

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS  
CITY OF LIVONIA  
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2024

A Meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals of the City of Livonia was held on Tuesday, February 6, 2024.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jim Baringhaus, Vice Chairman  
Christopher Boloven  
Michael Testa  
Marc Rotondo  
Lynda Scheel  
Timothy Klisz, Secretary

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Gregory G. Coppola, Chairman

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mike Fisher, Chief Assistant City Attorney  
Lawrence O'Neal, Inspector

The meeting was called to order at seven p.m. Vice Chairman Baringhaus explained the Rules of Procedure to those interested parties. Each petitioner must give their name and address and declare hardship for appeal. Appeals of the Zoning Board's decisions are made to the Wayne County Circuit Court. The Chairman advised the audience that appeals can be filed within 21 days of the date tonight's minutes are approved. The decision of the Zoning Board shall become final within five (5) calendar days following the hearing and the applicant shall be mailed a copy of the decision. There are four decisions the Board can make: To deny, to grant, to grant as modified by the Board, or to table for further information. Each petitioner may ask to be heard by a full seven (7) member Board. Six (6) members were present. Vice Chairman, Jim Baringhaus, further explained the option for petitioners to reschedule their petition to a future date for a full board hearing. Neither Petitioner requested that either case be tabled to await a full Board. Secretary, Timothy Klisz, then read the Agenda and Legal Notice to each appeal, and each petitioner indicated their presence. Appeals came up for hearing after due legal notice was given to all interested parties within 300 feet, petitioners, and City Departments. There were several (not counted) people present in the audience.

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(7:00)

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**APPEAL CASE NO. 2023-11-31, Bethel Baptist Temple (Tabled on December 12, 2023):** an appeal was made to the Zoning Board of Appeals by Bethel Baptist Temple, seeking to erect a ground sign resulting in excess overall sign area and excess area of the bulletin board message display portion of the sign.

**Ground sign area:**

Allowed: 30 ft.  
Proposed: 50 ft.  
Excess: 20 ft.

**Bulletin board message area:**

Allowed: 20 ft.  
Proposed: 27 ft.  
Excess: 7 ft

This Rural Urban Farm property is located on the south side of Six Mile Road (29475), between Oporto Street and Middlebelt Road, Lot. No. 053-01-0001-000, R-U-F District, Neighborhood, rejected by the Inspection Department under Livonia Fence Ordinance, Code of Ordinances Sections 6.50 and 11.08.

**BARINGHAUS** Thank you very much. Could I have a motion from the Board to remove the first case from the table?

**TESTA** Mr. Chair.

**BARINGHAUS** Mr. Testa.

**TESTA** Move to remove appeal case number 2023-11-31 from the table.

**KLISZ** Support.

**BARINGHAUS** Motion by Mr. Testa, support by Mr. Klisz to remove the case from the table. All those in favor say aye.

The item was unanimously approved by acclamation.

**BARINGHAUS** Thank you. Secretary Klisz, would you please read the first case?

**KLISZ** Sure. Calling appeal case number 2023-11-31, Bethel Baptist Temple, tabled on December 12, 2023. An appeal was made to the Zoning Board of Appeals by Bethel Baptist Temple seeking to erect a ground sign resulting in excess overall sign area and excess area of the bulletin board message display portion of the sign. This Rural Urban Farm property is located on the south side of Six Mile between Oporto Street and Middlebelt Road, RUF district neighborhood, rejected by the Inspection Department under Livonia Ordinance, Section 6.50. Ground sign area: allowed 30 feet, proposed 50 feet, excess 20 feet. Bulletin board message area: allowed 20 feet, proposed 27 feet, excess seventeen.

**BARINGHAUS** Thank you. Does the Board have any questions for the law department? Any questions for the Inspection Department? Very good. The Petitioner, come forward, please. Good evening.

**BUJA** Good evening.

**BARINGHAUS** Could you state your name and address please? Sure.

**BUJA** Ryan Buja. I'm pastor at Bethel Baptist and address is 30457 Jeanine Street, Livonia, Michigan 48152.

**BARINGHAUS** Great, thank you very much. You could outline the revisions you made to your proposal and about the variance, it would be appreciated.

**BUJA** Sure. I didn't know if I have to go over the hardship about the trees, which is something I presented. I know there's some new Board Members here today. So I don't know if that's something I need to.

