

**MINUTES OF A VIRTUAL MEETING  
ARCHITECTURAL BOARD OF REVIEW  
CITY OF INDEPENDENCE  
VIA ZOOM  
December 17, 2020**

The Meeting was called to order by Chairman Norm Casini at 3:01 p.m. and the following responded to Roll Call:

**PRESENT:**           **Norm Casini, Chairman  
Michael Gero, Building Official  
Don Ramm, City Engineer  
Steve Rega, Fire Chief  
Jeff Markley, City Planner**

**New Business:**

- 1. 5700 Brecksville Road, AAA Travel Insurance – Proposed new ground monument sign.**
- 2. 6803 Sprague Road, Matt Brzoska – Proposed three-car garage.**

**Late Addition:**

- 3. 6901 Rockside Road, Spectrum – Proposed new wall sign.**

Chairman Casini asked if there were any corrections or additions to the Minutes of the October 15, 2020 Architectural Board of Review meeting. There were none.

**A motion was made by Building Official Gero, seconded by City Engineer Ramm, to approve the Minutes of the Architectural Board of Review meeting of November 19, 2020.**

**ROLL CALL:           Yeas: Gero, Ramm  
Nays: None  
Abstain: Casini  
MOTION CARRIED**

**5700 Brecksville Road, AAA Travel Insurance –** Dustin James of Advanced Installation was in attendance.

Chairman Casini stated that he had a couple of questions. He asked if the location was in the approximate area of where the sign was before.

Building Official Gero replied no.

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Chairman Casini stated that he didn't have a problem with the location. He asked if the sign would be one sided.

Mr. James stated that it would be a two sided sign.

Chairman Casini stated that he didn't have any problem with the sign, except the sign was located very close to grade, and they could put the address on the end of the sign. He stated that if the grass would grow six inches, you would not be able to see the sign or if there would be any landscaping to be developed in that area.

Building Official Gero asked Mr. James if there was any chance of adding additionally the numbers on the edge of the sign that will be facing the street.

Mr. James stated that he didn't think the customer would have a problem with that.

Building Official Gero stated that the Fire Department likes to have them there also. He stated that it looked nice on the base, and depending on how the landscape would be arranged, it may or not be covered with snow. He stated that up on the edge of the sign, the Fire Department likes to have the address there.

Mr. James stated that it would look like it would fit real nice because they have 20 inches wide in the front; and it looks like the address numbers were 17 inches.

Building Official Gero stated that it would not be on the edge of the base, but on the edge of the sign itself.

Mr. James stated that he would write that down, and it should not be a problem.

The Building Official stated that they could be put vertically on the sign.

The Chairman asked Mr. James what the sign base would be made of.

Mr. James stated that it would be a masonry foundation and base.

The Chairman asked if it would be face brick.

Mr. James stated that it would be brick.

The Chairman asked what would the top be made out of.

Mr. James stated that he believed it would be sandstone.

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Chairman Casini stated that he didn't have any further questions. He stated that he thought the colors were good and the design was good.

Building Official Gero stated that the applicant would be going to the Board of Zoning Appeals this evening for a variance on the height; so whatever the Board would do would be subject to variance approval. He stated that they were in the process of getting the specific location spot worked out.

He stated that they were talking about landscaping, and he asked the City Planner to weigh in on it. He stated that there was a landscape mound currently in the area where the sign would be going; and it was thought that they might be able to incorporate the landscape mound around the base of the sign and bring the landscaping out a little bit. He stated that there would have to be a landscape plan that the City Planner would have to look at and approve.

City Planner Markley stated that he was looking at a street view of the sign right now. He stated that the Building Official was talking about the end of the mound which was north of the existing sign.

Building Official Gero stated that where the sign was staked out, there were currently right-of-way issues there; so it would be more to the west out of the right-of-way to the mound, closer to the mulch bed, the landscaping. He stated that perhaps the mulch bed could be brought around the sign with some landscaping.

Chairman Casini stated that the applicant could propose something of that nature, and they could let the City Planner take a look at it.

Mr. James agreed to doing that. He thought it would look aesthetically pleasing that way also to incorporate it around the sign. He stated that the sign being located a little higher on the hill, they would be able to work with it a little better. He stated that it was an interesting situation.

Chairman Casini asked if anyone had any questions.

City Engineer Ramm stated that he wanted to get it on the record that according to their review, he stated that he thought the sign would have to be moved westerly a good 10 feet to get it located explicitly outside of the right-of-way and up the hill, closer to the existing landscaping. He stated that regarding the height variance that the applicant was seeking at the Board of Zoning Appeals, if the height dimension was taken from the 3 to 1 slope, give or take, that height variance, they could be picking up two to three feet on the low end such that the overall height would be larger on the low end than on the short end.

Mr. James asked the City Engineer where he was going to pull that from. He asked if it would be from the middle of sign, or would he be going right from the very leading edge of that sign.

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City Engineer Ramm stated that in terms of seeking a variance, they would want to be measuring the worst case scenario in his opinion.

Mr. James stated that it was the worst case scenario with them putting a sign over there. He stated that they were trying to fit the sign back in into something that has been redone, and it was definitely a challenge. He stated that he wanted to make sure that he would get the height variance through.

Chairman Casini stated that Mr. James would have to locate the sign behind the right-of-way of the roadway.

