

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
CITY OF LIVONIA
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2025

A Meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals of the City of Livonia was held on Tuesday, January 7, 2025.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Gregory G. Coppola, Chairman
Jim Baringhaus, Vice Chairman
Christopher Boloven
Michael Testa
Marc Rotondo
Timothy Klisz, Secretary

MEMBERS ABSENT: None (There is one vacancy on the Board)

OTHERS PRESENT: Mike Fisher, Chief Assistant City Attorney
David Popp, Building Inspector

The meeting was called to order at seven p.m. Chairman Coppola 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. 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.

(7:00)

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COPPOLA You can go ahead and call the first case. Just—

KLISZ You want to call this one?

COPPOLA Yeah, generally when I initially looked at this, I thought it would [inaudible] have a little bit of each of them would make sense.

KLISZ Okay.

COPPOLA The questions can be moved along.

KLISZ Right.

COPPOLA But I think we're going to have to address each of them separately.

APPEAL CASE NO. 2024-10-34, 13740-13780 Merriman: an appeal was made to the Zoning Board of Appeals by Seaway Realty, Inc., seeking to erect a new monument sign resulting in excessive sign height and area.

This Tech and Manufacturing property is located on the east side of Merriman Road (13740-13780), between Industrial Road and Schoolcraft Road, Lot. No. 102-99-0014-000, M-1, Light Manufacturing, rejected by the Inspection Department under Livonia Zoning Ordinance Section 11.08 (4) – Sign Regulations in Industrial Districts.

Sign Height

Allowed: 6 feet

Proposed: 9.67 feet

Excess: 3.67 feet

Sign Area

Allowed: 30 sq. ft.

Proposed: 54.25 sq. ft.

Excess: 24.25 sq. ft.

COPPOLA Alright, thanks, Secretary Klisz. Mr. Popp, anything you'd like to add?

POPP Nothing to add, Chair. Thank you.

COPPOLA Any questions for Mr. Popp? Seeing none, if the Petitioner can step up to the podium. We need a name and address first, if you would.

ZANNIS Angelo Zannis, 31801 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia, 48150.

COPPOLA All right, thank you, Mr. Zannis. I know you've got three of them here before us. We'll try to-- I think a lot of the questions regarding the proposed can be kind of handled altogether. I think there's more of a question of existing and any other needs or hardships that each of those locations have. Why don't you tell me a little bit about just overall what you're trying to achieve with the petition.

ZANNIS So my grandfather built these three properties that you have in front of you. Started the company back in the 60s and built them in 1976, 1982, and 1986. We are proactive landlords who care about the image of our buildings and how they represent the tenants who occupy them. Current signage has been in place since the 70s, 80s, and I decided to take initiative to update more esthetically pleasing signs, and so they will no longer be an eyesore for the community, as you can see on those drawings.

COPPOLA Okay. How tall—We're going to talk first about the property on Merriman.

ZANNIS Yes.

COPPOLA So how tall is the existing monument sign?

ZANNIS It is a three-foot cylinder sign, which is three foot in diameter, by 21 feet high.

COPPOLA And how many units do you have in this building?

ZANNIS We could have up to eight tenants in the building at any given time.

COPPOLA How many do you have right now?

ZANNIS Seven.

COPPOLA Okay, and how would you... so currently... I didn't count. 1-2-3-4-5, looks like there's seven spots on that. Looks like there's six that are filled. How do you get the same level of visibility of the eight tenants on the on the proposed sign?

ZANNIS So the current one, you can't see the lettering. It's a pretty small window, which is an acrylic-based window that has to be replaced every single time. Tenants are pretty limited, with logos, business, and description of the business on there for advertising, for clients and for the community. So having a larger sign there would allow certain tenants to have more space to advertise their business if they wanted to, and some don't need that large advertising. So that could leave some of the bigger tenants in the building to advertise a larger space.

COPPOLA Okay, so based on what you're proposing, how many tenants can fit on your side?

ZANNIS Well, roughly eight to ten.

COPPOLA Okay, and it looks like with the proposed sign, almost half of the space proposed in size, square footage is taken up either by advertising for yourself or for advertising for the center in the sense of, I see the address on the area, the address on the building, the

address on the monument sign, usually helpful, but the bulk, the majority, a good chunk of this is taken up by advertising for you.

ZANNIS Okay, understood, and that's just something that we wanted to show. Tenants could occupy those spaces. People know us by the block of addresses and industrial centers that we currently have, so we could address that, make it smaller. And we were just kind of showing you what it would look like if tenants were to kind of stack up the sign with advertisements of their business.

COPPOLA Okay. Questions for the Petitioner?

BARINGHAUS Mr. Chairman.

COPPOLA Vice Chair Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS Yes. You indicated on the tenant side area, on the proposed sign, what are those dimensions? The actual space where you will be displaying the tenants' names in the building, the eight to 10 tenants, you're forecasting to have.

ZANNIS Roughly eight foot by seven foot.

BARINGHAUS Okay. And then let's contrast that to your existing monument sign.

ZANNIS Yes.

BARINGHAUS What is the size of each of those panels, again?

ZANNIS It's roughly two foot wide by 18 inches. It's an acrylic piece that, if a tenant were to move out, we would sticker a new name on there and slide it in place.

BARINGHAUS So for you to get 10 tenants on the proposed sign, you may have to shrink the size of the area to display those tenants' names?

ZANNIS Yes. So they would... some tenants don't need a lot of advertising. Some tenants do. So depending on which tenants would like advertising, we would take that up with them.

BARINGHAUS Okay, thank you.

KLISZ Mr. Chair.

COPPOLA Secretary Klisz.

KLISZ For the Petitioner, you said it's currently set up for eight tenants. So would you be expecting in the future that one would split to get to nine or ten?

ZANNIS We could, yes, the building is set up for eight tenants, individual. But you know, offices change, and we split up certain parts of the building and give it a separate suite A, suite B, then they would have the option to split that on the sign as well.

KLISZ Okay, but then, let's just say we go full blown. You have 10 tenants on your sign. How big will that be? Is it going to be so tiny that no one can see it?

ZANNIS I don't think so, based on the square footage of the sign, we would allot to whoever has the most space to get the most signage on there and kind of work our way down as far as space.

KLISZ Okay. Thank you.

BARINGHAUS Mr. Chairman?

COPPOLA Vice Chair Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS In addition to the monument sign on Merriman....

ZANNIS Yes.

BARINGHAUS Do your tenants do additional advertising on your building?

ZANNIS Certain ones do. They do not get the visibility on Merriman Road, where a lot more of their traffic would come from. They do have some, but it's blocked by the building that is right on the corner of Merriman and Schoolcraft, which has the liquor store and the restaurant.

BARINGHAUS I was looking at your monument sign. It has, for example, there's Perfect Price Insurance Agency on the top of the monument sign, and then directly behind it, across the parking lot, there's a second Perfect Price Insurance Agency sign as well. And they still feel they are undersigned based on the fact that you have two signs of the lowest proximity?

ZANNIS We're going to be demoing the sign that's currently on the building, since we are doing a new metal siding on there, so that tenant will no longer have the option of having a sign on the building. That's in the plans to be done in the springtime, to take down the existing wood and put up metal wall paneling on the side of the building.

BARINGHAUS Okay. On the boulevard were you replacing the proposed monument sign? Seems like there's a lot of trees on that boulevard. How are you going to work around those?

ZANNIS We're going to redo the landscaping in there, but we don't want to start ripping out trees and cutting down things without an approval. So that's something that we would rework so they get the best visibility as possible.

BARINGHAUS It looks like your tenants not only use signs like on the building, like Perfect Price Insurance Agency, but they also use a lot of decal signage as well on windows and doors to the businesses. Do you still plan on continuing that practice in addition to the monument sign or...?

ZANNIS Well, there's two entrances in the building that you can go to one tenant or the other. So I would assume that they would keep at least a small window decal to notify, this is Perfect Price to the left, and this is ABC Company to the right. They share a common area with common bathrooms in two of the spaces. So that's something where I'm sure that they would want at least some type of small decal on their inside window to indicate where to go.

BARINGHAUS And on a number of your buildings, you also have some loading bay doors in the back, or large rolling metal doors.

ZANNIS Yes.

BARINGHAUS Some businesses identify their businesses by putting the logo on those doors. Will that practice continue as well?

ZANNIS Certain ones do for deliveries. It's mainly meant for people delivering stuff. FedEx, UPS, to know which tenant to go into, but they don't rely on that as their sole advertising. Since it's kind of sandwiched between two buildings, it's hard for tenants to see, and most of them do not go through the back warehouse doors.

BARINGHAUS Now you have three properties before us tonight. Will each property have a unique monument sign, or is it your plan to standardize those signs?

ZANNIS Our plan is to standardize the signs, have them all the same, look the same, so people will be able to recognize Seaway Realty Inc.'s building and bring up the image of the property and take out the old signs, which are obsolete and an eyesore.

BARINGHAUS Thank you.

COPPOLA Mr. Zannis, one thing that would have been helpful for us, it's missing, and maybe you have this data, is the measurements for each of the segments that you have. You have at the top, you have an address, and then the name of the center, and you have a tenant area, and then you have, I guess, an owner advertising area. Do you know what the dimensions of those two areas are? Well, actually all three and tenant area, too.

ZANNIS I believe the top portion would be 18 inches, where it advertises the address in the complex. The bottom portion, which states, "Seaway Realty, Inc.," or "Seaway" with the logo, that would depend on how much space the tenants would take up. We could make that smaller, but it really depends on how tenants want to advertise. It's pretty much a blank canvas for them. There's no slots in there. It's pretty much whatever they would want on the sign.

COPPOLA So that bottom section there is actually part, theoretically part of the tenant sign area?

ZANNIS Correct.

COPPOLA And that you just, for purposes of an example, you added—

ZANNIS Yes.

COPPOLA --Your name to show how that would slot in. So if I use, and again, I'm kind of eyeballing it. So if I use that as the size, it would look like there would only be four tenant signs, maybe five on each side. And would you do two-sided, like they have one on one side, they have one on the other side, or you would split it. I mean, how you...? Again, I'm still trying to understand how you get a tenant on here. I guess you're saying not everybody needs a sign right now, although it looks like everybody has a sign right now.

ZANNIS Right. Yeah. So they would end up having a horizontal section that would take up the width of it. We found that that's the best and easiest for pedestrians and people driving by to see, so we would allow them certain slots within that.

COPPOLA What are you planning on doing with the address numbers on the buildings? Are those going to stay or be removed because now you have that address on the...?

ZANNIS Correct, we would end up removing them because the sign would be, we feel sufficient enough. And if people do pull into the complex above the multi-tenant common entrance entryway, it does have the address on top and window stickers, just so you can see what space you're walking into and which lobby and then each tenant.

TESTA Mr. Chair?

COPPOLA Mr. Testa.

TESTA Thank you. Question for the Petitioner. Do you have examples on how that tenant area might be populated? That's what we don't have. Ours is just a blank. It's all white. Maybe you're speaking that some may be the full-length, some might be rectangles or squares. You have the examples of different layouts?

ZANNIS I do not.

TESTA Okay.

ZANNIS Not like a....

TESTA Not here, or do you have anything back at the office? Or?

ZANNIS I can have something made up at the office. I don't want to put tenant names or anything on there.

TESTA I think that's where there's some question here whether it's a big enough area to populate the eight to 10 businesses that you're talking about. It does look considerably smaller area-wise, new versus old.

ZANNIS Correct.

TESTA New looks smaller than the old, but you're confident that that area that you're asking for is going to be enough. You're not going to have to come back before us asking for more space and more signage?

ZANNIS Correct. Yeah. And the sign company that we are working with has done the contract for Ashley Capital. We have visited sites of Ashley Capital to get size and dimensions of their signs, and we found that based on the multi-tenant buildings, that's what we based it off of: slots and signage sizes for the tenants.

TESTA Okay. Thank you.

COPPOLA Any other questions for the Petitioner? All right, I don't know if this would procedurally work. Mike, can we table this one and move to the next one, because there's just specifics in regards to what's being replaced.

FISHER I think that's fine. What you want to get to is to look at all three of these before you cast your votes on them.

COPPOLA Correct.

FISHER That makes perfect sense.

COPPOLA Okay. So what I'm going to do, then, just for the record, is I'm going to... I don't know if table is the right word. We're going to set aside the first petition for 13740 through 13780 Merriman, and then now bring up the petition for 31035 to 31041 Schoolcraft. We need to

do a... does Secretary Klisz need to do a kind of announcement, or can we just move forward based on my...?

FISHER I think that plus the fact that we've got so few people in the audience.

COPPOLA You think we're good?

FISHER I think you've covered it.

APPEAL CASE NO. 2024-10-35, Seaway Realty, Inc., 31035-31041 Schoolcraft: seeking to erect a new monument sign resulting in excessive sign height and area.

This Tech and Manufacturing property is located on the south side of Schoolcraft Road (31035-31041), between Merriman Road and Middlebelt Road, Lot. No. 102-99-0053-000, M-1, Light Manufacturing, rejected by the Inspection Department under Livonia Zoning Ordinance Section 11.08 (4) – Sign Regulations in Industrial Districts.

Sign Height

Allowed: 6 feet

Proposed: 9.67 feet

Excess: 3.67 feet

Sign Area

Allowed: 30 sq. ft.

Proposed: 54.25 sq. ft.

Excess: 24.25 sq. ft.

COPPOLA We're going to move on to the second related petition, the 31035 to 31041 Schoolcraft. So this is basically an exact copy of the preexisting, I mean, the proposal for the prior one correct?

ZANNIS Correct. That was the original building that my grandfather built in 1976 that one currently measures eight foot by nine foot, so we would be reducing the size of that.

COPPOLA My first question was, what's the size of that one? Yeah, that's actually bigger than the proposed.

ZANNIS Correct. Yep, the existing is bigger than the proposed.

COPPOLA It looks like eight foot by nine foot. So. Okay. Its's taller on one.... Okay. Questions for the Petitioner on this one?

BARINGHAUS On the second case?

COPPOLA Yes.

BARINGHAUS Okay. Mr. Chairman.

COPPOLA Vice Chair Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS I'm just unclear on the location at this address. It looks like you've begun some landscaping work on the front of the building, like it's clear there's dirt. Is that the site we're referring to?

ZANNIS No, that is the next-door building, which is 31067 to 31077.

COPPOLA So we'll talk about that one in a minute. This is the one that's got, I think the sign—

BARINGHAUS Gotcha.

COPPOLA --Of the one you just mentioned, actually, is no longer there.

ZANNIS Correct.

BARINGHAUS Okay, we jumped a little bit. It'll work. Just keep going.

ZANNIS 31035.

BARINGHAUS However, while we're on the subject.

ZANNIS Don't worry about it, I'm in no hurry.