**BARINGHAUS** If you'd like to, just...

**BUJA** Okay, yeah. So one of the things that we have different than pretty much, not only every other church, but every other business in Livonia is in front of our property, in the Wayne County right-of-way, we have seven mature trees, and they're very, very large. And they block pretty much, especially when all the leaves are on, I did send a picture in and that was taken in the fall when about half of the leaves are fallen off. But in the summertime, so about half the year, when those trees are full our church is really, really blocked from the view. Whereas you know, when you look at all the other churches, there's about five others on that mile stretch, not one of them have any trees, blocking their sign, blocking their church. And even as you drive around Livonia, you know, you can drive anywhere you want. But on the road, there's Steve's, there's McDonald's, and Walgreens and no one has, you know, seven huge trees on the right-of-way. We had reached out to Wayne County Trees several years ago, because the trees had gotten so overgrown, they were almost touching the ground. To the point that for 18 months, I had called Wayne County to please trim the trees. For 18 months, they didn't come out, to the point I'm on my seventh call. Wayne County said, "Just trim them yourself." So we did that. So they do look a lot better. What you see in that picture is because of the work that we did on the Wayne County trees to make it look like it should. However, they're still very large and they still do block and I do believe that that hardship does present us, you know, that case does present a hardship to our situation that we believe other churches and other businesses in Livonia do not have to deal with, which is the main reason we are asking for the variance to get something. In this case, we went back and revised. We listened to kind of, you know, your feedback on what, as far as the electronic sign and whether it's electronic or a letter sign. And we met, we decided to go away from the electronic sign and to listen to your comments, your feedback. And so what we did is we went to the company, the same exact company that designed Cornerstone Baptist, which is directly across the street a little to the

west of us, the same company that made that sign, they're the exact same specifications for a letter sign. And I know that the Board granted a variance on that. So we're asking you to consider the same thing there. One of the reasons we felt that would be acceptable is, I know last time when we were here Dairy Queen was before us. And I know they were asking for a larger menu board. And I know one of the discussions that were made were Plymouth Road Dairy Queen had been given a variance for that same menu board sign, and it was kind of like well, we've kind of set that precedent, so we don't see an issue giving this location the same size. So we kind of took all that information. And we designed or had the same exact sign designs, as Cornerstone and we feel that our hardship, we really need that sign even more so than them because of that. One of the really things on that sign is -- if I've understood it correctly -- one of the reasons they wanted the bigger sign was because they had a bigger offset from the road. At least that's I think what we talked about last time. I measured their offset, and they actually have the same exact offset as we have. So our sign currently is 37 feet from the road. Their sign is at 40 feet from the road however, they chose to put their sign 13 feet from the sidewalk when obviously 10 is the code, so they could have had that thirty-seven. They chose to put it at forty, so their offset from the road is exactly the same as what our current sign is at and also where the new sign would go would be 37 feet from the road, 10 feet from the sidewalk. So we're trying to make everything similar, you know, in the same exact specification on that. So that's kind of, we tried to listen to you and bring back something that would be acceptable.

**BARINGHAUS** Can you outline the current location of your existing sign versus where you want the proposed sign?

**BUJA** Sure. So the current sign, we kind of have two lots, the main church lot, and then to the west, we have like a field almost, but where the current church is at or where the church is at and that lot is directly in the middle of the yard there, and we want to move it over to the driveway side. Big reason there, get it over by the driveway, is because it's the most open there, again, we have all those trees. And if we can move it to where the driveway is at, at least there's a gap there that will allow people to see it, maybe a little quicker. It'd be a quick second, but at least a little bigger gap there, it would be more noticeable than having it blocked in the middle there by the trees. So that's why we wanted to move it, move it over to the west, or a little bit.

**BARINGHAUS** Very good. Questions from the Board?

**ROTONDO** Mr. Chair.

**BARINGHAUS** Yes, Mr. Rotondo.

**ROTONDO** A question for the Petitioner. Have you reached out, I know you said you contacted Wayne County about maintaining the trees? Have you reached out to them about maybe getting a permit to remove the trees?

**BUJA** I have not thought of that idea. And you know, I don't know, if that would be allowed, but that's definitely something to consider.

**ROTONDO** I know that they offer permits. I don't know what their criteria is and if they would be willing to allow it or not.

**BUJA** Sure, yeah, we would definitely be open to that, for sure.

**ROTONDO** That's it.

**BARINGHAUS** Okay. Great. Thank you.

**TESTA** Mr. Chair.

**BARINGHAUS** Mr. Testa.

**TESTA** Thank you. Question to the Petitioner. Last time you were here, you were pretty adamant about the electronic sign. It sounds like, obviously you moved away from it. Can you talk to me about the rationale, or was it just simply... you didn't think, "I don't want to have to worry about this?"

**BUJA** As far as why we did it. I mean, at the end of the day, we felt because it was, pretty adamantly seemed like it was denied here, that it was not going to happen. And so, you know, it was a matter of, did we want to fight the City about the sign or maybe just go in a different direction and present something that would be more acceptable to the City? So that's kind of why we decided to go that direction.

**TESTA** Okay. And last time, you were also questioning your zoning. Do you plan on seeking a zoning change?

**BUJA** We do not.

**TESTA** Okay. And then the last question, I do recall a discussion last time regarding your temporary signs and you put up a "Trunk or Treat" as an example. I remember that specifically that you do have?

**BUJA** Correct.

**TESTA** Good. If this variance is approved, those signs would be coming down?

**BUJA** Correct. Yeah, we wouldn't need to advertise. Obviously, we could put it on our letter sign.

**TESTA** Okay. Thank you. Thank you.

**SCHEEL** Mr. Chair.

**BARINGHAUS** Yes, Ms. Scheel.

**SCHEEL** Thank you. Will you be removing the sign you have there?

**BUJA** Yeah, that sign will be coming down.

**SCHEEL** Thank you.

**BARINGHAUS** Question, did you change the dimensions of the sign? From what you originally proposed to the present design tonight?

