thank You to Anne McBride for all the pre-work she does for the BZA.

Mr. Anderson stated the packet she provides so they do not have to dig through the code is very helpful.

XI ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Nienaber made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Hall seconded the motion.

Chairman Anderson adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_, 2021 \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman, Jeffrey Anderson

\_\_\_\_\_, 2021 \_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary, Tom Hall