BARINGHAUS I just have to know this. Are you going to keep the sculpture?

ZANNIS Sculpture? Yes.

BARINGHAUS Also the flagpole?

ZANNIS Yes. The flagpole we keep. We have a service that maintains and puts up new flags quarterly. Changes lights, changes ropes and everything. So.

BARINGHAUS Okay, so this will pretty much stay the same, with the exception of the sign.

ZANNIS Correct.

BARINGHAUS No major landscaping rework like--

ZANNIS No.

BARINGHAUS [Inaudible] Thank you.

COPPOLA Mr. Popp, could you do me a favor while we're continuing to talk? We approved something for Ashley Capital, it's probably a little over a year. Maybe do the one on Middlebelt?

BARINGHAUS Was it Eckles?

COPPOLA Could you check and see what was approved on that one? So just recapping some of this-

POPP Ashley Capital is actually the owner on that property, just to be clear. So....

COPPOLA Yeah, I think the owner is a multi-tenant.

POPP Okay, and what road is it on, do you think?

COPPOLA They put in a monument sign. They approved a monument sign.

POPP I know. What road do you think it was on?

COPPOLA I think it was Middlebelt.

POPP Middlebelt?

COPPOLA Well, there's more than one.

BARINGHAUS Yeah, that's it, probably.

POPP I'll see what I can find. Give me a couple minutes.

COPPOLA Are you going to search by name?

POPP Yeah, I'm gonna go through BS&A. I'll search by name and see what I can find.

COPPOLA Okay, because I think there's actually two that we did for them over the past probably three years. Okay, so just to recap on this one, you're replacing an existing sign that's eight by nine. You're putting it in basically the same place. So it's just, in a sense, updating.

ZANNIS Yes, that's correct.

COPPOLA So I'm going to now set this one aside.

KLISZ We do have one letter on this one. I don't know if you want to just....

COPPOLA We'll do those all. Should we do the--

KLISZ I mean, it's just one and it's on this file, if you want me to read it.

COPPOLA Sure.

KLISZ We have one letter that's on this particular file, not on the other two. By John McFarland, 30881 Schoolcraft, Livonia, (letter of approval was read). So that's the only correspondence in all three files.

APPEAL CASE NO. 2024-10-36, Seaway Realty, Inc., 31067-31077 Schoolcraft: seeking to erect a new monument sign resulting in excessive sign height and area.

This Tech and Manufacturing property is located on the south side of Schoolcraft Road (31067-31077), between Merriman Road and Middlebelt Road, Lot. No. 102-99-0057-000, M-1, Light Manufacturing, rejected by the Inspection Department under Livonia Zoning Ordinance Section 11.08 (4) – Sign Regulations in Industrial Districts.

Sign Height

Allowed: 6 feet

Proposed: 9.67 feet

Excess: 3.67 feet

Sign Area

Allowed: 30 sq. ft.

Proposed: 54.25 sq. ft.

Excess: 24.25 sq. ft.

COPPOLA Okay, now I'm going to move on to the third one, which is 31067 through 31077 Schoolcraft. Again, same proposed—

ZANNIS Correct.

COPPOLA --Signage. There was a sign that existed. What was the size of the signage removed?

ZANNIS That was the same cylinder, tube sign that was on Merriman and Schoolcraft.

COPPOLA You said that was what? 21 feet tall?

ZANNIS Yes.

COPPOLA Should you put a light on that for airplanes?

[Laughter]

COPPOLA Okay, so your plan is to put that basically in the same spot as the old sign, or are you moving that?

ZANNIS We would be putting that in the same spot.

COPPOLA How many tenants are gonna—

ZANNIS It'll probably be set back just a little bit, just because the sign after it, we want people to have a good view on [inaudible] and seeing each complex. So if you move back

COPPOLA And this one here, you've done some work. You're starting work on....

ZANNIS We ripped out trees and vegetation and brush there, that's been there just to be able to see the building better.

COPPOLA And then so for, similar to the first question, you've got your address on the building, will you then take that down? You propose to take that down?

ZANNIS Yes, that's correct.

COPPOLA So you'll have it on the monument sign. Question, for just on this one. How many tenants are in this building? Seven?

ZANNIS Sorry? Sorry, which building?

COPPOLA I'm on the 31067 through 77 Schoolcraft.

ZANNIS Six tenants currently.

COPPOLA Okay. And how many tenants can it fit?

ZANNIS That one would be eight.

COPPOLA Okay. Any luck, Mr. Popp? I recall both of them. I just I know they were relatively larger, but that whole development was pretty darn large, too.

POPP I've got a 12200 Middlebelt that's owned by Ashley Capital.

COPPOLA I think that might be the one.

POPP Trying to find the sign, because there's, like....

COPPOLA There's lots of signs.

POPP 1000 addresses and a million suite numbers. I'm just trying to find where the sign permit was. I assume you're wanting to know what the size was on it?

COPPOLA Yeah, what was the variance we ended up approving?

POPP Okay, let me see if I can find the variance on that. I was trying to find a sign for that.

BARINGHAUS Mr. Chairman.

COPPOLA Vice Chair Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS In terms of the signage, I'm assuming it's illuminated.

ZANNIS That's correct. All signs that are currently in place do have power run to them. The new proposed signs would as well be illuminated.

BARINGHAUS Do they operate on timers?

ZANNIS Yes, astronomical timers.

COPPOLA So they would shut off at what time?

ZANNIS They're basically dawn to dusk timers. And they take into the account daylight savings time. So it's a set it and forget it. That's how—

COPPOLA So they'd be lit up all the time when they start is what you're saying?

ZANNIS Correct.

COPPOLA That's true today?

ZANNIS Some of the, well, the sign that's no longer there, obviously, but yes, there is illumination on these signs. They haven't been updated, so they use the old incandescent bulbs. So.

BARINGHAUS All right, thank you.

TESTA Ashley Capital... It might have actually been the Roush fence.

POPP Yeah, it's... I got the ZBA case number. I'm just trying to find it still. It was back in 2016.

COPPOLA No, I'm thinking of the one. Yeah, there was one that they converted to basically, primarily warehouse space.

POPP Yeah, this is Livonia Distribution Center, LLC. It's two monument signs 300 feet apart. I do not have a size yet, so bear with me one second.

COPPOLA Yeah.

POPP So it looks like the ground signs, six foot by 31 foot, two foot by 20 foot. I mean, those are pretty large signs. Then there's a new ground sign, four foot by six foot. Six foot tall is the height. Then there's another one, eight foot by 10 foot. The 10 foot is the height.

COPPOLA Okay.

POPP I think the one that says ground signs, that's really large, that must be a mis-- that permit must be wrong, that's gotta be a wall sign, six foot by 31 foot.

COPPOLA Okay.

POPP So four foot by six foot, and....

COPPOLA That one would have been....

POPP Eight foot by 10 foot.

COPPOLA Eight foot by 10 foot would be the one that would have needed the variance, that other one would have been compliant, right?

POPP I believe so. At that time, I'm not familiar with what the ordinance was in '16.

COPPOLA I think it would have been in compliance. Okay, any other questions for the Petitioner? I know we've read the correspondence. I just wanted to give the audience any opportunity that wanted to speak for or against the petition. So we've been following protocol since there are not... we read the correspondence. Did you want to say something?

EADEH Yes, yes. So I'm Edward Eadah from 31073 Schoolcraft Road. I'm a tenant in the building under the third petition.

COPPOLA Okay.

EADEH I appreciate the opportunity to be here, and so I worked alongside Angelo in kind of figuring this all out. And I want to say that the sign size, which seems to be in question, was a conservative figure to make sure that we were as in compliance as possible,

right? The code states for 30 square feet. Of course, this is about 15 or so square feet. We didn't want to go too crazy, because of course that probably would go kind of way above what would be allowed in the City, although our biggest problem as a tenant is that people can't find us, right? So when people come by for their deliveries or clients that stop by, they have a hard time locating our building, because even though the address is a block, it doesn't say our specific address number, which people often look for, along with incorrect GPS, which I'm sure we've all been accustomed to. And so to have a sign that is of a substantial size would be super helpful. The current sign that we have in our building was that cylindrical sign. It was extremely cumbersome to get a sign in there, as well as it was facing north versus facing west, where people drive by. And so it was almost pointless for us to put a sign in there, because people had to essentially rubberneck as they passed the building before they can actually see our building.

COPPOLA Okay. Anything else?

EADDEH I appreciate it.

COPPOLA Just out of curiosity, what business is yours?

EADDEH Yeah.

COPPOLA What do you guys do?

EADDEH Yeah, so E & E Tech, we're an IT and cyber security firm.

COPPOLA Okay.

EADDEH Yeah.

COPPOLA All right.

EADDEH I heard you guys talk about IT issues earlier, so I was trying to jump in to help, but I figured it's probably not my place.

BARINGHAUS [Inaudible]

EADDEH I can help you. It depends on if you approve or deny. That's all I'm saying.

COPPOLA I'm sure it's all user issues.

BARINGHAUS Yeah. Well, thank you.

EADDEH Thank you.

BARINGHAUS Just need the on switch.

COPPOLA Mr. Zannis, is there anything you'd like to say in closing?

ZANNIS No, I appreciate you guys taking the time to go through all of our drawings and take a look at what we were proposing.

COPPOLA All right, thank you. You can have a seat right now. So we're going to close the public portion of the case. I'm going to start, and we're going to, I think we, for purposes of comments, we can combine them, so all three cases we will be discussing at one time. So I'll start the Board's comments with Mr. Testa.

TESTA Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have no concern with these proposals. I appreciate the final comment that basically you're being very conservative. Trying not to go overboard. I appreciate that the signage is basically smaller, or basically the same size as previous. And I think it is a great refreshing and going to be a much better look. So I can support these.

COPPOLA All right. Mr. Boloven.

BOLOVEN I agree with Mr. Testa. I would have liked, as the Chair stated, to see a little bit more specific sign itself, rather than just the blank white space. But in comparison to the other signs that are there, obviously it's an improvement, and size isn't that much far off, a 22-foot pillar, is quite small. But that being said, I can support with the condition. I'm trying to word the condition that for the area to address the concerns of the Board, but I want to see some conditions on the specs of the signage without tabling. Thank you.

COPPOLA All right. Thank you. Vice Chair Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS I agree with my colleagues. I think the signage replaces the signage that basically was obsolete, as the tenant indicated, it only points one direction. There's a lot of hardships in the area. One is the fact that it's a fairly high traffic area. I grew up in that area, and I still missed the building when I was looking for it, but there are a lot of buildings in the area. It gets a little dense and they all kind of blend in. I think this will get a little more distinctiveness. Also, I think having signage lower to the ground will be beneficial, instead of looking 21 feet up in the air, trying to find a business as well. So based on that, I'll approve the variance.

COPPOLA All right, thank you. Secretary Klisz.

KLISZ I agree. There's really not much else. Everyone's kind of said everything that I was thinking about in this. It's consistent. It looks better. They're refreshing the building. It's a win-win for everyone. So I'll be in support of each one.

COPPOLA All right, thank you. Mr. Rotondo.

ROTONDO Yeah, I don't have any issues with this. I think my colleagues obviously summed it up pretty well. It's clearly an improvement to what's there right now, and it's a nice-looking sign, and obviously smaller than what's currently there. So I have no issues with it. I could be in favor of approving.

COPPOLA All right. I'm generally in agreement with my Co-Board members here. I think the main driver for me in supporting this is that they're replacing signs that are higher or larger than existing. If you had come to us with a monument sign or something that was in compliance and asked for more, I would probably struggle with that. I also, I guess, from my perspective, again, because of those, I think it's good. If you had come in, and I think I just want this for the record, for the next person that shows up and said, "Hey, you gave this." I want to put it into perspective. I think number one, while I think the address numbers are appropriate for the sign. "Seaway Commerce Center" could have gone on the building or something, because you still have the ability to put a wall sign on. So I would have rather seen that on the wall and the size reduced. I also wanted, when I saw the "Seaway Real Estate" sign, I thought that was a permanent fixture, and I would have suggested that that's not appropriate, but I see you're trying to show that that's what one of the signs will look like. So that would have brought you a lot closer to compliance. If it wasn't for the issue, again, I think you're improving what you currently have, and I think it will look a lot better. There's also, now there's some little kind of consistency around the building that you own, which I think is good. So again, just for the record, if notwithstanding the existing signage and the improvement, this would be something that I probably would not support. So I will go ahead and open. Oh, and then I just wanted to say, for my purposes, the one condition that I would, or the two conditions I would like is, number one, that the addresses on the buildings be removed to clean things up. And then number two, any large tenant signs that would you know? Now we'll go on to the sign length. I think the first petition, had the tenant, big tenant sign right on the front. Yes?

POPP From an Ordinance perspective and for Fire they have to have four-inch signs on each unit, four-inch-high address. They have to have an address sign on the unit for fire stations, minimum four inches tall, is what our ordinance says.

COPPOLA Okay, so if we condition it--

POPP Normally, we require it on the rear door and the front door for Fire. So a Fire comes in the back side to those doors that they know what unit they're in.

COPPOLA There's no door anywhere near where their numbers are.

POPP Correct. I'm just stating, just again for the record, the units themselves, where there's an exterior door that leads in the unit has to have a four-inch address label.

COPPOLA Okay.

POPP So that Fire can know where they're going.

BARINGHAUS Do they need the large...?

POPP They do not need to be large. Correct. Yep, it just has to. The units have to be labeled.

COPPOLA I'd suggest no more than what's in compliance with... I think it's... I'll go ahead and open the floor for a motion.

BARINGHAUS Mr. Chairman.

COPPOLA Vice Chair Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS Resolved, that the variance sought in Appeal Case Number 2024-10-34, filed by Seaway Realty, Incorporated, be granted for the following reasons and findings of fact: the uniqueness requirement is met due to the obsolete signage currently in use, denial of the variance would have severe consequences to the Petitioner due to the lack of customers locating their buildings and the inconsistent signs between three facilities. The variance is fair in light of its effect on neighboring properties. In the spirit of zoning ordinances, due to that there's no protest from existing neighbors or businesses. The property itself is classified as M-1 under the Master Plan, which is light manufacturing, and the proposed variance is not inconsistent with that classification. Further, that the variance be granted with the following conditions: one, that the traditional building signage be removed from the building, except signage that conforms to the ordinances of the City, and then also remove the large tenant signs on the building as well.

TESTA Support.

COPPOLA I have a motion by Vice Chair Baringhaus, supported by Mr. Testa, conditions as stated, any discussion?

FISHER Mr. Chair?

COPPOLA Yes, sir.

FISHER The Master Plan classification of this property is Tech and Manufacturing. Just wanted to clear that up.

BARINGHAUS Thank you. It does say on the... the public notice said,.

FISHER Right.