**BUJA** Are you referring to the electronic sign?

**BARINGHAUS** The size of, the overall size of the sign?

**BUJA** So the electronic sign that we proposed was forty.

**BARINGHAUS** Okay.

**BUJA** Yep. And that was 10 square feet bigger, you know, than what the electronic sign would be allowed. So again, we just kind of took your feedback and went with kind of what the variance was given and kind of built it off that.

**BARINGHAUS** Thank you. Any other questions from the Board? Okay, very good. Okay. Just have you take a chair for a moment. Does the audience have any comments? Okay, no comments from the audience, then? Secretary Klisz, do we have any letters?

**KLISZ** We have no letters.

**BARINGHAUS** Thank you very much. Okay. At that point, I'll have you come forward to make a final statement.

**BUJA** Final statement?

**BARINGHAUS** Yes.

**BUJA** A closing statement. I reiterate everything I just said. No, final statement: You know, I appreciate your consideration into this matter. And, you know, closing statement would be you know, I feel like Bethel for those who don't know, this year, 2024 is 50 years that Bethel has been at that location. 1974 to 2024. So it's been in the community a very long time. And we plan on continuing for another 50 years, hopefully, and more. And we do feel like the sign that we have is older. It's an old, it's an outdated sign. So the new sign would definitely present better than our old sign, right? It's gonna look better, it's going to be better for the community.

It's gonna be nicer to look at as people drive down the road. So we feel like it's a win-win for everybody.

**BARINGHAUS** Okay, very good. Thank you very much.

**BUJA** Thank you.

**BARINGHAUS** Okay, we'll close the public portion of the meeting and we'll get the Board's comments with Ms. Scheel.

**SCHEEL** Well, even though I wasn't here when this was presented the first time, I did go back and read the notes and the minutes, I should say, and the comments and everything that was there. I do appreciate you bringing me back a sign that's not an electronic sign. I think that meets the needs of both sides. And I think it's a great choice. So I would be in favor of this this evening.

**BARINGHAUS** Thank you. Mr. Rotondo?

**ROTONDO** Yeah, I also reviewed the minutes because I was not here at the previous one. It looks like you made some changes based on the comments that some of the other, my colleagues made. So yeah, I can get behind this, and I will be a favor of it.

**BARINGHAUS** Great, thank you very much. Secretary Klisz?

**KLISZ** I agree. I was here. The last one. And again, as we told the Petitioner and everyone else is that we had these and consistently said no to electronic message board signs in residential areas. So I'm glad to see it is not and the fact that it looks very similar to the neighbor's sign which we did approve, is great. And it's actually smaller than that one. So I have no problem approving this one.

**BARINGHAUS** Thank you. Mr. Boloven.

**BOLOVEN** Nothing further to add. I support what my colleagues stated and I'd be in support.

**BARINGHAUS** Thank you. Mr. Testa.

**TESTA** Thank you. I'll be in support of this. Thank you for modifying your proposal based on our feedback last time.

**BARINGHAUS** I too will be in support of the variance as well. It's obvious you took our comments to heart and went back, did your research, did your homework, and made the necessary adjustments in the sign that it blends better into the surrounding areas as well. So with that, the floor is open for a motion.



**KLISZ** Mr. Chair.

**BARINGHAUS** Secretary Klisz.

**KLISZ** Resolved: the variance appeal case number 2023-11-31. Filed by Bethel Baptist Temple will be granted for the following reasons and findings of fact: The uniqueness requirement is met because of the age of the old sign and the inability to see the sign currently due to the trees that are in the area and that won't be cut appropriately by Wayne County. Denial of the variance would have severe consequences for the Petitioner because of the inability of parishioners to get to the church without a readable sign. The variance is fair in light of its effect on neighboring properties and the spirit of the zoning ordinance because of overwhelming crowd support and no opposition. The property is classified RUF under the master plan. The proposed variance is not inconsistent with that classification. Further, that the variance be granted with the following conditions: that it be built as presented as to location and material and size.

**BARINGHAUS** Okay, very good. Do I have support?

**BOLOVEN** Support.

**FISHER** Mr. Chair

**BARINGHAUS** Yes?

**FISHER** Just for the sake of accuracy, the Master Plan says this is Corridor Commercial.

**KLISZ** Change my classification to Corridor Commercial.

**FISHER** Thank you, Mr. Klisz.

**BOLOVEN** Support.

**BARINGHAUS** Thank you. I thought the public announcement said RUF zoning?

**FISHER** It's RUF zoning but on the Master Plan it's Corridor Commercial.

**BARINGHAUS** Very good. Thank you. Okay, very good. Support by Mr. Boloven. But is there any discussion from the Board? Okay, very good. Secretary Klisz, will you take a vote?

**RESOLVED: APPEAL CASE NO. 2023-11-31, Bethel Baptist Temple:** an appeal was made to the Zoning Board of Appeals by Bethel Baptist Temple, seeking to erect a ground sign resulting in excess overall sign area and excess area of the bulletin board message display portion of the sign.