The Building Official agreed.

The Chairman stated that Mr. James would have to move the sign to the west.

City Engineer Ramm agreed. He stated that there was a good amount of room behind the sidewalk to the right-of-way.

The Chairman stated that he thought they could incorporate it a little better too based on doing some landscape.

Mr. James stated that with the landscaping, it would bring everything together.

City Planner Markley stated that Mr. James would end up with a much more exposed sign base.

Mr. James stated that the one drawing had a little bit of a cut, and they would try to eat up the angle a little bit; but they could only do so much because it was only 20 inches tall. He stated that like the Engineer was saying, it was a 3 to 1 pitch there.

City Planner Markley stated that would be exposed quite a bit more which should look nice. He wanted Mr. James to be mindful that the base will grow in height.

City Engineer Ramm stated that another option could be to install maybe some segmental block wall on the front end.

City Planner Markley stated that they would end up with a retaining wall and a sign base, it might be two different materials. He stated that he thought Mr. James could probably incorporate it all into a segmental wall if he wanted to go that route.

Mr. James stated that he thought the way that his boss was explaining how he would like to dig into, they would excavate into the hill and kind of round it out and make it smooth so everything would be nice and rounded and feeds into there. They would dig down the foundation. They

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were not anticipating having the foundation showing, and then the block on top of there to try to get that true, they have the 20 inches plus the sandstone. He stated that he heard what the City Engineer said about that sticking out, and they would like to avoid that just for looks and aesthetics and everything else.

Chairman Casini asked if anyone else had any questions. He stated that what they were approving today was that the sign would have the address on the edge of the sign facing east, and the sign would be moved back behind the right-of-way. The owner will submit a landscape drawing for the City Planner to review.

Mr. James asked the City Engineer if the sign needed to be moved 10 feet from where they were at.

City Engineer Ramm stated that he felt that 10 feet would get the applicant outside of the right-of-way.

**A motion was made by Building Official Gero, seconded by City Engineer Ramm, to approve the sign as stated above, subject to the variance being granted by the Board of Zoning Appeals.**

**ROLL CALL:           Yeas: Casini, Gero, Ramm  
                          Nays: None  
                          MOTION CARRIED**

**6803 Sprague Road, Matt Brzoska** – The applicant was not in attendance. Attorney Mark Marong was in attendance representing Mr. & Mrs. MacRaild.

Chairman Casini stated that the Board did not have a site plan locating the garage anywhere; so it would be difficult to review and approve. He asked if the Building Official had any questions.

Building Official Gero stated that he would contact the applicant, and let him know that he will need to submit a site plan. He asked the Secretary if she was going to reach out to the applicant to remind the applicant that he missed the meeting. The Secretary stated that she will reach out to the applicant. She stated that the applicant did send an e-mail that he was going to be in attendance.

Building Official Gero stated that the next meeting of the Architectural Board will be canceled; so the third Thursday of January would be the next meeting.

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**A motion was made by Building Official Gero, seconded by City Engineer Ramm, to table the matter.**

**ROLL CALL:       Yeas: Casini, Gero, Ramm  
                      Nays: None  
                      MOTION CARRIED**

**6901 Rockside Road, Spectrum** – Cione Belknap of Agile Sign and Lighting was in attendance. She stated that they would be installing the Spectrum wall sign with the small logo sign. She stated that they would be face lit LED channel letters at 2’6” in height and 12’ in width. She stated that they were looking for an approval as submitted. She stated that the least frontage was 35’ so the sign should be within code.

Ms. Belknap stated that she would be happy to answer any questions from the Board.

Chairman Casini asked if the logo was the triangle.

Ms. Belknap stated that it was the little blue triangle at the end.

Chairman Casini stated that they would be individual letters with nothing connecting anything between them.

Ms. Belknap agreed.

The Chairman stated that there would be no other visual attachments.

Ms. Belknap agreed.

The Chairman asked if the electrical feeders and connectors of the letters will be through the backside which would not be visible.

Ms. Belknap agreed.

Chairman Casini asked if the Building Official had any questions.

Building Official Gero stated that he did not have any questions. He stated that he was a little concerned at first, but he thought the sign looked very nice. He asked the City Engineer if he had any questions.

City Engineer Ramm stated that he did not have anything.

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**A motion was made by Building Official Gero, seconded by City Engineer, to approve the sign as presented.**

**ROLL CALL:       Yeas: Casini, Gero, Ramm  
                      Nays: None  
                      MOTION CARRIED**

Building Official Gero stated that the City will be shutting down on December 24<sup>th</sup> through January 4<sup>th</sup>; and they will be back open on January 4<sup>th</sup>. He just wanted to let the applicant know. He stated that he may not get back to the applicant until after the first, but he will be in touch with the applicant.

Elizabeth, who was on the Zoom call on behalf of Spectrum, asked if they included the window vinyl in the permit application.

Building Official Gero stated that it was on the permit information; but the Board does not look at that as a sign. The windows would be blanked out. He stated that would not be an issue.

**There being no further business, the Architectural Board of Review virtual meeting of December 17, 2020 was adjourned at 3:18 p.m.**

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**Acting Chairman Michael Gero**

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**Debi Beal, Secretary,  
Unapproved at Time of Release 12/18/20**