BARINGHAUS M-1, Light Manufacturing. So thank you.

FISHER The resolution is going to say....

BARINGHAUS Thank you.

COPPOLA Resolution revised, as suggested. We need a little more precision in the conditions. Or is everybody comfortable with that?

BARINGHAUS Let me see them again. Just so... I said, Mr. Chairman,

COPPOLA I think you said, "remove the additional signage..."

BARINGHAUS Remove the what? Large tenant signs...

COPPOLA Right, remove the large tenant signs.

BARINGHAUS Okay.

COPPOLA And...

BARINGHAUS I was trying to follow the condition.

COPPOLA And to remove, they remove the large address signs, except as required pursuant to ordinances.

BARINGHAUS Large address signs, except for signage required by... address signage required by ordinance.

COPPOLA Right. Everybody good with that? Okay, take roll, please.

On a motion by Baringhaus, supported by Testa, the variance was granted.

RESOLVED: APPEAL CASE NO. 2024-10-34, 13740-13780 Merriman: an appeal was made to the Zoning Board of Appeals by Seaway Realty, Inc., seeking to erect a new monument sign resulting in excessive sign height and area.

This Tech and Manufacturing property is located on the east side of Merriman Road (13740-13780), between Industrial Road and Schoolcraft Road, Lot. No. 102-99-0014-000, M-1, Light Manufacturing, rejected by the Inspection Department under Livonia Zoning Ordinance Section 11.08 (4) – Sign Regulations in Industrial Districts,

Sign Height

Allowed: 6 feet
Proposed: 9.67 feet
Excess: 3.67 feet

Sign Area

Allowed: 30 sq. ft.
Proposed: 54.25 sq. ft.
Excess: 24.25 sq. ft.

be granted for the following reasons and findings of fact:

1. That the uniqueness requirement is met due to the obsolete and inconsistent signage among the Petitioner's properties,
2. That denial of the variance would have severe consequences for the Petitioner due to the inconsistent signage and inability of customers to locate their buildings,
3. That the variance is fair in light of its effect on neighboring properties, and in the spirit of the zoning ordinance due to no protest from existing neighbors or businesses in the area, and
4. That this property is classified as Tech and Manufacturing under the Master Plan, and the proposed variance is not inconsistent with that classification.

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

1. That the large tenant signs on the building be removed, and
2. Large address signs on the building will be removed except signage which is required by ordinance.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Baringhaus, Testa, Boloven, Klisz, Rotondo, Coppola

NAYS: None

Vacancy: One seat

PASS/FAIL/TABLED: PASS: PASS

KLISZ Mr. Rotondo.

ROTONDO Aye.

KLISZ Mr. Testa.

TESTA Aye.

KLISZ Mr. Boloven.

BOLOVEN Aye.

KLISZ Secretary Klisz votes aye. Vice Chairman Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS Aye.

KLISZ Chairman Coppola.

COPPOLA Aye.

KLISZ Passes six to zero. That's for case 34.

COPPOLA So for case 35, do I have a motion?

BARINGHAUS Mr. Chairman.

COPPOLA Vice Chair Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS Okay. Resolved that the variance sought in Appeal Case Number 2024-10-35, filed by Seaway Realty, be approved for the following reasons and findings of fact: again, the uniqueness requirement is met for again, current, obsolete signage and inconsistent signage for the three locations. Denial of the variance would have severe consequences for the Petitioner due to the inability of customers to locate their businesses. The variance is fair in light of its effect on neighboring properties and the spirit of zoning ordinances, due to the fact that there is no neighbor or business protest to this proposed signage. The property itself, again, is... Mr. Fisher, still showing on one it's Tech and Manufacturing, I'm sorry.

FISHER Tech and Manufacturing.

BARINGHAUS I'm sorry?

FISHER It's Tech and Manufacturing.

BARINGHAUS Okay, showing it's Tech and Manufacturing under the Master Plan, and the proposed variance is not inconsistent with the classification. Further, that the variance be granted with the following conditions. One, removal of large tenant signs. Two, removal of large address signs, except for the address signs required by ordinances.

TESTA Support.

COPPOLA I have a motion by Vice Chair Baringhaus supported by Mr. Testa, same conditions as prior. Any discussion? Seeing none. Can you go ahead and take roll, please?

On a motion by Baringhaus, supported by Testa, the variance was granted.

RESOLVED: APPEAL CASE NO. 2024-10-35, 31035-31041 Schoolcraft: an appeal was made to the Zoning Board of Appeals by Seaway Realty, Inc., seeking to erect a new monument sign resulting in excessive sign height and area.

This Tech and Manufacturing property is located on the south side of Schoolcraft Road (31035-31041), between Merriman Road and Middlebelt Road, Lot. No. 102-99-0053-000, M-1, Light Manufacturing, rejected by the Inspection Department under Livonia Zoning Ordinance Section 11.08 (4) – Sign Regulations in Industrial Districts.

Sign Height

Allowed: 6 feet
Proposed: 9.67 feet
Excess: 3.67 feet

Sign Area

Allowed: 30 sq. ft.
Proposed: 54.25 sq. ft.
Excess: 24.25 sq. ft.

be granted for the following reasons and findings of fact:

1. That the uniqueness requirement is met due to the obsolete and inconsistent signage among the Petitioner's properties,
2. That denial of the variance would have severe consequences for the Petitioner due to the inconsistent signage and inability of customers to locate their buildings,
3. That the variance is fair in light of its effect on neighboring properties, and in the spirit of the zoning ordinance due to no protest from existing neighbors or businesses in the area, and
4. That this property is classified as Tech and Manufacturing under the Master Plan, and the proposed variance is not inconsistent with that classification.

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

1. That the large tenant signs on the building be removed, and
2. Large address signs on the building will be removed except signage which is required by ordinance.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Baringhaus, Testa, Boloven, Klisz, Rotondo, Coppola

NAYS: None

Vacancy: One seat

PASS/FAIL/TABLED: PASS: PASS

KLISZ Mr. Rotondo.

ROTONDO Aye.

KLISZ Mr. Testa.

TESTA Aye.

KLISZ Mr. Boloven.

BOLOVEN Aye.

KLISZ Secretary Klisz votes aye. Vice Chairman Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS Aye.

KLISZ Chairman Coppola.

COPPOLA Aye.

KLISZ Passes six to zero.

COPPOLA Okay, for Appeal Case 36. Do I have a motion?

BARINGHAUS Mr. Chairman.

COPPOLA Vice Chair Baringhaus. You're on a roll.

BARINGHAUS I am, it's going. The variance sought in Appeal Case No. 2024-10-36, filed by Seaway Realty, be granted for the following reasons and findings of fact: the uniqueness requirement is met due to the obsolete and inconsistent signage amongst its properties. Denial of the variance would have severe consequences for the Petitioner due to the inability of its customers to locate its facilities. The variance is fair in light of its effect on neighboring properties, and in the spirit of the zoning ordinances, due to no protests from neighbors or businesses in the area. The property is classified as Tech and Manufacturing under the Master Plan, and the proposed variance is not inconsistent with that classification. Further, that the variance be granted with the following conditions: one, the large tenant signs be removed, and then second, the large address signs be removed, except for address signs that are required by city ordinance.

TESTA Support.

COPPOLA I have a motion by Vice Chair Baringhaus, supported by Mr. Testa. And we have the same conditions as prior, any discussion? Seeing none. Take roll.

On a motion by Baringhaus, supported by Testa, the variance was granted.

RESOLVED: APPEAL CASE NO. 2024-10-36, Seaway Realty, Inc., 31067-31077 Schoolcraft: seeking to erect a new monument sign resulting in excessive sign height and area.

This Tech and Manufacturing property is located on the south side of Schoolcraft Road (31067-31077), between Merriman Road and Middlebelt Road, Lot. No. 102-99-0057-000, M-1, Light Manufacturing, rejected by the Inspection Department under Livonia Zoning Ordinance Section 11.08 (4) – Sign Regulations in Industrial Districts.

Sign Height

Allowed: 6 feet
Proposed: 9.67 feet
Excess: 3.67 feet

Sign Area

Allowed: 30 sq. ft.
Proposed: 54.25 sq. ft.
Excess: 24.25 sq. ft.

be granted for the following reasons and findings of fact:

1. That the uniqueness requirement is met due to the obsolete and inconsistent signage among the Petitioner's properties,
2. That denial of the variance would have severe consequences for the Petitioner due to the inability of customers to locate their buildings,

3. That the variance is fair in light of its effect on neighboring properties, and in the spirit of the zoning ordinance due to no protest from existing neighbors or businesses in the area, and
4. That this property is classified as Tech and Manufacturing under the Master Plan, and the proposed variance is not inconsistent with that classification.

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

1. That the large tenant signs on the building be removed, and
2. Large address signs on the building will be removed except signage which is required by ordinance.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Baringhaus, Testa, Boloven, Klisz, Rotondo, Coppola

NAYS: None

Vacancy: One seat

PASS/FAIL/TABLED: PASS: PASS

KLISZ Mr. Rotondo.

ROTONDO Aye.

KLISZ Mr. Testa.

TESTA Aye.

KLISZ Mr. Boloven.

BOLOVEN Aye.

KLISZ Secretary Klisz votes aye. Vice Chairman Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS Aye.

KLISZ Chairman Coppola.

COPPOLA Aye.

KLISZ Six to zero.

COPPOLA All right, Mr. Zannis. Your variance has been approved. So looking forward to seeing the new signs and good luck.

ZANNIS Thank you guys for your help.

COPPOLA Thank you.

BARINGHAUS Thank you.

COPPOLA Alright. Call the next case.

APPEAL CASE NO. 2024-10-37, Laurel Investment, LLC, on behalf of Lessee Cooper's Hawk Winery & Restaurant 17123 North Laurel Park Drive: seeking to install a wall sign package resulting in an excessive number of signs and excessive total sign area.

This Regional Commercial property is located on the west side of North Laurel Park Drive (17123), between University Park Drive and Six Mile Road, Lot. No. 028-99-0006-007, C-4, High Rise Commercial, rejected by the Inspection Department under Livonia Zoning Ordinance Section 11.08 (3) – Sign Regulations in C-2, C-3 and C-4 Districts.

Total Signs

Allowed: 2
Proposed: 4
Excess: 2

Total Sign Area

Allowed: 197.25 sq. ft.
Proposed: 220.9 sq. ft.
Excess: 23.65 sq. ft.

COPPOLA All right, thank you. Mr. Popp, anything you'd like to add?

POPP Nothing to add, Chair. Thank you.

COPPOLA Any questions for Mr. Popp? Mr. Popp, it's been determined that the feather is considered a sign.

POPP They determined that because it is a logo, that they're considering it a separate sign, correct.

COPPOLA Okay.

POPP At least that was the last discussion that I heard on that.

COPPOLA The Petitioner... there he is. Name and address, if you would, please.

ESCUDERO Good evening, everyone. My name is Amadeus Escudero, with Design Collective Architects here on behalf of the owner and Cooper's Hawk Restaurant team. We are the designer and architects for the building here at 17123 North Laurel Park Drive, Cooper's Hawk Restaurant.

COPPOLA Mr. Escudero, why don't you tell us a little bit about the proposal? What I'd like to understand is, from your client's perspective, what's the hardship that would suggest that the Board should provide the variance?

ESCUDERO Certainly. A couple of unique conditions that make signage a matter of concern for the clients in this site in particular, three main things here. Number one is the improved safety. Improved safety through better sight lines. The site itself is about 10 feet down below the elevation of Six Mile Road. So that's a little bit difficult for sight lines, for traffic going east and westbound on Six Mile Road. On top that Six Mile Road is particularly fast traffic. It's three lanes going both ways. And then, in addition to that, there is a considerable setback for

where the building starts and where the [inaudible] light is so and then the last point related to that is that you do need to turn from Six Mile Road to North Laurel Park Drive into the parking lot itself. So for all those reasons, we love to push for improved safety through additional signage. And then number two, just better wayfinding. Also kind of related to the first point, wherein it's a four-sided building, so all four sides of this building is very much exposed. So being able to have a sign for both the eastbound traffic and westbound traffic, and for the cars going from behind, from the North Park Laurel Drive would be important for not only safety, but also for restaurant experience, as you would drive into the site. And then lastly, it's just for beautification and streetscaping of the general site there. We do believe it's not only in [inaudible] good for the business, but it's also good for the overall streetscape. And then I think the one last point I want to make mention is that we have reduced from the initial design the total square footage of the signage, and removed one sign from the north side of the building and then and enough so that if you discounted the feather wall art as [an] actual sign, we would be within the allotted square footage. We would still be over that one number of signs, from three to two or two to three, but we would be within the spirit of complying with the signage rule. Square footage-wise.

COPPOLA Okay, the documentation that you provide... let me step back. So this appears, based on the layout and some other documentation I reviewed, that there's going to be, you'll have visibility on, actually, two monument signs: one that will be dedicated and then one that will be shared. The shared one on the entrance, off of the main drive. I can't remember what it's called now. And then you're going to have a monument sign, which is, I think the location is yet to be determined.

ESCUDERO Yes, it'll be right in front of the building, towards Six Mile. That's one of the pertinent sign plans that we want to improve upon for sure.

COPPOLA And that will be perpendicular to Six Mile or facing Six Mile?

ESCUDERO Perpendicular.

COPPOLA So let me ask then about... in your proposal you have a "Now Open" sign. Is that a temporary sign?

ESCUDERO Yes, yes.

COPPOLA So the sign to the west, is it the intent to have...? I mean, what are you intending to have visibility at? Because there's... I'm not sure who would actually see that. So the west elevation sign, which faces towards 275, and again, I think it was stated, I'm hoping I'm not confusing the case to state that the property is actually going to sit down a little bit?

ESCUDERO Little bit, about 10 feet or so.

COPPOLA So the west sign visibility that I'm struggling to understand, if that's actually going to be visible.

ESCUDERO It is indeed visible before the highway, there's still another building that I believe is going to be situated by, I want to say Chops Restaurant.

COPPOLA Is that the Capital Grille?

ESCUDERO Okay. Sorry, yes, you're right. Capital Grille, yes, they will have their own signage there, of course, too. But yes, the west signage is going to be primarily for the eastbound traffic and also just another method of wayfinding once the cars get into that parking lot that's semi-shared or adjacent to the parking lot of Capital Grille.

COPPOLA Okay. Questions for the Petitioner?

TESTA Mr. Chair?

COPPOLA Mr. Testa.

TESTA I have a question. I'm not sure if the Petitioner can answer. Maybe Legal or Inspection. Is there a petition coming in the future for Capital Grille? So today's petition is only for Cooper's. Especially the monument sign. I'd rather know....

POPP I do not have an answer for that. It's on the plans that went through...

TESTA Council.