**Ground sign area:**

Allowed: 30 ft.  
Proposed: 50 ft.  
Excess: 20 ft.

**Bulletin board message area:**

Allowed: 20 ft.  
Proposed: 27 ft.  
Excess: 7 ft

This Corridor Commercial property is located on the south side of Six Mile Road (29475), between Oporto Street and Middlebelt Road, Lot. No. 053-01-0001-000, R-U-F District, Neighborhood, rejected by the Inspection Department under Livonia Fence Ordinance, Section 6.50 and 11.08, **be granted** for the following reasons and findings of fact:

1. That the uniqueness requirement is met because of the age of the old sign and the inability to see the sign currently due to the trees in the area that won't be cut appropriately by Wayne County,
2. That denial of the variance would have severe consequences for the Petitioner because of the inability of parishioners to get to the church without legible signage,
3. That the variance is fair in light of its effect on neighboring properties, and in the spirit of the ordinance because of overwhelming crowd support and no opposition, and
4. That this property is classified as Corridor Commercial under the Master Plan, and the proposed variance is not inconsistent with that classification.

Further, that the variance **be granted** with the following condition:

1. It will be built as presented as to location, material, and size.

**KLISZ** Yes. Ms. Scheel?

**SCHEEL** Aye.

**KLISZ** Mr. Rotondo?

**ROTONDO** Aye.

**KLISZ** Mr. Testa?

**TESTA** Aye.

**KLISZ** Mr. Boloven?

**BOLOVEN** Aye.

**KLISZ** Secretary Klisz votes aye, and Chairman Baringhaus?

**BARINGHAUS** Aye.

**KLISZ** Passes six to zero.

**BARINGHAUS** Well, congratulations, your variance is approved. And just, please just follow up with the building inspection department for any final arrangements. Thank you very much.

**BUJA** Thank you.

**BARINGHAUS** Secretary Klisz, will you call the next case?

**APPEAL CASE NO. 2024-01-04, 29200 Schoolcraft Road (Tabled on January 9, 2024):** an appeal was made to the Zoning Board of Appeals by Expedite the Diehl, LLC, on behalf of Henry Ford Health Systems, seeking to erect wall, ground and directional signs resulting in excess number of wall signs, excess height and area of directional signs and excess height and area of ground signs. Signage on utility poles on private property are not allowed.

| <b><u>Number of Wall Signs:</u></b>            | <b><u>Directional Sign Area:</u></b>                                                                                | <b><u>Directional Sign Height</u></b>              | <b><u>Ground Sign Height:</u></b>               | <b><u>Ground Sign Area:</u></b>                                  |
|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Allowed: One<br>Proposed: Three<br>Excess: Two | Allowed: 2 sq. ft.<br>Proposed: 47 sq. ft, 9 sq. ft., and 9 sq. ft.<br>Excess: 45 sq. ft., 7 sq. ft., and 7 sq. ft. | Allowed: 5 ft.<br>Proposed: 6 ft.<br>Excess: 1 ft. | Allowed: 6 ft<br>Proposed: 9 ft<br>Excess: 3 ft | Allowed: 30 sq. ft.<br>Proposed: 45 sq. ft.<br>Excess: 15 sq ft. |

This Commercial property is located on the north side of Schoolcraft (29200), between Middlebelt and Cardwell Roads, Lot. No. 095-99-0002-008, C-2 District, Commercial, rejected by the Inspection Department under Livonia Zoning Ordinance, Section 11.08 (3), 11.05 (16).

**KLISZ** Sure. Calling appeal case number 2024-01-04, 29200 Schoolcraft Road, tabled on January 9, 2024. An appeal was made to the Zoning Board of Appeals by Expedite the Diehl, LLC on behalf of Henry Ford Health Systems seeking to erect wall, ground, and directional signs resulting in excess number of wall signs, excess height and area of directional signs, and excess sign, height, and area of ground signs. Signage on utility poles on private property are not allowed. This Commercial property is located on the north side of Schoolcraft (29200) between Middlebelt and Cardwell Roads, C-2 District, Commercial, rejected by the Inspection Department under zoning ordinance section 11.08 (3) and 11.05 (16). Number of wall signs allowed: one, proposed: three, excess: two. Directional sign area allowed: two square foot, proposed: 47 square foot, nine square foot, and nine square foot, excess: 45 square foot, seven square foot, seven square foot. Directional sign height allowed: five foot, proposed: six foot, excess: one foot. Gound sign height allowed: six foot, proposed: nine foot, excess: three foot. Ground sign area allowed: 30 square foot, proposed: 45 square foot, excess: 15 square foot.

**BARINGHAUS** Thank you. Could I have a motion to remove the case from the table, please.

**TESTA** Mr. Chair.

**BARINGHAUS** Yes, Mr. Testa.

**TESTA** Move to remove appeal case 2024-01-04 from the table.

**BARINGHAUS** Can I have a second, please?

**SCHEEL** Support.

**BARINGHAUS** Okay, support by Ms. Scheel. Motion by Mr. Testa, support by Ms. Scheel to remove the case from the table. All those in favor say aye.

