

The Tuesday December 7, 2021 meeting of the Delhi Township Board of Zoning Appeals was called to order by Clay Tharp at 6:00 p.m. at the Delhi Lodge with the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Members present:

Clay Tharp
Stephen Schott
Scott Heenan
Jennifer Vatter
Andrew Mattei

Also present:

Gregory J. DeLong, Assistant Township Administrator
Anthony S. Roach, Zoning Administrator

Anthony Roach certified that the requirements of Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code and the rules adopted pursuant thereto had been completely complied with as they concerned the meeting.

On Motion by Mr. Mattei and seconded by Mr. Tharp to approve the minutes of the Boards' November 9, 2021 meeting but to dispense with the reading. Mssrs. Tharp, Schott, Heenan and Mattei and Mrs. Vatter voted aye.

The Public Hearing was convened.

Mr. DeLong advised case VA2021-04 is to hear a variance request to permit a six-foot by fifteen-foot or 90 sq. ft. monument sign in the front yard along Neeb Road; whereas the Zoning Resolution permits monument signs to be no greater than six-feet in height and no greater than 24 sq. ft. in size; for property located on Neeb Road (parcel 540-0073-0022-00) in the "AA" Residence District. He commented that the proposed sign is a monument style design and consists of the letters "MSJ", navy blue with gold trim and is made of durable fiberglass with steel interior supports and would be located near the entrance to the Neeb Road parking garage.

Mr. DeLong advised according to the submitted application the purpose for the proposed sign is to: provide the Mount community and prospective students with a strong branded experience and photo opportunity on campus; the proximity to the main entrance to the University provides the ideal location as it captures foot and vehicular traffic from Admission tours, athletic events at the Sports Complex, and is close enough for events and/or everyday use; This site is the primary entrance to the Sports Complex & east parking, and this display acts as a gateway to those facilities.

Mr. DeLong advised that staff has two questions that the Board may wish to discuss with the applicant: confirmation of the sign height as it is unclear whether or not the footer will extend above grade, if so, the sign's height will be greater than 6' from grade, what is the confirmed height? In the application materials, the applicant states that the sign is 72 sq. ft., whereas based on submitted application materials, staff calculates the sign at 90 sq. ft., what is the correct square footage?

Mr. DeLong advised staff will not be providing a recommendation on this case due to affiliation with being on committees at MSJU. He commented that as the Board makes their decision on the proposed request, the decision shall be made based on the Area Variance Factors of Review; Section 22.5 (B)(1) of the Township Zoning Resolution.

Greg Goldschmidt (sworn), Creative Director for MSJU, advised that the 72 sq. ft. of the sign comes from the fact that the sign is tilted, so the actual square footage is 72 sq. ft. He commented that they did not calculate the base in the height of the sign so it will be several more inches with the concrete base.

Mr. DeLong advised that when they calculate the square footage of a sign, we draw a box around it and use that so we will use the 90 sq. ft.

Mr. Goldschmidt advised he is working on creating affinity pieces for MSJU campus and one of the first pieces they started looking at were the giant campus letters that you see around colleges. He commented that university letter displays provide campus branding, photo opportunities, and organic social media engagement. He noted that the site is the primary entrance to our Sport Complex and east parking, and this display acts as a gateway to those facilities.

To Mrs. Vatters question as to do you intend to do more of these around campus in areas that might be more visible? Mr. Goldschmidt advised that this is intended as a one-time project and the lifespan of this piece is approximately twenty years.

To Mr. Tharp's question as to will the sign be lit? Mr. Goldschmidt advised it will be illuminated from some lamps in front but it is not an illuminated sign.

To Mr. Heenan's question as to are you concerned with people trying to take pictures and this being close to the road causing traffic or safety issues? Mr. Goldschmidt advised that the sign is set back up the hill so students taking pictures can safely be in the lawn area and away from the road. He commented that at the corner of Neeb and the parking garage there is a 6' by 18' sidewalk space that people can safely stand on while taking photos. He noted that there are only eight homes that are at the end of Neeb Road, the majority of the campus traffic ends either just before or just through that sidewalk.

To Mr. Heenan's question as to is the sign strong enough to hold the students if they climb on it? Mr. Goldschmidt said it is durable enough to park a car on top of it.

To Mr. Tharp's question as to has there been any public input? Mr. DeLong responded in the negative.

To Mr. Schott's question as to is there anywhere else on campus this sign could be placed and have the same desired effect? Mr. Goldschmidt advised it would not have the same impact if it were elsewhere.

To Mr. Heenan’s question as to would granting this in anyway effect the business on Delhi Pike wanting a 90 square foot sign? Mr. DeLong advised that this is a totally different type of use and staff doesn’t believe it will affect the commercial district as the commercial district has more lenient sign regulations which allows for more signs and larger signs what non-residential uses in a residential district are permitted.

On Motion by Mrs. Vatter and seconded by Mr. Tharp to grant the variance for 6’6” high by 15’ monument sign as proposed. Mssrs. Heenan, Schott, Tharp, Mattei and Mrs. Vatter voted aye.

On Motion by Mr. Heenan and seconded by Mr. Tharp that the area variance factors of review are met. Mssrs. Heenan, Schott, Tharp, Mattei and Mrs. Vatter voted aye.

Old Business:

- Nothing

New Business:

- Mr. DeLong advised that for our mixed-use project we are ready to go out for bid for the first rounds of the earth work.
- Mr. DeLong advised that there are only seven lots left for Greenside Estates.
- Mr. DeLong advised that the zoning complaints have gone down since we no longer take anonymous complaints.
- Mr. DeLong advised we have issued 285 Zoning Certificates so far this year.
- Mr. DeLong advised that the vacancy rate is at 10%.
- Mr. DeLong advised that they are looking into adding some verbiage in the rules of procedure for the zoning commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals where people can get removed from meetings for being disruptive.
- Mr. DeLong advised that Rocket Systems filed their appeal today.

There being no further business on motion of Mr. Heenan seconded by Mr. Tharp the meeting was adjourned at 6:37pm. Mssrs. Heenan, Schott, Tharp, Mattei and Mrs. Vatter voted Aye.

Anthony S. Roach
Zoning Administrator