POPP ...Council, so I would assume, and that's elsewhere in the plans, if you really do a deep dive into it, but we don't have any permits or anything issued for any of this.

TESTA Yeah, it looks like they use a different architect based on the drawings from City Council. So you don't know anything about...?

ESCUDERO Apologies. I don't have insights.

TESTA That's fine. Yeah, okay. I had the same question as the Chairman about the purpose of the west elevation sign, so thank you for clarifying that. I mean, I understand the answer. I'm not sure I totally support that directional. Thank you.

BARINGHAUS Mr. Chairman.

COPPOLA Vice Chair Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS I know right now we're looking at Cooper's Hawk, but do you know where Capital Grille will be, or, refresh our memory, where it will be in relation to Cooper's Hawk?

ESCUDERO Yes, it'll be west of the Cooper's Hawk site. Yeah.

BARINGHAUS Okay, again. And then at this point, do you have a location identified for the monument sign?

ESCUDERO Yes, I believe it will be somewhat dead center from the main entry. So I guess if you look at the south elevation sign. Just south of that.

POPP It's on the Council....

BARINGHAUS Okay, great, thank you.

ESCUDERO And then, just as added information, a little bit more, various landscaping will be added to the [inaudible] Six Mile, which is what we want, but also does make wayfinding an added challenge.

BOLOVEN Mr. Chair.

COPPOLA Mr. Boloven.

BOLOVEN Question for the Petitioner, and you might not be aware, I don't know your involvement. Is there a cross-parking agreement between Capital Grille and Cooper's Hawk?

ESCUDERO I believe there is, but I am not privy to the exact agreement.

BOLOVEN Because I'm looking at where you're placing the monument sign. I'm looking at the proposed layout. Capital Grille is going to be west of you. You're going to have the new hotel north of you.

ESCUDERO Correct.

BOLOVEN It looks like there's a bunch of shared parking between all these entities. Where you're planning, based on this picture, to put the monument sign, it looks like it's probably gonna be dead square center between the shared parking.

ESCUDERO The monument sign will be towards Six Mile Road and not towards the parking lot, so south of our building.

BOLOVEN Correct. So based on the layout that's going to be right between Capital Grille and Cooper's Hawk, if it's up Six Mile.

COPPOLA Are we looking at the same general [inaudible]?

BOLOVEN So they're going to put it right here. Oh, that's different than this. That's different.

ESCUDERO Yeah.

COPPOLA But it said TBD on the on the other detail.

POPP It's on page 27 of the Council packet.

COPPOLA Yeah, it just says TBD on there. I think that was just a notation, not a location.

BOLOVEN So, Mr. Fisher, how's this been handled in the past? When you got a new development like this, where there should be overlap, rather than obviously, you could set a precedent by deciding on one.

FISHER Well, I think we have a reasonable belief there is a parking shortage here, we probably need to deal with that. It's at least theoretically possible. I have no idea, because the question never occurred to me until just now, but it's also entirely possible that you have enough space there to park everybody.

BOLOVEN Well, it's not even just the parking, it's the signage.

COPPOLA I think where you're going is, do you want to do these as one-offs, or do you want it? Because not only is Capital Grille going to come in, but so is Home 2 Suites—

BOLOVEN Correct.

COPPOLA --And so is Holiday Inn and maybe, again, they've already got some signage variances. So do you want to do it as a total development, or do you want to do it as one-offs?

BOLOVEN Correct. Yes, because, I mean, my view would be, I'd rather have a monument sign more like a Victor Parkway stand out, but it's like a shared monument sign, rather than having multiple monument signs on Six Mile Road. And that's what, with these one-offs, that's what's going to end up happening, let alone the overage. And I'm looking at Capital Grille's. And Capital Grille, this [has] got even more of a request than what Cooper's is requesting. It seems like with the joint shared parking cross agreement, that this is better to handle, is a joint package between all these entities coming in rather than trying to head down just the first Petitioner's request that made it in so far.

FISHER Well, perhaps needless to say, these are independent businesses who don't necessarily want to be tied to the other guy's timetable.

BOLOVEN But at the same time, if they've got a cross-parking they are tied to some extent, right?

FISHER Well, yes, that's the \$64 question, I guess.

COPPOLA I thought I read within the Council and Planning Commission package that there wasn't a shared parking arrangement, and then all four locations were going to... they could share so that they met the requirements. I didn't see in the Planning Commission any request and reference and referral to ZBA for a parking deficiency.

BOLOVEN Correct. And then the last, it looks like there was an email to Mr. Taormina with some elevation changes on Capital that I'm taking that attachment more as their signage is gonna end up being here.

POPP Mr. Chair, can I say something real quick?

COPPOLA Mr. Popp.

POPP On the meeting tonight, the monument signs themselves aren't at issue. All the monument signs are actually within ordinance. The only signs that are in issue are the building signs, just to note. And there is one shared monument sign on the plan that I believe does fall within our ordinance as it is. You're asking about shared signage. There is a--

COPPOLA Yeah, it's on Laurel Park. Well, north [inaudible].

POPP Correct. Yeah. I just want to note that the monument signs we're talking about technically, aren't....

BOLOVEN I get that it's not, but at the same time, in my mind, it is....

POPP Okay.

BOLOVEN ...Because if they're looking for an overage on the building, then obviously all the signs, signage is going to....

POPP Sure, yeah, no. I just wanted to throw that out there. That's all.

BOLOVEN I'm looking at it, and it just seems like, and I appreciate Mr. Fisher's comments that it's an individual business and they're on different timetables. It just seems like this whole development, what you do for one you're gonna do it for all. I know we had a similar issue with the Lee's and the Jimmy John's and the Dairy Queen, and that kind of got piecemealed where it's like, okay, we made the decision on the first one, but this is obviously a high volume intersection, such as Plymouth and Farmington. I don't know. I guess pose the question for the Board.

COPPOLA That's a good question, because I think that's an alternative, if you move forward and put the signs that are in compliance and then come back for a variance for the additional signs once the whole package is together.

BOLOVEN But the more it might... say the monument sign they put it in, we might have a condition.

COPPOLA Well, let me just take that into consideration and [inaudible].

BOLOVEN Right, right. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

COPPOLA No, no, those are all very good points. So what other questions do we have for the Petitioner?

BARINGHAUS Mr. Chairman?

COPPOLA Vice Chair Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS Yeah, I have a question on the south elevation. The sign on the illustration presented to us, the Cooper's Hawk sign towards the middle of the building. Are those? Is that sign in front of windows? I see the four squares on the side of the building. What are those?

ESCUDERO Oh, that's the entry vestibule. It has a big two-story space.

BARINGHAUS Okay.

ESCUDERO So it's not an occupied space. It's just--

BARINGHAUS [Inaudible] Sunlight.

ESCUDERO --A larger entryway.

BARINGHAUS Okay, very good. The sign colors themselves are white lettering on top of like a black band.

ESCUDERO Correct. Yes.

BARINGHAUS Feathers white, just basically white and black format?

ESCUDERO The feather will be black. I think the effect would be a little bit more on that backlit.

BARINGHAUS Okay. Very good. Thank you.

TESTA Mr. Chair?

COPPOLA Mr. Testa.

TESTA Yeah, I'd like to ask the Petitioner again about the west elevation sign. So someone coming westbound on Six Mile, they have to pass the restaurant anyway, where they turn. So couldn't they see the sign on the south elevation and know where the restaurant is?

ESCUDERO Generally, then that's really the question of, again, this three-lane road, and it's rather fast traffic, so thinking being is that the more heads up that you give to these vehicular traffic, the better that they react, and they're not reacting too quickly to seeing the sign too late.

TESTA Okay, yeah, I understand that. Even if they missed the first turn, they have two more opportunities, even before they get to Newburgh, to turn to go eastbound. So okay, thank you.

ESCUDERO Absolutely.

COPPOLA Any other questions for the Petitioner? All right, seeing none. Anybody in the audience would like to speak for or against this petition? Is there any correspondence? All right, Mr. Escudero, anything you'd like to say in closing before the Board makes its decision?

ESCUDERO Just thank you for your time, and we're always willing to work with you guys for whatever decision you can make.

COPPOLA All right, thank you. You can have a seat, if you would please for a moment. I'm gonna close the public portion of the case and start the Board's comments with Mr. Rotondo.

ROTONDO Yeah, I can see how there's some comments have come up about the sign on the west side, but seeing how they share the parking lot with the Capital Grille west of them. I can see why they would want to delineate their building from that side, so I can be okay with the signs as they've been written up on the plans. Thank you.

COPPOLA All right, thank you. Secretary Klisz.

KLISZ Yeah. I think one thing to look at, and it reminds me of when we did the BJ's Brewhouse, is that one of their and I can't remember how we determined it, whether it was a sign or was art, but the side of BJ's has this mural that's metal, and I don't remember whether it was approved, because it's there. So we either said okay to it because it was a sign, or maybe there was some dispute about whether it was art, but regardless, it's there. So I think this, that

makes the extra sign is the feather that's determined to be a sign when it's really art. And so that, just as a piece of information, compared to something we've done before and allowed, I think everything else is pretty reasonable. You know, you could argue about any sign. You could actually argue there should be one on the north elevation. But I think they're reasonable, it's very tasteful, and it's going to be a crowded area, and I think it looks good. So taking aside the art argument, I would be in support of this as presented.

COPPOLA All right. Vice Chair Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS Okay, thank you. Yeah, I agree with my colleagues' comments on the signage package. I think it's very well done, tasteful yet understated. You're going to need visibility from Six Mile due to the changes in elevation. I know with 275 and that area, we always take a closer look at signage facing west. Since it will face on 275 I think it's beneficial for people coming off the freeway to see that. The line of sight on the west side is fairly clear. It's not being obscured by Capital Grille as Mr. Rotondo pointed out because they share a parking lot. There's definitely a need to delineate both buildings, so based on that I'll approve the variance.

COPPOLA Thank you. Mr. Boloven.

BOLOVEN I'm going to be in opposition to my colleagues. I just don't think this is right. I understand everything that was discussed tonight. I understand saying it's an individual business, but it's... what we do here is going to set the precedent for the rest of the development. And I think it's excessive. It looks nice, I'm not taking that away from-- the plan looks great, but at the same time, that's the pinnacle point of Livonia right there, where you're pulling up at Six Mile Road from 275 and it's essentially the way this would go is, it's gonna be sign, sign, sign, sign. Not just on the buildings. There's gonna be monument signs. There are gonna be shared signs. Mr. Popp said, and I understand some of that is going to be allowed as is, without the other conditions of the Board. So if we just say, "Yeah, we're going to grant the additional signage," it's not taking into account all the other signage this area is getting that's not being reviewed tonight. And that's, my worry is, what if you know, like Mr. Popp, if he hadn't brought it up, we wouldn't have known about the shared sign. What other signages on this development that's not before this Board that we're willing to give such great signage on the building itself, which then we're going to have another restaurant come in, and then the hotel's going to come in, requesting these exact same things. I'd like to see the full package. I'd like to see what all the signage is before making a decision on granting such an excess and granting the additional signs. Thank you.

COPPOLA Thank you. Mr. Testa.

TESTA Thank you, Mr. Chair. I completely agree with Mr. Boloven. I'd like to treat this development as a total package. I do understand there are individual businesses or restaurants and businesses, but there is one overall owner of the lot that's giving this up, and I'd like to hear from them, or have a representative that's explaining what is the overall plan. But

specific to what's before us tonight, I do want to comment on that. I was hung up on the west elevation sign, but based on Mr. Rotondo's comments about the shared parking and Mr. Baringhaus brought up a good point about 275, I can be okay with that sign. And also, Secretary Klisz, that leaf signage, which is more feather which is more artwork that probably wouldn't need a variance if we counted that as a sign. I think your total sign area itself is, well, it's over. It's not too excessive. But overall, I'd rather treat this as a whole package rather than piecemeal.

COPPOLA All right, thank you. I agree with Mr. Boloven, in the overall sense. The developer is the same for this whole development and they did present at least a design package for the Planning Commission and Council to approve. So I think it makes sense to take into consideration all the signage, so we don't turn it into a situation where we were taken advantage of. With Schoolcraft College, what they did to us. I don't want that to happen to us again. I want us to know what's going on. So I would... what I don't want to do, I think is to reject the petition and then have them have a difficulty. And rather, maybe we table this and wait for the whole project to come together, and they can do it all at once. Again, they're separate businesses, so they may have to have separate petitions, but I'd like to see it all at one time, and specifically to what's being proposed. They've got a lot of visibility here. They've got a monument sign entering the development. They've got a monument sign on Six Mile. They've got signs on the east and the south section. And I guess on the west section, I somewhat disagree. For someone to get into that development, they've got to go past the monument sign. They get to see the sign on the east side. They're gonna know it's Cooper's Hawk. Once they get into the parking lot between Capital Grille and Cooper's Hawk, they don't know which building is which, they probably shouldn't be driving. As to visibility off 275, I don't think it provides any visibility off 275. It sits down. It's way off the ramp. Driving north, no one's gonna see that. You're raised up driving south, definitely not gonna see it. So I don't think it really adds a lot of value. And again, with all the other signage, you've got the monument sign on Six Mile, they're going to see that. They're going to see the front of the building. They come in from Laurel Park Drive, they're going to see the monument sign. You're going to see the sign on the east side. So I think the signs are somewhat excessive. And again, once, if we were to do that for Cooper's Hawk, Capital Grille comes in, they've got three signs, and then all we've got is building signs all over. So I'm a little concerned about that. As to the logo. Generally, I'm not excited about the logo. I know Secretary Klisz made a comment on the one we did on Haggerty. That really was more art, because that really isn't their logo. So I think that's why we determined that where, this is in their logo. That same feather is on every sign that's on there. So, but it is, at least it's not like some smiling clown or, some big mouse or something like that, at least it's somewhat classy. I could probably live with it to some extent, but I think I agree overall with Mr. Boloven, I'd like Capital Grille, Home2Suite, anything that Holiday Inn wants to change, let's get that all done in one fell swoop, so that there's a consistency in the development. It looks good and it looks consistent. So I'll go ahead and open up the floor for a motion.

TESTA Mr. Chair?

COPPOLA Mr. Testa.

TESTA Yeah, moving to table Case 2024-10-37, to allow the Petitioner of Laurel Investment, LLC, to put together [an] overall package for this development, including the two restaurants and hotel, present back to Zoning Board.

BOLOVEN Support.

COPPOLA Right, I have a motion by Mr. Testa, support by Mr. Boloven to table.

BARINGHAUS I have a question. Going back to Mr. Fisher's point where there were two separate businesses, two independent projects. I mean, would Capital Grille share its signing strategy with Cooper's Hawk, or with the developer? Are they treated as two separate--? Maybe that's a question for you. If you want to come up here. I guess I'm seeing this as another related to Burger King and McDonald's on the same piece of property with the same development, would they blend their signage packages into one consistent strategy? I don't think so.