The item was unanimously approved by group agreement.

**BARINGHAUS** Okay, thank you very much. Good evening.

**DIEHL** Good evening. My name is Tracey Diehl. That's T-R-A-C-E-Y D-I-E-H-L. My address is 6487 Hilliard Drive, Canal Winchester, Ohio, 43110.

**BARINGHAUS** Okay, very good.

**DIEHL** Please don't hold that against me. I do realize where I am. I'm not a Buckeye fan, so let's get that out of the way.

**BARINGHAUS** We always appreciate full disclosure.

**DIEHL** I try to, especially when I come to Michigan. I actually love Michigan, I think it's beautiful here. I want to thank you for allowing us the opportunity to come back. I was not present at the last meeting. But I have been fully briefed on what occurred during that meeting. I also wanted to make some clarifications that there was a monument sign that was proposed to be nine feet in height. It's my understanding at that time that the Board made a suggestion to bring that sign down to six feet, and we have, so that sign will not be seeking a height variance. That is a sign that is along Schoolcraft Road, I believe, and it's on the southeast side of the property. I also want to say that I had dinner over in that area today before coming here. And being unfamiliar with the area, I suddenly looked to my right and said, "Oh, wait a minute, there's Henry Ford Health." Coming down Schoolcraft, down the service road there, it was not very easily identified. It is very hard to tell that there is a medical facility there as the day gets darker. So during the day, these signs will definitely be an added benefit to people that are seeking medical services there. I am happy to go over all of the criteria. I know that there were some discrepancies in the submission from what was posted online last time. But I reviewed what was posted online today. And everything that was there is correct. We are not seeking signs on utility poles. We are not putting any signs on utility poles, we know that those are not allowed. And those should have been removed the first time so I apologize to the Board for that. And what we are seeking is what has already been reviewed in the application. And I'm happy to answer any questions that you might have. Or go over any of the criteria.

**BOLOVEN** Mr. Chair.

**BARINGHAUS** Yes, Mr. Boloven.

**BOLOVEN** Two quick questions and then I'm gonna refer to the numbers in the corner. That's what we were using last time.

**DIEHL** Okay,

**BOLOVEN** So you said the nine foot monument sign is coming down to six foot. Is that E02?

**DIEHL** Yes.

**BOLOVEN** And I'm looking at E03. One of the questions last time, is this banner remaining in the second picture?

**DIEHL** The banners are being removed. Yes.

**BOLOVEN** Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**BARINGHAUS** Thank you. I do have a question on your diagram.

**DIEHL** Absolutely.

**BARINGHAUS** Okay. Could you clarify the sign EXT-001? I didn't see detailed photos in the PowerPoint presentation.

**DIEHL** Okay. Yep, absolutely. On page three of the variance submission. It's numbered down at the bottom of the center in the fine print, page number three, that shows you E01a. And then if you look in the top right-hand corner, do you see the banner that is there? That is E01. That banner is being removed. And the proposal is for a letter set on this wall in the statement in the spot that is shown. So on the site plan that EXT-001 and 001a, it's referring to that banner and that letter set.

**BARINGHAUS** But the banner is going away.

**DIEHL** Yes. The banners are going away.

**BARINGHAUS** Now on E01a, you know where it says Henry Ford Health?

**DIEHL** Yes.

**BARINGHAUS** Where are the building numbers going?

**DIEHL** Those building numbers are being moved to another corner where they're more legible. Because they did not need a variance they were removed from the package.

**BARINGHAUS** Very good. The other two signs I had questions on were EXT-033 and 034. I'm using the numbers that are referenced on the second, no, first slide. It's on the site plan.

**DIEHL** 033 and 034? And I believe that those were existing signs and they're existing directionals that are not being modified. They did not need a variance either.

**BARINGHAUS** Can you describe the signage you're using for employee parking, or to identify the employee parking area?

**DIEHL** There is a directional sign that is going to be placed on the north side of the property on a base that they are right now that doesn't have a sign. Okay, so this is kind of internal to the site of the north, the northern area of the parking lot. And it identifies visitor parking and staff parking. It is identified as E37.

**BARINGHAUS** And then, possibly off Schoolcraft the entrance to what is the current employee parking area is gated and it looks like the gate is locked. Is that your plan to leave that gate locked?

**DIEHL** That gate would be open if it's necessary for employees to enter. It's for employee use only, so for safety purposes, it would only be something that staff could open.

**BARINGHAUS** And if I recall, you're going to modify sign [inaudible] that identifies employee parking?

**DIEHL** Yes. And that's what I was going to say, Mr. Chairman, E05 also identifies staff parking. And E21 identifies the shipping and receiving as well as staff parking on the opposite side.

**BARINGHAUS** I noticed in your parking lot, you have an entrance that is almost by the front of the Aldi's store. It goes into the Olive Garden parking lot.

**DIEHL** Yes.

**BARINGHAUS** And then you have another entrance further down that goes into your parking lot. Kind of behind the Aldi's.

**DIEHL** Yes.

**BARINGHAUS** Can you describe the signage in that area?

**DIEHL** Okay, so E037 is the sign that is going to the north side behind the Aldi's where the base is existing, that is a monument sign. And then if you go further over east from that, that's where those existing directionals are, directing traffic within the property. That's E033 and

034. And then 036 is also a directional sign. And then, those are from the north side of the parking. Then on the south side of the property along the entrance on Schoolcraft. That's where you will see E002. That monument sign that is existing that's being replaced. I believe that that's being replaced. And that's the one that we're going to replace it at six feet. And then the existing sign 005 is also a small monument sign that is being removed and replaced. And that is, for lack of better terminology, the east and the west entrances along Schoolcraft.

**BARINGHAUS** It seems like a lot of your pylon signs, especially, and apparently, the blue areas that needed the words "Henry Ford Health" has a fairly extensive blue field on it. And you may not hear a lot of these signs. It's six feet, I think six feet. Can you reduce the size by reducing the blue area, have you looked into doing that already?

**DIEHL** Well, if they reduce it, it will reduce the height and then the signs won't be legible for, I'd say, people that are five feet. I'm five foot two, most vehicles come right up to my eyesight. So the idea is to have the sign legible between a vehicle that's sitting in front of it. If there was a vehicle coming in or out of the entrance, you want that sign to be legible to all motorists that are traveling that are using signage. Additionally, we are in Michigan and I know right now we have El Niño, La Niña, whichever one it is, and we're not getting a lot of snow, but in a snowy season, that ground surface is going to be blocked as well. Additionally, this is very consistent with what the Henry Ford Health writing team is doing throughout all of their Michigan sites, all of their hospitals are being rebranded. And the signage is very cohesive. For all of them.

**BARINGHAUS** Is the sign package for each facility or is it based on the location?

**DIEHL** It's based on the location, but they do have standard branding that they've tried to choose from. And it is to make Henry Ford Health signage more legible. Because in the past, it's been very wordy, very excessive. So the negative space, there's this organization called the United States Sign Council, and the United States Sign Council is a nonprofit organization in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. They make recommendations on negative space within a sign and how a motorist is affected by this thing called the viewer rate of transfer, where when they're driving down the road, what they can see in a small amount of time and a small window, and the negative space on the sign contributes to that as well. So having too much stuff on the face of the sign and not a lot of negative space, makes it hard for a sign to be legible. And we have to take into consideration the person that's going to a medical facility isn't always happy about going there. They're often under distress. And so making the signs as simplified and legible, but purposeful, you know, with an intent is their goal.

**BARINGHAUS** The patient entrance, is that primarily the brown building [inaudible]?

**DIEHL** That patient entrance is where primarily the northwest corner of the building. Is that area, the front end? Yes, that would be considered the front of the building. It's kind of like the north side. It's not along Schoolcraft. It's kind of the opposite side.



**BARINGHAUS** Driving around it, I was like in the loading area. I was in the back of it. I don't know if that was just for employees, if that was for employees or patients as well.

**DIEHL** Employees and, any entrance could be used by emergency services or patients if it needed to be.

**BARINGHAUS** Primarily, probably, the one?

**DIEHL** Primarily, yes.

**BARINGHAUS** Okay. Very good. Thank you. Any other questions from the Board?

**ROTONDO** Mr. Chair.

**BARINGHAUS** Mr. Rotondo.

**ROTONDO** E21, which I'm trying to pull up again, I saw it before the meeting, but now my tablet's freezing up. It looked like it was increasing pretty significantly, compared to what was there before?

**DIEHL** I don't have that memorized. Because I do so many of them. Yeah, they're increasing that one to make it more consistent. They're doing that to make it more consistent with the other directional signs on the property. That sign is proposed to be nine square feet, which is what the other directionals are.

**ROTONDO** Okay.

**BARINGHAUS** Very good. Yes, Ms. Scheel?

**SCHEEL** No questions.

**TESTA** Mr. Chair.

**BARINGHAUS** Yes, Mr. Testa.

**TESTA** Thank you. Question for the Petitioner, just a point of clarification, you reviewed a couple of changes since last time. I'm looking at the revisions right here. All the revisions were made in November. I think really, technically nothing has changed. Since the last [inaudible].

**DIEHL** There is a revised narrative that's posted on the website that is dated 1-10-24. And that's what I was referring to, that on that narrative. There's actually, and I can provide you with a hard copy if you'd like. But on that narrative, there was a reference to that monument sign that's going to be nine feet height, where only six foot is allowed, is actually not going to be. It's going to be six feet.

**TESTA** Okay.

**DIEHL** That needs to change

**TESTA** The revision record on the drawings...

**DIEHL** On the drawings.

**TESTA** ...is dated last November.

**DIEHL** Yeah, the drawings. What, the drawings haven't been re-dated. They haven't been re-dated, but they were altered.

**TESTA** Okay.

**DIEHL** Yeah. If that makes sense. I apologize for the confusion, but that's because the drawings are not scaled, but they will be submitted for a building permit scale with a six foot of height.

**TESTA** Okay, yep. I just want to make sure. Usually, if we approve we'll say, "As presented." I just wanted to be sure what we have in front of us.