ESCUDERO I'm not sure I can answer yes or no. Anyway, we do share... a civil engineer is what we do share and again, it is the same landowner.

BARINGHAUS So it is feasible to do this.

ESCUDERO It's feasible to coordinate with them. Certainly.

BARINGHAUS Okay. And then the timeline for Capital Grille. First of all, when do you plan on opening Cooper's Hawk?

[Inaudible]

BARINGHAUS I understand. That's my point. [Laughter] All right, sorry, when is Cooper's Hawk opening?

ESCUDERO I believe it's going to be end of the year 2025.

BARINGHAUS Okay. And Capital Grille we'll just say "TBD" for now?

ESCUDERO Not certain with Capital Grille or the hotel.

BARINGHAUS So there's another little piece of the puzzle. Okay. Thank you.

BOLOVEN So, Mr. Chair. Just in response to Mr. Baringhaus. Real quick. I guess the difference for me is they presented this as a group package to Planning and Council, rather than different businesses that came in, because I think it does have that common landowner, that common developer, and that's why it's all been in one package. That's why it's a little surprising to me that it's coming in as a piecemeal now, when it's been a package the whole way through. So that's it.

BARINGHAUS Mr. Chairman?

COPPOLA Vice Chair Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS On the diagram of the City Council package on page 27, where's the Capital Grille signage identified? It's on the site plan.

COPPOLA Probably, except for the monument signs.

BOLOVEN You keep going down. It's got all the signage.

BARINGHAUS It keeps disappearing on me. I'll take your word for it.

BOLOVEN So the next page has the group monument sign that Mr. Popp referenced. Then it's the monument sign for Cooper's, the stand alone, and then it goes down to the Capital Grille signage.

BARINGHAUS I remember reading that.

TESTA Mr. Chair?

COPPOLA Mr. Testa.

TESTA Just to respond to Vice Chairman Baringhaus's comment about different strategies. That may be the case, but since they're... the first restaurant [will be] opening at the end of this year, so that we're not harming them in any way by tabling them today. They have plenty of time to come back, if they want to come back, and say, "Hey, we're not going to have any combined strategy." I'd like to know that, too.

POPP Mr. Chair, can I say something? Just for giggles, I took Mr. Klisz's comment on the logo. Without the feather, they'd be point one seven less than they would need to be, so they would actually be under ordinance without the feather.

COPPOLA One sign over it?

POPP One sign over it, correct. Yes, sir.

COPPOLA Okay. Anything else? Beside the roll? To get to the roll call, is there anything else? Seeing there's none, you can go ahead and take roll, please.

On a motion by Testa, supported by Boloven, the case was tabled.

RESOLVED: APPEAL CASE NO. 2024-10-37, Laurel Investment, LLC, on behalf of Lessee Cooper's Hawk Winery & Restaurant, 17123 North Laurel Park Drive: seeking to install a wall sign package resulting in an excessive number of signs and excessive total sign area.

This Regional Commercial property is located on the west side of North Laurel Park Drive (17123), between University Park Drive and Six Mile Road, Lot. No. 028-99-0006-007, C-4, High Rise Commercial, rejected by the Inspection Department under Livonia Zoning Ordinance Section 11.08 (3) – Sign Regulations in C-2, C-3 and C-4 Districts,

Total Signs

Allowed: 2

Proposed: 4

Excess: 2

Total Sign Area

Allowed: 197.25 sq. ft.

Proposed: 220.9 sq. ft.

Excess: 23.65 sq. ft.

be tabled to allow the Petitioner, Laurel Park Investments, LLC, to put together a comprehensive sign package for this development, including the two restaurants and the hotel, and return to present it to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Testa, Boloven, Klisz, Rotondo, Baringhaus, Coppola

NAYS: None

Vacancy: One seat

PASS/FAIL/TABLED: PASS: TABLED

KLISZ Mr. Rotondo.

ROTONDO Aye.

KLISZ Mr. Testa.

TESTA Aye.

KLISZ Mr. Boloven.

BOLOVEN Aye.

KLISZ Secretary Klisz votes aye. Vice Chairman Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS Aye.

KLISZ Chairman Coppola.

COPPOLA Aye.

KLISZ Passes, six to zero.

COPPOLA So, I think you kind of understand where we're coming from. It's a development. I think we need to look at it in its entirety. Nothing that's happened today stops Cooper's Hawk from opening with signage. They can put two signs up, one on the east or the west and the south, or one on the front with the feather, whatever they want, as long as they're in compliance. Again, I think not opening until the end of the year will provide you at least a little time, but at a minimum, you could have signage, and you definitely have the monument sign and you have the other monument sign. So I think, and that's something maybe you can go back and discuss with your developer and say, "Hey, look, you know, we tried to get our plan done, and they're saying, you guys, we need to come together and come up with a consolidated plan so that the Board can see that and kind of approve everything at one time." Does that makes sense?

ESCUDERO It does make sense. Thank you again. Just so I understand it clearly to know that this is technically denied, not approved?

COPPOLA No, it's tabled. So it hasn't been denied, because denied would have had consequences. So it doesn't say... we haven't said no yet.

ESCUDERO Okay.

COPPOLA We said, we tabled it, the purpose from our perspective, tables, we really want to see the development's plan for signs so we know what we're approving for everybody.

ESCUDERO Thank you for clarifying.

COPPOLA Okay?

KLISZ Yes.

COPPOLA All right, thank you. You can call the next case, please.

APPEAL CASE NO. 2024-11-40, Sheldon Center, LLC, on behalf of Lessee 3D International, LLC, 33115 Plymouth Road: seeking to erect a wall sign resulting in excessive sign area.

Sign Area

Allowed: 40 square feet
Proposed: 59.04 square feet
Excess: 19.04 square feet

This Corridor Commercial property is located on the south side of Plymouth (33115), between Farmington Road and Woodring Street, Lot. No. 134-99-0003-004, C-2, General Business, rejected by the Inspection Department under Livonia Zoning Ordinance Section 11.08 (3) – Sign Regulations.

COPPOLA All right. Thank you. Mr. Popp, anything you'd like to add?

POPP Nothing to add at this time, Mr. Chair.

COPPOLA Any questions for the Inspection Department? Seeing none, if the Petitioner could come forward, name and address, not that I don't already know it, probably, but....

GRENADIER Good evening, everybody. Josh Grenadier of Sheldon Center, LLC, 24255 West 13 Mile, Suite 220, Bingham Farms, Michigan 48025.

COPPOLA Welcome back, Mr. Grenadier. Happy New Year to you.

GRENADIER Thank you. Happy New Year to you.

COPPOLA So coming forward to request excess signage for one of your tenants. We just did one for another one of your tenants, which was a 50% overage. This is not nearly asking for as much, almost as much back in August. And I think the reasons we talked about in regards to visibility and how the building sits on the property, and how each of the units are kind of unique in the sense of narrow and deep and such, but am I missing any of the issues?

GRENADIER No, those are my two unique hardships is that the spaces are very narrow and deep, which, with a map problem, creates smaller signs, and then we're also a good 300 feet from the road, so a smaller sign is very hard to see.

COPPOLA Okay. Any questions to the Petitioner?

TESTA Mr. Chair?

COPPOLA Mr. Testa.

TESTA Thank you. So because of our questions on what we just did with the previous case, you were establishing a hearing again today. I think you made a good case last time and I want to say I think you have a good case today. Do you foresee coming back for additional...?

GRENADIER Yes.

TESTA Projects in your complex?

GRENADIER Yeah, absolutely. This is [an] existing tenant who, when he moved in three years ago, he chose to do the sign according to the ordinance, and straight from the first day, he was telling me that people couldn't read the sign. It wasn't big enough. So it is an issue with all of the tenants in the main building. So if you know, a new sliver is leased. For example, we just leased to a nail salon. They chose not to come in and did it according to the ordinance, the sign is up on the... kind of see that it's definitely on the small side, but yeah, I would expect any new tenant. And now that I know that all the addresses that have been approved in the past, that stays with the address, any new tenants for those spaces don't have to come back in, for but every suite in the main building, I think, applies to the same argument.

TESTA Okay, thank you. Maybe a question for Legal, does he need to do a separate variance for each address? Or could he ask for a variance to cover the whole building?

FISHER You can always ask.

TESTA Yeah, I don't want to hold you up tonight but maybe consider that for next time. From my standpoint, I'd rather have them all uniform. It is hodgepodge right now. I understand why, but your comment about the new tenant already came in and decided to go with the smaller sign. They wouldn't have to pay the money for the variance, but if they all pooled together and try for one variance, maybe that would be a good approach.

GRENADIER Absolutely.

TESTA Thank you.

BARINGHAUS Mr. Chairman?

COPPOLA Vice Chair Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS Yeah, what was the tenant's prior signage? What was the size of the sign?

GRENADIER It was a 40-square foot.

BARINGHAUS 40 square feet.

GRENAIER One per linear foot on the frontage.

BARINGHAUS Thank you.

COPPOLA Just a quick question, just for my own curiosity, than remaking a decision. In the case of this tenant, the signage is bigger actually than the linear feet of its frontage being allowed to go over the common area, least the way I'm looking at this. So there's kind of like....

GRENAIER Yeah, this building is very unique. It has a breezeway on three sides of the building, the front and the two sides. So yes, it's not directly in front of... it is a little hybrid. I can't explain it.

COPPOLA For esthetically, you centered it, in a sense, on the looks like you've tried to center it on....

GRENAIER The architectural.

COPPOLA So generally, if we're going to approve, around 50% increase from the ordinance, it would be a taller and less longer sign.

GRENAIER Yeah, the letters would get bigger. [Inaudible] the sign, increase the sign....

COPPOLA Sign wouldn't be as long as it have to now fit within the confines.

GRENAIER Yeah, each... there's a column every 20 feet, and when we get larger tenants that take up 40 or 60 feet, that bigger sign fits nicer in a bigger area. So the last time I was here, I was here for the Anytime Fitness. And you guys refunded my money, which I appreciate, because we had already had an approval for that address, and they have their sign up and that is a good example. You can see that it fits. It fits nicely in the building. It's the height. Everything proportionally is very good.

COPPOLA Okay, just have a quick question. Mr. Popp, based on where they're proposing it, the sign actually is not completely over. Is that an issue?

POPP There's nothing in our ordinance I'm aware of that would be against. I don't know that there's anything in the ordinance that says the sign for that business has to be on the business. It could be anywhere on the building, really. I mean, it's just a factor.

COPPOLA The sign would have to be... not saying it has to be a business. But the sign for that unit has to be over that unit, correct?

POPP It doesn't actually say that.

GRENADIER I would say that that unit, since it's the end unit with....

POPP I don't know that our ordinance addresses that specifically, the location of it. It just addresses size. I don't know, maybe Mr. Fisher can elaborate on that, but I don't.

FISHER I think this is a situation where location does matter and it should be on there, billed as advertising.

COPPOLA Do you see what I'm talking about? Did you look at the rendition?

GRENADIER The actual tenant sweep extends about halfway into this between these two panels. So there's actually... 40 actual feet for frontage, even though it's centered a little to the left.

BARINGHAUS Mr. Chairman?

COPPOLA Vice Chair Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS Basically they're saying, because the business is on the corner, it wraps around the corner.

GRENADIER It does.

BARINGHAUS On two sides.

GRENADIER But there's a sidewalk on the side of it and up front of the building it's [inaudible]. That's where the sidewalk ends.

BARINGHAUS Okay.

COPPOLA It kind of extends over what I would call common area.

FISHER Yeah, I really don't see that as a problem, since it's still all one sign. If you had a sign that you just randomly occupied a common area [inaudible], but here, it's just....

COPPOLA Okay.

GRENADIER Yeah, it's really directly above the front doors. It is off-center. It's a very good directional finding sign.

COPPOLA All right, anything else for the Petitioner? Seeing none. Is there anyone in the audience who would like to speak for or against this petition? I don't see anybody. Any correspondence?

KLISZ No correspondence.

COPPOLA Okay. Mr. Grenadier, anything you'd like to say in closing?

GRENADEIR Nope. Thank you all for your service. Appreciate you being here tonight.

COPPOLA I'm gonna close the public portion of the case and start the Board's comments with Mr. Boloven.

BOLOVEN I'd be in support. It's a beautiful development that's upgraded along the way. We're less of leaders, I think, in comparison to what the Board's granted before. Clearly, it's within range. It's not too excessive. There's some larger proposals that we granted. As such, I'd be in approval this evening.

COPPOLA All right. Thank you. Vice Chair Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS Thank you. Yeah, I agree. I think it's a very well-thought-out development. Even the signage is, even though it varies in sizes across the building, I think the sign is appropriate. I think you have a number of hardships. One, the building doesn't run parallel to Plymouth Road. It kind of angles on the property. This particular business probably is the farthest point from that at that point. Also, there's a lot of landscaping in front of that building. When you come down the entrance to the facility. I was driving towards the building, and a tree promptly blocked the entire sign. So that's a hardship as well. The other thing is the corner, because it does wrap around as you indicated. I think it just makes sense to place the sign centered on the area where the building is as well. So based on that, I'll be in support of the variance.

COPPOLA Thank you. Secretary Klisz.

KLISZ I agree. I don't really have anything else to add on this. My colleagues made great commentary. I'll be in support.

COPPOLA Thank you. Mr. Rotondo.

ROTONDO Yeah, I agree with my colleagues. They summed it up pretty well. I can understand hardship with the distance off of Plymouth Road coming toward this building, so I can be in favor of it.

COPPOLA All right. Thank you. Mr. Testa.

TESTA I agree. I can be in support of this, and I appreciate the updates and improvements you've made to that corner overall. Thank you.

COPPOLA All right, thanks. I, too, am in support of this. It's consistent with what the Board has approved in the past. So I'll go ahead and open the floor for a motion.

KLISZ Mr. Chair?

COPPOLA Secretary Klisz.

KLISZ Resolved that the variance on Appeal Case No. 2024-11-40, filed by Sheldon Center, LLC, on behalf of Lessee 3D International, LLC, be granted for the following reasons and findings of fact: The uniqueness requirement is met because of this particular unique shopping center that's on an angle, and that has been done and the signage has been changed over the years. Denial of the variance would have severe consequences for the Petitioner, because, again, they wouldn't have the proper signage in this particular unique location. The variance is fair in light of its effect on neighboring properties and in the spirit of the zoning ordinance, because of no neighbor opposition, the property is classified as C-2, General Business, under the Master Plan, and the proposed variance is not inconsistent with that classification. Further, that the variance be granted with the following conditions: built as... that the sign be installed as presented as to location and materials.

ROTONDO Support.

COPPOLA I have a motion by Secretary Klisz, support by Mr. Rotondo, with conditions built as presented. Any discussion?

FISHER Mr. Chair, just the Master Plan should be Corridor Commercial.

COPPOLA Corridor Commercial. Okay. We need to [inaudible] Secretary [inaudible].

KLISZ I'm used to reading that.

COPPOLA I'm used to reading that, too.

KLISZ How am I going to word this? So that's the Master Plan.

COPPOLA Okay. All right, so corrected. Any discussion? Seeing none, you can take roll.

On a motion by Klisz, supported by Rotondo, the variance was granted.

RESOLVED: APPEAL CASE NO. 2024-11-40, Sheldon Center, LLC, on behalf of Lessee 3D International, LLC, 33115 Plymouth Road: seeking to erect a wall sign resulting in excessive sign area.

Sign Area

Allowed: 40 square feet
Proposed: 59.04 square feet
Excess: 19.04 square feet

This Corridor Commercial property is located on the south side of Plymouth (33115), between Farmington Road and Woodring Street, Lot. No. 134-99-0003-004, C-2, General Business, rejected by the Inspection Department under Livonia Zoning Ordinance Section 11.08 (3) – Sign Regulations,

be granted for the following reasons and findings of fact:

1. The uniqueness requirement is met because this particular shopping center is situated at a unique angle, is already completed, and the signage has changed over the years,
2. Denial of the variance would have severe consequences for the Petitioner because they wouldn't have the proper signage in this unique location,
3. The variance is fair in light of its effect on neighboring properties and in the spirit of the zoning ordinance because of no neighbor opposition, and
4. 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 conditions:

1. That it be built as presented as to location and materials.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Klisz, Rotondo, Boloven, Testa, Baringhaus, Coppola

NAYS: None

Vacancy: One seat

PASS/FAIL/TABLED: PASS: PASS

KLISZ Mr. Rotondo.

ROTONDO Aye.

KLISZ Mr. Testa.

TESTA Aye.

KLISZ Mr. Boloven.

BOLOVEN Aye.

KLISZ Secretary Klisz votes aye. Vice Chairman Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS Aye.

KLISZ Chairman Coppola.

COPPOLA Aye.

KLISZ Passes six to zero.

COPPOLA Mr. Grenadier, your variance is passed with the only condition that it be constructed and installed as presented.

GRENAIDIER Thank you very much.

COPPOLA All right. Thank you.

TESTA Mr. Chair. You might be able to predict what I'm going to ask.

COPPOLA Sure. We're going to go off the record at 8:37 for a short break.

[Recess]

COPPOLA Okay, it's still 8:41, and we're back on the record. Okay, if you can call the next case.

APPEAL CASE NO. 2024-12-41, Seven Mile/Farmington Venture, LLC, on behalf of Lessee Meijer, Inc., 33500 W Seven Mile Road: seeking to erect a sign package resulting in an excessive number of wall signs, total wall sign area, wall sign size and directional signs in excess sign size.

Number of Wall Signs

Allowed: 2
Proposed: 6
Excess: 4

Maximum Area

Allowed: 494 sq. ft.
Proposed: 506.5 sq. ft.
Excess: 12.5 sq. ft.

Maximum Wall Sign Size

Allowed: 200 sq. ft.
Proposed: 253.7 sq. ft. (sign D1)
Excess: 53.7 sq. ft.

Maximum Directional Sign Size

Allowed: 2 sq. ft.
Proposed: 6 sq. ft. (sign C4) and 4 sq. ft. (sign C5)
Excess: 4 sq. ft. and 2 sq. ft. respectively

This Mixed Development Center property is located on the north side of West Seven Mile (33500), between Farmington Road and Norwich Road, Lot. No. 016-99-0016-003, C-2, General Business, rejected by the Inspection Department under Livonia Zoning Ordinance, Sections 11.08 (3) – Sign Regulations in C-2 districts & 11.06 (8): Exempt Signs.

COPPOLA Okay, thank you. Mr. Popp, is there anything you'd like to add?

POPP I just wanted to make everyone aware, that everyone got the emails from Matt. There was a number that bounced up and down.

COPPOLA Just for the record.

POPP So I think the overage is on the bull, and because there's a bunch of different stuff, though submitted as far as what we have for drawings or was proposed. So we're gonna need clarification from you guys on what we actually have, because we've got a high number of 511 and a low number of 495.87, so just putting that out there.

COPPOLA Okay, questions for Mr. Popp? Just so for clarification. Just so everybody is clear. The six signs that are proposed, I've got, and I'm looking at their package, I've got four wall signs that they show. Then what? What are the other two?

VANDER KODDE Mr. Chairman, if I may?

COPPOLA If you can give me a minute.

VANDER KODDE Yes.

COPPOLA Thank you. I want to get the perspective of the Inspection Department, then you're next.

POPP They're all on the building.

COPPOLA So I see... I'm looking at this page here. So the wall signs that we're talking about to make up six? I see the four right now. I see "Meijer," I see "Pickup," I see "Pharmacy," and I see following signs.

POPP The window signs?

VANDER KODDE The window signs are considered wall signs because they're greater than 10 square feet.

COPPOLA So the "Fresh" and the "Local" signs are the ones that would make up five and six.

POPP Apparently, yes.

JONES That's our understanding, Mr. Chair.

COPPOLA Okay.

BARINGHAUS So then... Sorry. For the wall signs, there would be "Pickup," "Pharmacy," "Meijer," and "Grocery?"

COPPOLA So these four. Everyone understand what we're looking at?

TESTA Yes. I have a question for Mr. Popp.

COPPOLA Sure.

TESTA Regarding... on the site plans, they're showing some curbside pickup signs?

POPP So the little signs are, we're considering just directional signs there. We're not considering in the square footage of the signage. They're just, like the real small directional signs? Yeah, we're not. They're just directional signs. Would be like "no parking" or "fire lane."

TESTA Okay.

POPP Matt did not include any of those in the sign package.

TESTA Curbside pickup ones are the same category, then?

POPP Matt was considering them just directional signs.

TESTA I haven't seen anyone come in with a "Curbside Pickup," but I see them all over the place now.

POPP Yeah, Matt just considered those exempt as directional signs that would be on the property.

TESTA Okay, but something like the "Pharmacy," "Pickup," "Bottle Return," and the "RX" signs count?

POPP Because they're much larger.

TESTA They're attached to the building.

POPP They're attached to the building. They're much larger signage.

TESTA Thank you.

COPPOLA And then, just real quick, Mr. Popp, for purposes of the Inspection Department, that would be sign C4 which you're calling a directional sign, even though it's very strategically segregated into three two-square-foot signs. You count that all as one sign because it's on one post of one structure.

POPP For which one?

COPPOLA C4. It's also known as a "Pickup Monument Sign," you'll see there's actually three pieces. Each of them are two feet.

POPP Yeah, I just had it up. I scrolled past it. What's...?

COPPOLA You see what I'm saying?

POPP Yeah, it's three two-square-foot signs.

COPPOLA But it's all on one, because it's on one upright structure that they're considering that one.

POPP Correct. I believe that's how Matt was measuring that.

COPPOLA But the same thing for the parking, what they call C5 "Parking" [inaudible]. These are two two-foot signs, and they're adding them together just so that the least better. Okay, any other questions for Mr. Popp? All right, I think we're ready for you. If I can get names and addresses first?

VANDER KODDE Good evening. Mr. Chair. Jason Vander Kodde, civil engineer with Fishbeck. 1555 Arboretum Drive Southeast.

COPPOLA Would you spell your last name, please?

VANDERKODDE V-A-N-D-E-R K-O-D-D-E.

COPPOLA That's why I asked. Yes, sir.

JONES Cris Jones, senior real estate manager, Meijer, 2929 Walker Avenue, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

COPPOLA And you don't need to spell your last name. Okay. So why don't you....

VANDER KODDE There's no H in Chris, it's--

[Laughter]

COPPOLA Why don't you tell us a little bit about the proposal here and why, what brings or what arises to the point that you have a hardship that requires or supports a variance.

VANDER KODDE Thank you very much for the floor. If I can begin just with clarifying the sign request. On the application we requested four wall signs. The Building Inspection Department considered the "Fresh" and "Local" signs that are actually window signs inside the building as wall signs as well. That's why it's written up as six, because the square footage of those signs exceeds 10 square feet. We did not realize that that was a guidance when we read the definition in the ordinance. The ordinance for wall signs is exterior wall signs. So that's why we applied differently.

COPPOLA Okay.

VANDER KODDE Similarly for the "Pickup" and the "Curbside" signs in the back, the way the ordinance is written, we presented to the City Council with those signs as one sign, and then realized that if they were just limited to two signs, that they would be consistent with the ordinance. If you grant us a variance for those signs, we're happy to put them back as one sign. It's a little easier for us. We're also happy to leave them as individual signs, if you guys prefer. So however you would like that, if the variance would be granted, we'd be happy to accommodate. Thank you for that clarification.

COPPOLA That's helpful. So when I looked at this design package you gave us, there was a summary page, which was page number one, and then as you went deeper into the details, it actually says somewhere that there's revisions. So it didn't look like the square footage [matched] what was on this original on the first page summary. So is, I guess, stepping back, is the petition from your perspective, representative of what you're asking for?

VANDER KODDE The petition as submitted on December 4 is representative of what we're asking for. So the C 5.2 drawing that you're looking at is what we're asking for this evening.

COPPOLA That, and I understand that, but when I looked at... I couldn't come up with your numbers.

VANDER KODDE Okay.

COPPOLA Which is a problem. I could come up with 506.5, when I added those five, those six signs together.

VANDER KODDE And were you? How far off were you? Was it around...? Were you within two feet?

COPPOLA Well, it depended on, on if I took the measurements you had on the summary sheet.

VANDER KODDE Okay.

COPPOLA Or I took the measurements you had on your revised sheet. Is that different?

VANDER KODDE Understood. Thank you. So the revised sheet was the document sent that we provided to the Planning Commission, I'm sorry, the City Council during the PGD process, and we explained, at the City Council's request, at the neighbor's request and staff's request, how we had revamped the signage package that we were proposing on the building from what we had originally proposed to what we were now proposing. And so what we had done there was conceptually reduced and consolidated many of the signs from what our original application was to something that was a little better in line with the architecture and the City's ordinance, although it's still in excess, and so that that document is a supporting document to our application, depicting what we told the City Council in a public meeting. Subsequent to that, we went to our sign vendor and our design team and came over the exact sign dimensions that are on the C 5.2 so both the original and the revised drawings that you were looking at conceptually were presented to City Council for their review. The final exact numbers are on the C 5.2 sheet.

COPPOLA Which is the one we have here?

VANDER KODDE Correct.

COPPOLA Okay.

VANDER KODDE Does that? Does that clarify?

COPPOLA It does.

VANDER KODDE Okay.

COPPOLA It does. Okay. So then give me a pitch.

VANDER KODDE I would be happy to. I have two pages, but given the given the lateness of the hour, I'm going to try to consolidate. So if you'd like more detail on any of that, I'd be happy to offer it, and I'm going to try to just summarize for you.

COPPOLA Appreciate that. Thank you.

VANDER KODDE So the sign package is a result of the collaborative PGP process that included many study sessions, public hearings, deliberations and decisions, including specific discussions regarding the building architecture, placement on the site and the signage. The PGD was reviewed, revised several times, and ultimately deemed compliant with Vision 21, 2021. The PGD was unanimously approved by the Planning Commission on June 18 and City Council on August 26. Based on the approved PGD, we believe that there are four compliant hardships that merit granting of variance: the setbacks, the size, the vehicle safety, and pedestrian safety. I'll start with the first. The average setback of the building between Farmington and Seven Mile is 253 feet when compared to the underlying zoning requirement of C-2 which is 100 feet. That means that our building is set back an average of more than two and a half times the setback that the C-2 sign ordinance in sizes were written for. That makes those signs much more difficult to see from the sidewalk and from the street than a typical business would enjoy. Our signs that we're requesting are not two and a half times the ordinance. The only sign, the largest sign, is only 1.27 times the ordinance. So we feel that it is proportional and reasonable and attractive on the building at that distance from the roadway. The gentleman before us noted that that's been a case for some of his tenants as well. Second reason is the building architecture, after working extensively with the City staff and commissions, the PGD building was approved for the square footage of 75,000 square feet. Again, this is two and a half times the size of the maximum 30,000 square foot building in the C-2 district, and we ultimately received a waiver for that building square footage. Because of that building square footage and the length of the walls in the building and the height of the building and the corner orientation of the entry. The proposed signage is the minimum amount that we need in order for it to look good and to work well in the C-2 district. I'm sorry, this one is 1.27 times larger. I had 1.25 on the first, but anyway. Third reason is for vehicle safety. Meijer operates over 270 supercenters and three similar grocery stores, many of which are in the state of Michigan. The supercenter and grocery store formats have four different points of service for the following four services: main entry for grocery shopping, pharmacy drive-up for prescriptions, curbside pickup for online order fulfillment and bottle return for the deposit exchange. Each of these service points requires clear wayfinding in order for vehicles to safely navigate to the correct location in all lighting and all weather conditions because Meijer has the ability to be open for 24 hours. The City Council reviewed the seal of circulation and planning and approved it as compliant with the city standard for C-2 zoning for public health, safety and welfare, and our resulting wayfinding

signage helps to eliminate any confusion as drivers try to navigate to any one of those four service points, so thereby reducing incidents of crashes or other conflict as vehicles are able to get to their intended location quickly and efficiently. Finally, a reason, our fourth and final reason, is for pedestrian safety. There are two primary pedestrian service points on the building: the main entry for the groceries and the bottle return. These access points have been very carefully considered by the Planning Commission and City Council, and their decision to affirm the PGD meets their high standard for pedestrian connectivity in Vision 2021. Meijer has provided four dedicated pedestrian routes from the community sidewalks and the customer parking lot to these points. In order to safely accommodate the pedestrians to those points, the City Council has allowed us to lay out the site to immediately route vehicles for the pharmacy drive through and the curbside pickup away from pedestrians, again in all lighting and weather conditions, and provide them for safe and efficient routes to the front door of the building. So for those reasons, or for that reason, we feel that the extra signage on the building helps pedestrian safety considerably. In conclusion, the PGD site setbacks, the building size, the vehicle safety, and pedestrian safety have all been extensively vetted and improved by the City of Livonia Planning team as compliant with C-2 zoning and compatible with the adjacent neighborhood. The requested signage variances were a key component of these discussions, and found to be the minimum increase necessary. Please help us keep the site safe for the motoring public, the walking public, and all-weather conditions and lighting conditions by approving the variance request tonight. Thank you.