**DIEHL** What you have on the website, for the Board is correct.

**TESTA** Thank you.

**BARINGHAUS** Can you discuss the signage that would bring patients in from Schoolcraft Road?

**DIEHL** The signage that would bring patients in from Schoolcraft Road?

**BARINGHAUS** I'm sorry, no, I meant [inaudible].

**DIEHL** That's the signage. Well, there's actually no signage that would bring somebody in from there. People would already be on the campus by the time they see that signage. When they're coming down on the north side of Aldi they would see that E37. That would be their first indication that there's a hospital, there's a medical facility here. I want to refrain from calling it a hospital. A lot of the sites I deal with are hospitals.

**BARINGHAUS** That's the sign on the telephone pole.

**DIEHL** It's totally, yes, that's coming down. Yeah, so they, unfortunately, in the sign industry, when they send somebody out to do something to make changes, they try to do it all at the same time. So anything that's not legal that's there will come down. And I can testify to that.

**BARINGHAUS** Any other questions from the Board? Okay. Very good. Why don't you stay there for a moment. Secretary Klisz, do we have any letters?

**KLISZ** No.

**BARINGHAUS** Okay, there are no letters. Perfect. If I could just have you give a closing comment.

**DIEHL** Certainly. So I would like to state on the record and be very clear that a medical facility is not like other facilities within the same zoning district. These signs aren't intended to draw in business. People don't make decisions about their medical care based on the signage. People that are seeking this facility are going to use the signage to find their way. We can't use the argument of GPS traffic or GPS navigation as being a valid way to negate the need for a sign. Not everybody uses GPS technology. My father doesn't use GPS technology, and he's only 72 years old. So saying that people that go here will be able to use a GPS to find it is not a valid statement. Saying that people that are going here are going to be potentially under distress, are going to need the signs to find their way, are going to possibly be unfamiliar with the area. That is a good indication that you know signage is necessary, but also to remember that sometimes emergency medical services have to go to a medical facility to pick up a patient to transfer them to another level of care in the event of an emergency. Not all ambulances are going to be familiar with this area, sometimes those come from outlying communities. And so making sure that anybody that is on this campus for any reason, can navigate their way there to find it safely, quickly, and be able to prepare for turns safely is very important. So Henry Ford Health has implemented their proposal for these changes, and seek your approval, humbly, with the knowledge that they have gone to great lengths to try to make sure that they mitigate any potential motorist hazard that comes from lack of signage, as well as provide a clear, cohesive way for the campus to be able to take its part here in Livonia, as you know, a business partner who is providing a medical service. Thank you.

**BARINGHAUS** Thank you very much. With that we'll close the Board's public portion of the meeting and we'll begin the Board's comments with Mr. Testa.

**TESTA** Mr. Chair. So last time I was in support of this, but we just couldn't move forward because of the uncertainty about what the actual proposal was. The documents we had in hand didn't match the verbal explanation. I think part of it was on the Petitioner, part was on us for not having the latest documents. I do think it's greatly pared down from what was originally I guess submitted to the City would be the best way to say it. I do see the need, I compare this site to other medical sites that are within the city. I went around, for example, St. Mary's, so I think this is in line with what we've approved before and also what is already there and existing. I agree. Once you're on site, you kind of need guidance to get around. Thank you.

**BARINGHAUS** Thank you. Mr. Boloven.

**BOLOVEN** I agree with Mr. Testa. The feedback you guys took from the last meeting, it seems like you actually took that into account and made those changes and that's one of the big things the Board appreciates is you accepted that feedback. It's more concise than last time, some of the information we didn't have, some of the information wasn't clear. I think we all have a better picture now. And as presented, I would be in support this evening.

**BARINGHAUS** Thank you. Secretary Klisz.

**KLISZ** I agree with my colleagues, I really don't have anything further to add. It's, they summed it up well. I'll be in support.

**BARINGHAUS** Okay, thank you. Mr. Rotondo.

**ROTONDO** Yeah, my colleagues did a good job of summarizing everything. I don't have much to say. I'm in support of it.

**SCHEEL** I also agree with my fellow Commissioners and I will be in support of this also.

**BARINGHAUS** I too will be in support of it as well. It's a challenging piece of property, a lot of entrances, a lot of different ways to get to it. On the surface, it looks like a lot of signs but you did a very good job of organizing it for us tonight and I thank you for that and walking us through it. So based on that I will approve the variance as well. With that the floor is open for a motion.

**BOLOVEN** Mr. Chair.

**BARINGHAUS** Mr. Boloven.

**BOLOVEN** Resolved that the variance sought in appeal case number 2024-01-04, filed by Henry Ford Health System be granted for the following reasons and findings of fact: the uniqueness requirement is met due to the location of the property in relation to the expressway as well as a busy congested area. Denial of the variance would have severe consequences for the Petitioner due to the lack of signage for patients coming to the facility as well as staff, deliveries, vendors. The variance is fair in light of its effect on neighbor's property and in the spirit of the zoning ordinance because of no neighbor objection, and this property is classified as Regional Commercial under the Master Plan, and the proposed variance is not inconsistent with that classification. Further, that the variance be granted with the following conditions: that it be built as presented this evening.