JONES Just to add a couple of things to Jason's report, I think we spent about two years with Planning Commission, neighborhood meetings, City Council, rapid response meetings. This was a uniquely zoned piece of property, and the City kind of had an overarching, unique goal, so to make this corner as walkable as possible, and pedestrian friendly. And I wanted to just add to what Jason said, we did incorporate three kind of we call them, "pops." They're like public parks provided by private funds. So there's three of those designated on this site that have benches and artwork and picnic tables and that type of thing. And we wanted to make sure those pathways to the building and pedestrian walkways were very safe, and people could either go directly to bottle return, if that was their intention that day, could go directly to pharmacy pickup or go to curbside pickup. Most of that is vehicular traffic going to pick up and pharmacy so we wanted to clearly identify those far ends of the building to keep as many vehicular movements out of the parking lot as long as possible. So we'd like to, we think the building needs some wayfinding signage as well. I think the "Grocery" mark we have on this building, that's in conjunction with the "Meijer." The "Meijer" is really the only branding sign we have on the building, and we wanted to designate, from a supercenter perspective, that this is a Meijer grocery, and it's essentially grocery only in about 55,000 square feet of a building with 20,000 of it in back house space. So that mark, we talked to the City about, could we separate the marks, make them... and that created two signs, lit by one circuit breaker. Could be one sign. So we went through those kind of discussions, and we ended up just shrinking the sign a little bit smaller. Thank you. We're happy to answer any questions.

COPPOLA Thanks. That was helpful. In regards to the pickup, how that curbside pickup works? You have signage for... so they're going to... I do a curbside pickup order. I'll drive in, and then I'll park and they'll come bring me my order. Is that correct?

JONES That's absolutely correct. The only add, I would say, is you'll get a text that says, "Your order is ready. Please pull into space number two."

COPPOLA Okay.

JONES And so you'll be directed to a particular space, and you'll notice those spaces are a little wider. They've got four feet separation for a cart, for an employee to come out the door and load the vehicles. So yeah, there'll be... it's essentially what you said, except for you get a text and get designated a parking spot to go into.

COPPOLA So the customer that does a curbside pickup doesn't need to leave their car.

JONES No, sir.

COPPOLA And doesn't need to enter the building.

JONES No, sir.

COPPOLA So then what would be the purpose of the pickup sign above the doorway? I'm assuming employees come in and out.

JONES That's correct. It's for the store, the Meijer employee, to come out the door. It's really to orientate that side of the building, because those parking spaces are where kind of close to a Burger King.

VANDER KODDE McDonald's.

JONES McDonald's.

VANDER KODDE Curbside areas behind the building, and we're only permitted to have signs on two sides, and so we're indicating on the east side of the building that the curbside pickup is behind the building, so the customer knows to drive that direction. When they get behind the building is where the six-foot sign is to tell the customer to turn left into the circulation, and then the customers face north. So the back of the sign is actually going to be facing McDonald's. The front of the sign will be facing the Meijer building. And that's to allow the customers to make that circulation, that counterclockwise circulation motion, with an easy wayfinding in all weather, lighting conditions, so tell them to go to the northeast corner of the building, telling them to turn left before they get to the truck dock area, and then telling them which position to park in in order to receive their order.

COPPOLA Right. So the directional signs will direct them to the parking area for pickup. They don't need to enter the building. So again, the question is, what's the purpose of the pickup sign on the building if the only one going in and out of that door are your employees?

VANDER KODDE So the purpose for the pickup sign on the building is to differentiate it from the pharmacy or the main entrance of the bottle return so the customer doesn't think that they need to pick up the groceries in the pharmacy or pick up their groceries at the front entry of the building, or pick up their groceries at the bottle return.

COPPOLA Isn't that the purpose of all the directional signs?

JONES It definitely is, Mr. Chairman, and I think it's just one of those things when your customers are used to, glancing up and looking, kind of like I think about myself, or I park and the parking lot at a Meijer kind of, oh, I'm on the home side, oh, I'm on the pickup side. So it kind of directs that traffic to that side of the building. And that sign, just being 15 feet up in the air, maybe a little bit in a larger sign, is more eye-catching. There was a period of time we talked about rotating the door so the door faced McDonald's, and the pickup sign was above the door facing McDonald's, but that got vetoed by your other colleagues.

COPPOLA Okay, so I'm looking at this at the site map here, and maybe that's... things have changed since then. So the pickup sign now is going to be facing east?

VANDER KODDE The pickup sign will be facing east, and the door will be facing north.

COPPOLA So wouldn't... I guess, won't that confuse people, and they'll pull into the parking lot, the main parking lot, on the east side, because they see the pickup sign on the door there where they really should be parking on the north side. Don't you think that will confuse them?

VANDER KODDE The door is on the north side of the building.

COPPOLA No, I understand that, but your pickup sign is on the east side of the building so people see that sign, they're going to go park in the parking lot on the east side and not follow the directional signs and go to the... and then try to, you know.

JONES If I recall correctly, Mr. Chairman, there was an ordinance that prohibited a sign on this side of the building.

COPPOLA On the north side?

JONES Yes.

VANDER KODDE We're allowed signs on two sides, but not three. So if a better solution, in your mind would be to put a sign on the third side, we're open to--

COPPOLA Actually I was going the other direction. I was thinking, what's the purpose of the pickup sign? Again? Okay, that pickup sign on the building, to me, doesn't seem to have a big purpose. Right now, where it's located even [inaudible]. I mean, they'll learn over time, but you have people going into that east parking lot instead of following the directional signs and parking on the north side. So and again, I'm looking at these.

JONES Right.

COPPOLA And originally it was above the door of where the employees come in and out. And you definitely don't want that, if you don't want people going in there. So to me, it just, I guess if we're going to make a compromise in the sense of what you've proposed and what we think we could approve, this would be the one that I would suggest we compromise on.

BOLOVEN Mr. Chair.

COPPOLA Yes.

BOLOVEN Can I ask just one quick question?

COPPOLA Absolutely.

BOLOVEN You're trying to bring this out here. I see the revisions from May to August. I'm looking at that last picture. You have a purple one mark sign, D-5 "Pickup" blade sign, which looks like it's on the north side, and then you have a sign D-4 "Pickup" which looks like the east side. Is that no longer the case now?

VANDER KODDE No, that is still the case. The blade signs are six-foot medallions which are ordinance compliant and not considered wall signs.

BOLOVEN So there's another "Pickup" sign there?

VANDER KODDE The "Pickup" sign. It's not. It is not a pickup sign. It's a blade [inaudible] and that is this one right here. It's on the lower left-hand corner.

BOLOVEN Is that on the building?

VANDER KODDE If that's the building [inaudible], yes.

COPPOLA They call it blade signs. It actually sticks off the building.

VANDER KODDE But it... correct.

BOLOVEN So you got your pickup, I'll call it the logo. Is the blade sign that's actually going to be on the north side still?

VANDER KODDE Yes, facing that'll be on the north side. Yes.

JONES Mr. Chairman, to your point. If you had to, like, twist my arm and say, "What's the most important thing to Meijer and what's the least important in terms of hierarchy?" I'm like you, that people that utilize the pickup area, they do it more than once, and they become more and more familiar with the program, although it's still a program sort of in its infancy. You know, since pandemic times, and it's a business, the mobile business, continues to grow exponentially, as families are busy, time starved, different weather events, but in my mind, too, as we look at these variances that are in front of you tonight, this one is at the bottom of what I thought. What I look at as three items, it is at the bottom of it.

COPPOLA I appreciate that clarification. What other questions for the Petitioner?

TESTA Mr. Chair.

COPPOLA Mr. Testa.

TESTA I have a couple of clarifying questions for the Petitioner. You were talking about what you presented to Planning Commission and then to City Council. You talked about approval. When City Council approved this, they were clear, though, that they were not approving the signage. They need to come before....

VANDER KODDE Yes, I didn't mean to indicate otherwise.

TESTA Okay. Thank you. Regarding my main clarification point is gonna be on the "Local" and "Fresh" signs. I believe in your opening statement, you said you feel that they are not signs or a wall sign because they're mounted on the inside. Do you mean they're behind the glass?

JONES They are.

VANDER KODDE Yes, they were behind the glass. And we did not understand that there was a nuance in the ordinance that when you put a sign behind the glass greater than a certain square footage, it then becomes considered a wall sign, even though it's still anterior.

JONES Yeah. Not until, like yesterday, we learned that they were considered wall signs. We were always under the impression and intentionally moved them from the building into the atrium, yeah, so they would not count as wall signs. So then I think as Law Director and Building Inspection Department dug a little deeper into some codes, and there was something

we had missed, and perhaps even, I don't want to say Planning missed it as well, but it's possible. Thank you.

COPPOLA Mr. Fisher, do you have any clarification? I was looking at the code, I think it says about a window sign the maximum 20% of the window areas. You may have exceeded the 20% and while.... so they picked the larger sign as the one that became the wall sign. I'm not certain, but that's....

POPP I don't know what the thinking was there. I wasn't privy to that conversation.

VANDER KODDE We're, we are still within the 20% easily. There's actually, it's not even, it's not even a statutory code, it's a guidance code, and one of the guidance codes in your signed guidance package, which is why it's not in the zoning ordinance, it's in a guidance document, which is why we missed it.

TESTA Okay, I guess if you purposely move the "Fresh" and "Local" sign inside so that it wouldn't count, why didn't you take the same strategy with your "Meijer" and the "Grocery" sign?

JONES That's a really good question. I think, because it's just so much more prominent, you know, so much more important. And it's "Fresh" and "Local" are white and the "Meijer" and the "Grocery" are colored. You know, I've kind of, maybe Jason can add a little flavor to it, but I think, because it is such a way how it goes out some, it protrudes out a little bit. It's more channel letters.

VANDER KODDE It's also consistent with our other three grocery stores, and it's part of the branding for the format.

TESTA Okay, yeah, I was gonna ask you about that. Do you really need the "Fresh" and "Local" sign? What does that do for you?

JONES Yeah, in my mind, I mean, it's been a local, Michigan-based business for 90 years. Our differentiator with other grocery providers is our "Fresh." I think that's really what we're known for as a corporate entity. So they are important. We did sacrifice. We have a third sign called "Value" that we dropped. And we, most of our "Local" signs say "Since 1934" but we dropped the "Since 1934." We just made it smaller. Okay, sorry, I'm sorry. Didn't mean to confuse that.

TESTA Yeah, I mean, I view you guys as fresh, fresh and when I think of Meijer's. Why couldn't that be inside that atrium area on a wall, like as I get my cart, and I'm walking in? That maybe hits me more than needing to see it in the parking lot.

VANDER KODDE It is, again, it's important with this format and with our branding that matches our four, our three other stores of this type. I believe that if we were to sacrifice any of our square footage, where we are only 12 square feet over, and I believe that we'd rather bring the bottle return sign inside on the window as a decal than we would to lose the "Fresh" and "Local" to bring it into compliance. If that's concerning for you.

TESTA Yeah, I'm personally not so concerned about the square footage overall. I'm more concerned about the number of signs. That's why I'm going after the "Fresh" and "Local." Where are your three other stores?

JONES Yeah, we have one. We opened two in Michigan, Macomb Township and Lake Orion or Orion Township. Then our third, we just opened in July, in Noblesville, Indiana.

TESTA Okay. I know it's not apples to apples, but how do you compare this signage versus, say, your Middlebelt location? I know it's, this is a grocery store, and that's a full shopping center, but....

JONES It's considerably less. I mean, I could, I don't know that I could put a square footage number to it, but it's considerably less, considerably less.

TESTA You have the "Fresh" and "Local" on your Middlebelt store?

JONES It's "Home" and "Fresh" on the Middlebelt. And they just-- it has two entrances. "Home" is on... designates one side of the building, where it's pharmacy and more general merchandise and then "Fresh" orients you toward the grocery side of the building.

TESTA And that makes sense to me to differentiate the two sides of the store. Okay. Thank you.

BARINGHAUS Mr. Chairman?

COPPOLA Yes. Vice Chair Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS Yeah. If I were to enter the store from Seven Mile using directional signage in the parking lot. How would I navigate to the pickup area?

VANDER KODDE If you were to enter from Seven Mile, what you would do is you would... you're coming from the east or the west?

BARINGHAUS I'm coming from the west.

VANDER KODDE So if you're coming from the west, you would turn left into the entrance on Seven Mile, you would get to the splitter island and you would, there would be a small directional sign in the island that indicates curbside pickup to the right.

BARINGHAUS That sign C-3, parking lot, wayfaring?

VANDER KODDE Yes. Okay, that's gonna....

BARINGHAUS Be turned right?

VANDER KODDE That's going to be sign number, the lower version of a pickup that way I believe. Or maybe, no, sorry, it would be the upper version. The "Pickup" and pharmaceuticals are backwards on that document, so I need to correct that. Good catch. You're going to go right. You're going to take the loop road, or ring road, we call it, around the outside perimeter of the parking lot. You're going to turn left near the intersection of Farmington and Seven Mile.

BARINGHAUS What tells me to turn off?

VANDER KODDE The fact that you can't go straight.

BARINGHAUS I understand.

[Laughter]

VANDER KODDE You're going to continue to follow those intuitively.

BARINGHAUS Tell me I have to go that way.

VANDER KODDE You're going to continue to follow the only way that the drive out goes, if you would like us to place the wayfinding sign there, we can.

BARINGHAUS No, I'm just curious.

VANDER KODDE Okay, no, that's a great question. And then you're going to proceed to the stop sign with the right-hand right-out entrance on Farmington. And there will be a "Pharmacy Ahead" sign, I'm sorry, "Pickup Ahead" sign, which is going to be sign C. Then you're going to continue straight. And then you're going to go left when you get up to the traffic signal at the top of the plane.

BARINGHAUS Okay, another question. In the pickup area, I'm in the car with my groceries, then I receive my groceries. How do I get out? How do I exit?

VANDER KODDE You're going to exit, you're going to go north, and then turn right, and then it depends on which way you want to go home, if you want to go left by McDonald's, go right by McDonald's, or back the same way you came.

BARINGHAUS So in other words, there's a little, maybe.

VANDER KODDE We don't have an exit sign there.

BARINGHAUS That's the exit, okay. The line was going over the exit line. [Inaudible] unclear.

VANDER KODDE So that is a stop mark. So that traffic stops for vendors or deliveries that are exiting, they have stops in there.

BARINGHAUS Okay.

COPPOLA Other questions for the Petitioner? Secretary Klisz.

KLISZ Compared to the other two grocery stores, what are their sign packages look like compared to ours? I don't know those communities, hardly at all. But is it something very similar? Do you have more than that? It's less than that.

JONES It's virtually identical. There were some nuances based on some local ordinances, but the signage, I'd say in Marion, I'm sorry, Macomb and Orion, the "Fresh" and the "Local" ended up on the building.

KLISZ Okay, which your original proposal was here. And then they got moved inside, behind.

JONES Yeah, we actually, in one community, we talked about painting those "Fresh" and "Local" on the building, so they'd be more art rather than a sign, which you guys talked about earlier, but it ended up "Fresh" and "Local" and on the building.

VANDER KODDE We pulled it inside.

JONES We did pull it inside. The store that we had to, couldn't get the variance on height.

VANDER KODDE Yes.

JONES Yep, yeah, Macomb, they have a height of the building ordinance at 30 feet.

VANDER KODDE 35 feet.

JONES 35 feet. And Orion allowed us to go to 36 feet, two inches.

KLISZ Thank you.

COPPOLA Any other questions for the Petitioner? Going once, going twice. Okay, is there anyone in the audience who would like to speak for or against this petition? If you step up and give the name and address, even though previously....

GRENADIER All right, I'll be really quick. Josh Grenadier, Sheldon Center, consumer and landlord. I really like Meijer's plan. I think that they're a very unique store, and that they're so big, they have so many entrances, so many different departments, I looked at the signs that say "Bottle Return," not so much the "Fresh," "Local" because there's only one entrance, but when there's two doors, I think that's super important to know which side of the parking lot I'm going to and I also would recommend against hiding signs behind the windows. [Inaudible] have a nice, good signs outside the windows. That's it.

COPPOLA Thank you. Anyone else?

KLISZ No correspondence.

COPPOLA No correspondence. All right, would you like to make a final closing statement?

JONES Again, I think we really went through all these signs very carefully with Planning Commission, with City Council, we reduced them each time, and we're in front of you with what City Council and Planning Commission felt was appropriate. What looked good from the roads, you know, where the signs are located. We did have unanimous support for that from those two boards, although the resolution said we still had to come to this board for final approval. I mean, we put a lot of thought in it, as you can imagine, into the signage package, but I will echo what I said earlier, that the curbside pickup can be sacrificed, because I believe customers will get used to where it is, and they're getting accustomed to where they are on other stores. Now, certainly, we had to accommodate for curbside pre-pandemic, so we had to roll it out to almost 270 stores. So some of them ended up in parking lots. They were the only places they could go. But I do think that customers will become accustomed, because if it's a frequency, you're not usually a one-time curbside customer. So I can, I can appreciate that comment by the Chairman, but the other ones are.... We appreciate your support. Thank you.

TESTA Mr. Chair, sorry, I know I do this often. Can I ask one more question?

COPPOLA Sure.

TESTA Based on your last comment, you could potentially sacrifice the "Pickup" sign. So thank you for putting that out there. Just to clarify, do you mean both the words "Pick up" and also the blade sign?

JONES No, just the words.

TESTA Just them.

JONES I believe the blade sign is compliant with the ordinance. So we really, and that's one of the reasons, I think the concession is not too painful, is because the blade sign remains.

TESTA Okay. Thank you.

VANDER KODDE If I may also close.

COPPOLA Absolutely.

VANDER KODDE One other hardship that I failed to work into the conversation is the high traffic. I know that was mentioned on one of the early applications, and with the queuing at the signal, the signage is important on the building for as you know, as many vehicles and as quickly as the vehicles travel past. So that's another unique consideration of this site, and it does help with wayfinding with the curbside sign. So if we are able to keep it, that would be very much appreciated. It would be a big concession, although it would be the concession that we would choose.

COPPOLA All right, thank you. You guys can have a seat if you would. Thank you. I'm going to close the public portion of the case and start the Board's comments with Mr. Boloven.

BOLOVEN Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't want to say I'm torn. I like the presentation. I think it's well thought out. I know you guys have gone through the gauntlet between Planning and City Council. There's still a couple things I'd like to see. I'd like to see pictures of your other... your Lake Orion store, your new store that just opened up in Indiana. I'd like to see how that layout actually looks, rather than the diagram that's kind of a prospect. Let's see the actual finished product. I see the sign behind the glass. What's it actually look like? Is that, sitting on the glass? Is it a standalone that's kind of floating, you know, that's an open question I have on it. I will say on the directional signs, I don't think you need the pickup sign on the building itself, the directional sign zone area you definitely need. I'll give you an example. Just went to Home Depot at 96 and Middlebelt, got lost, had no clue where to go, and there was no sign. So, you know, I met and, yeah, it's a big thing. People are doing it. I see the need for those signs, the whole package as a whole, though, like I said, I think before making a decision on it, I'd like to see what you've done in these other locations. They quickly pulled up the Indiana location, and it doesn't look like that has either "Fresh" or "Local" on it in the published photo. So, that's something that's willing to be, that they got rid of there. Is that willing to be a concession here? I know you're willing to do concession on the "Pickup." So, in a nutshell, I think I'd be in support of the table this evening for a little bit more information.

COPPOLA All right, thank you. Secretary Klisz?

KLISZ I agree. I think it's a big enough project, while I'm pretty confident that all of it, or very much, most of it, will be approved, and again, it has gone through maybe the biggest gauntlet that I've heard of. I mean, we often say, oh, Planning and Council looked at this, and so we're just, you know, the third eye, but in this case, we had neighbors and town halls and all that kind of stuff. So it is well thought out, but we're making a big decision on a big project, it probably would make sense to see the other three stores that are like this, even though they're in different communities and in different states, there's absolutely nothing wrong with taking another look at it. You know, we're missing a board member. We'll have a new board member by the time they would come back. So I would not be opposed to a tabling or, I guess, an approval with or without the "Pickup" sign, kind of either way with that one.

COPPOLA Thank you. Mr. Testa.

TESTA Thank you, Mr. Chair. First, I want to say thank you for coming to Livonia and developing something at Seven and Farmington. I think it's long overdue, and I've been very vocal that something's needed there. I have been able to Google some photos, but I do agree with Mr. Boloven, it would be helpful to understand "Local" and "Fresh" signs. I was of the opinion you don't need them, but based on the pictures I see now that they are inside, behind the glass, it is hard to see, so you really can't see them from the street. It is more for once you park your car and walking up, you kind of see them. It's very less visible compared to, say, the Meijer grocery sign itself. I'm not so concerned with the overage on the area. I am a little hung up on the number of signs. I actually do appreciate that you scaled down the Meijer signs. Your signs overall, none of them are too overpowering or too big in my opinion. I also like the esthetics overall of the building, I think the signs fit well. So I would support a table if that's where the Board is going. But I could also be in support of approval without the "Pickup" signs.

COPPOLA All right, thank you. Mr. Rotondo.

ROTONDO Yeah. I can obviously understand the need for the directional signs and the labeling of the pharmacy and the bottle pickup or the bottle return. Sorry. I can see the need to direct the traffic through the parking lot and high traffic area, make sure people can get to where they need to go. Kind of hung up on the "Fresh" and "Local" signs. I don't really see the purpose of those. So I can be in favor of a tabling as well.

COPPOLA Thank you, Vice Chair Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS Thank you. Just a couple things. I agree with Mr. Boloven and I would like to see photographs to some of the other stores. I always like your Royal Oak store, or it's called Woodward corner. It doesn't seem to have the level of signage that's being proposed for the Livonia store as well. Also, are they comparable size stores? Okay, other stores, Rivertown, I looked at those. They seem to have very clean exterior designs. It's not a lot of signage. It's basically, "Meijer's" and maybe some other signs as well. I do see the value of putting like "Pickup," "Pharmacy Pickup," and "Grocery Pickup," identifying those clearly on the building. But I mean, I'd really like to take a closer look at the number of wayfaring signs on the property. It

seems like they're congregated in areas, but they don't direct people well across the lot, so maybe taking a closer look would be good at that. Earlier you indicated that the property was designed with the intention of being walkable, but we didn't really have any discussion on crossing safety to get into the complex. I'd like to see a little bit more on that as well. So based on that, I agree. I think we should table it and have them come back with some additional information.

COPPOLA All right, thank you. Okay, got everybody tonight. Kind of did it out of order. So sometimes I lose track. So I think a tabling is in order. I think some additional perspective in regards to what you have already done in some of the cases is helpful. And from my perspective, I'm looking at, if I like, I actually... "Fresh" and the "Local" in the window I like a lot better than on the building. And I think it will really pop at night, but we'll see real well during the daytime. Get a little more challenging for you, but the "Pickup" sign was the one that I really had the issue with, and I think that if it the Petitioner came back. This is and I'm talking only from my perspective. I'm not talking from the other Board members' perspective, came back with a revised petition that reflected the removal of the "Pickup" sign that we talked about. So you would actually no longer have a maximum area issue. That would go away. So it's one less variance. We would have to prove I'm fine with the wall sign, the maximum wall sign, which was the "Meijer's" one. I think it looks good. It's an overage. Just 25, it's not that big of an overage. I'm pretty good with that, especially with it sitting so far back, although you're gonna have monument sign, everybody knows it's a monument, but that's branding, and I understand that. For the branding, I don't have an issue with the directional sign. I think it's actually going to be important for how this particular building is situated and set up. You gotta tell people where to go. I think with all the directional center you have for pickup, there's no, there shouldn't be any issues from finding that without the large pickup sign. So from my perspective, I think it would be helpful to see just what you did elsewhere. I think that's a good request. It came from Mr. Boloven. And then I'd like to see a revised petition reflecting comments, so that, we could kind of do one now where we kind of approved in part, rejected in part, but it wouldn't be very clear as to what we're actually approving. So a revised petition that kind of reflect the reduction in signage, kind of what we've talked about, at least what I talked about, again, you need to reflect all the comments and do what you think did make sense for you would make it cleaner for us on an approval basis when we wanted to move forward. So based on [that] I'm going to go ahead now and then open up the floor for a motion.

BOLOVEN Mr. Chair.

COPPOLA Mr. Boloven.

BOLOVEN Resolved that Appeal Case No. 2024-12-41, filed by Seven Mile/Farmington Venture, LLC, be tabled in order to give the Petitioner time to bring back pictures of other Meijer groceries that have been done that are final as well as potentially revising the petition in light of the Board's comments.

KLISZ Support.

COPPOLA I have a motion by Mr. Boloven, supported by Secretary Klisz, to table the petition. You can go ahead and take roll.

On a motion by Boloven, supported by Klisz, the petition was tabled.

RESOLVED: APPEAL CASE NO. 2024-12-41, Seven Mile/Farmington Venture, LLC, on behalf of Lessee Meijer, Inc., 33500 W Seven Mile Road: seeking to erect a sign package resulting in an excessive number of wall signs, total wall sign area, wall sign size and directional signs in excess sign size.

Number of Wall Signs

Allowed: 2
Proposed: 6
Excess: 4

Maximum Area

Allowed: 494 sq. ft.
Proposed: 506.5 sq. ft.
Excess: 12.5 sq. ft.

Maximum Wall Sign Size

Allowed: 200 sq. ft.
Proposed: 253.7 sq. ft. (sign D1)
Excess: 53.7 sq. ft.

Maximum Directional Sign Size

Allowed: 2 sq. ft.
Proposed: 6 sq. ft. (sign C4) and 4 sq. ft. (sign C5)
Excess: 4 sq. ft. and 2 sq. ft. respectively

This Mixed Development Center property is located on the north side of West Seven Mile (33500), between Farmington Road and Norwich Road, Lot. No. 016-99-0016-003, C-2, General Business, rejected by the Inspection Department under Livonia Zoning Ordinance, Sections 11.08 (3) – Sign Regulations in C-2 districts & 11.06 (8): Exempt Signs,

be tabled to allow the Petitioner to bring back pictures of other Meijer groceries which have been completed, as well as to allow the Petitioner to take the Board's comments into consideration.

ROLL CALL VOTE

AYES: Boloven, Klisz, Rotondo, Testa, Baringhaus, Coppola

NAYS: None

Vacancy: One seat

PASS/FAIL/TABLED: PASS: TABLED

KLISZ Mr. Rotondo.

ROTONDO Aye.

KLISZ Mr. Testa.

TESTA Aye.

KLISZ Mr. Boloven.

BOLOVEN Aye.

KLISZ Secretary Klisz votes aye. Vice Chairman Baringhaus.

BARINGHAUS Aye.

KLISZ And Chairman Coppola.

COPPOLA Aye.

KLISZ Six, zero for tabling.

COPPOLA Okay, since you've been tabled. I think you kind of heard what we had to say, but I want to make sure that you get the questions. I want you to come in as confident as you can that you reflect on our comments, and hopefully it's only a one more time thing.

JONES Thank you very much. We got the message, and those things that can easily be taken care of with the other two stores in Michigan and the store in Indiana, no problem whatsoever. So like the prior Petitioner, I appreciate your service and this democratic process, so [inaudible].

COPPOLA So I think you heard me earlier, but you'd have to turn in the revised petition by the thirteenth.

JONES Okay.

COPPOLA So you got a little bit of a short period. Otherwise, March 11, and that's February 4. Thank you. When do you plan? When are you actually planning on going vertical?

JONES We're in for permitting. And either right away permits right now.

VANDER KODDE It depends on the process.

COPPOLA So this process, I mean, timing wise, we're not really creating a significant...

JONES We'd like to start construction in the spring.

COPPOLA Okay, all right. Well, thank you very much. And I appreciate this. I appreciate your persistence in staying with this project. I think this property has been distressed for a very, very long time, and needed to be redeveloped. I think what's come up while, from some persistence perspective, isn't ideal. I think, I think it's probably the best solution we can come up with right now. And I appreciate Meijer's. I'm from Michigan. Meijer's kind of dedication

to the city of Livonia. I mean, you guys have been great here and have been a great corporate citizen for us. So appreciate that. I'm really looking forward to this being done and I think it's going to be a great asset.

JONES I didn't get to share this with either Planning Commission or City Council, but I, in preparation of one meeting, I had our charitable giving director pull a report of what we've given to the city of Livonia, the volume without giving any amounts. It was over like 53 different organizations, and it ranged. It had a wide range, from youth athletics to churches to police department to various organizations with a lot of emphasis on food insecurity, so it's part of who we are. I appreciate those kind comments, and we'll see you soon.

COPPOLA Great. Looking forward to it. Okay, thank you.

ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS

COPPOLA All right. We have minutes.

KLISZ Minutes.

COPPOLA Yeah, we're all in the last meeting.

KLISZ We were all in attendance.

TESTA Motion to approve the meeting minutes of December 10, 2024.

KLISZ Support.

COPPOLA I have a motion by Mr. Testa, support by Secretary Klisz to approve the minutes for the December 10, 2024 meeting. All in favor?

The Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the meeting of December 10, 2024.

COPPOLA I just need one more motion.

BARINGHAUS Mr. Chairman, motion to adjourn?

TESTA Support.

COPPOLA You'll support it? If you guys just want to stay here all night.... I have a motion by Vice Chair Baringhaus, supported by Mr. Testa to adjourn. All in favor?

The Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:38 p.m.

Gregory G. Coppola, Chairman

Timothy Klisz, Secretary