**BARINGHAUS** Okay, support?

**SCHEEL** Support.

**BARINGHAUS** Okay, motion by Mr. Boloven, support by Ms. Scheel. Discussion?  
Secretary Klisz, will you take a vote?

**RESOLVED: APPEAL CASE NO. 2024-01-04, 29200 Schoolcraft Road:** an appeal was made to the Zoning Board of Appeals by Expedite the Diehl, LLC, on behalf of Henry Ford Health Systems, seeking to erect wall, ground and directional signs resulting in excess number of wall signs, excess height and area of directional signs and excess height and area of ground signs. Signage on utility poles on private property are not allowed.

| <b><u>Number of Wall Signs:</u></b>            | <b><u>Directional Sign Area:</u></b>                                                                                | <b><u>Directional Sign Height</u></b>              | <b><u>Ground Sign Height:</u></b>               | <b><u>Ground Sign Area:</u></b>                                  |
|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Allowed: One<br>Proposed: Three<br>Excess: Two | Allowed: 2 sq. ft.<br>Proposed: 47 sq. ft, 9 sq. ft., and 9 sq. ft.<br>Excess: 45 sq. ft., 7 sq. ft., and 7 sq. ft. | Allowed: 5 ft.<br>Proposed: 6 ft.<br>Excess: 1 ft. | Allowed: 6 ft<br>Proposed: 9 ft<br>Excess: 3 ft | Allowed: 30 sq. ft.<br>Proposed: 45 sq. ft.<br>Excess: 15 sq ft. |

This Commercial property is located on the north side of Schoolcraft (29200), between Middlebelt and Cardwell Roads, Lot. No. 095-99-0002-008, C-2 District, Commercial, rejected by the Inspection Department under Livonia Zoning Ordinance, Section 11.08 (3), 11.05 (16), **be granted** for the following reasons and findings of fact:

1. That the uniqueness requirement is met due to the location of the property in relation to the expressway as well as a busy, congested area,
2. That denial of the variance would have severe consequences for the Petitioner due to the lack of signage for patients coming to the facility as well as staff, deliveries, and vendors,
3. That the variance is fair in light of its effect on neighboring properties and the spirit of the ordinance because of no neighbor objection, and
4. That this property is classified as Regional Commercial under the Master Plan, and the proposed variance is not inconsistent with that classification.

Further, that the variance **be granted** with the following condition:

1. It will be built as presented to the Board at the meeting.

Further, that Petitioner withdrew its request for a variance allowing Petitioner to place its signs on utility poles.

**KLISZ** Sure. Ms. Scheel.

**SCHEEL** Aye.

**KLISZ** Mr. Rotondo.

**ROTONDO** Aye.

**KLISZ** Mr. Testa.

**TESTA** Aye.

**KLISZ** Mr. Boloven.

**BOLOVEN** Aye.

**KLISZ** Secretary Klisz votes aye. Chairman Baringhaus.

**BARINGHAUS** Aye.

**KLISZ** Passes six to zero.

**DIEHL** Thank you all very much.

**BARINGHAUS** Congratulations, your variance has been approved.

**DIEHL** We will follow up with the building department and work through the permit process.

**BARINGHAUS** Very good. Thank you very much. Good luck to you.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS**

**BARINGHAUS** Secretary Klisz, we have some minutes to approve... June 23? June? I'm sorry.

**KLISZ** Yes, if we have a motion to approve the minutes of January 23.

**TESTA** I'll make a motion to approve the meeting minutes for January 23, 2024.

**BOLOVEN** Second.

**BARINGHAUS** Okay, very good. Motion by Mr. Testa, supported by Mr. Boloven. All those in favor say aye.

The Board approved the meeting minutes from January 23, 2024 unanimously.

**BARINGHAUS** Any additional comments for the Board tonight?

**BOLOVEN** I got one quick one. Mr. Baringhaus, Chairman Baringhaus.

**BARINGHAUS** Sure.

**BOLOVEN** Before we started the meeting, there was some discussion as to appointments. The only reason I'm reading this for the record is because I found it while we were going and I want it part of the minutes so we can refer back to it when somebody asks. So upcoming, there's three upcoming terms ending this year: Greg Coppola, who was appointed by Rob Donovic. This is on July 12, 2024. Jim Baringhaus appointed by Laura Toy. Appointed for term ending July 12, 2024. Marc Rotondo appointed by Scott Morgan, July 12, 2024. Next year, there's two up. Tim Klisz, appointed by Brandon McCullough, 7-12-25. Chris Boloven was appointed by Kathleen McIntyre, 7-12-25. And then two years from now, in 2026. Mike Testa appointed by Jim Jolly, 7-12-26. And Lynda Scheel appointed by Scott Bahr, 7-12-26.

**BARINGHAUS** Okay, well, thank you for that update. Very good, good to know. Any other comments? Okay with that, do we have a motion to adjourn?

**TESTA** I move to adjourn.

**BARINGHAUS** Motion by Mr. Testa. Supported by Secretary Klisz. All those in favor say aye.

The Board unanimously approved the motion to adjourn.