

ZONING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

April 29, 2020



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 919 Applegate Road
Project Name: Joe Daniel's Construction
Application Type: Approval for a Sign Variance Request
Legistar File ID # [60097](#)
Prepared By: Chrissy Thiele, Zoning Inspector
Reviewed By: Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator

The applicant is requesting approval for a Sign Variance. This property is an existing Contractor's Business (construction office and warehouse) located in the Industrial Limited (IL) district, which recently added a second story to the one story building. The property fronts West Beltline Highway (six lanes, 55 mph) and Jonathon Drive (2 lanes, 25 mph).

Pursuant to Section 31.043(2), MGO, the UDC may approve a sign with up to fifty percent (50%) greater net area or fifty percent (50%) higher than the maximum height otherwise allowed, or reduce the required yard or setback if such approval:

- (a) Is necessary for a sign located on the site of an establishment to be identifiable and legible from the nearest roadway at prevailing speeds; and
- (b) Will result in a sign more in scale with the building and site and in a superior overall design.

Permitted per Sign Ordinance: Summarizing Section 31.07, there shall be one signable area for each façade facing a street or parking lot 33 feet in width or greater. For a single occupancy, stand-alone, non-residential building with twenty-five thousand (25,000) square feet or more in floor area, or a non-residential occupancy or tenant space with twenty-five thousand (25,000) square feet or more in floor area in a multi-tenant building, the maximum net area of all wall signs shall be thirty percent (30%) of the signable area. In no case shall a wall sign exceed one hundred twenty (120) square feet in net area.

Proposed Signage: The subject property has an approximately 180 sq. ft. signable area facing the beltline highway, which in turn allows a maximum wall sign size of about 54 sq. ft. The north-facing facade has a larger signable area at the first story, but that area is not as visible from the adjacent highway due to site constants and adjacent development and signs. The applicant is requesting for a 79.91 sq. ft. sign on the second story, which would be about 47% larger in net area than what the code allows.

Staff Comments: The building is set back about 65' from the property line, at its closest point, and the beltline and frontage roads have a combined width of 308'. While it doesn't appear from street view, this building is over 25,000 sq. ft. of floor area, which limits the size of the sign to be no larger than 30% of the signable area. While the façade does have other decently sized signable areas, having a sign on the second story provides better visibility for signage, especially when there are six lanes of traffic and two frontage roads.

The desired sign shown at 30% of the signable area appears to be too small in comparison to the scale of the building and the wall space it will occupy. Naturally, as the size increases, the appearance of the sign in scale with the building façade decreases. Initially, the applicant requested approval for a sign 47% larger than what the code allows, however that sign appears to be too large for the area it will occupy. The applicant argued that the sign would comply with the ordinance had the building been under 25,000 sq. ft. of tenant space, however the requested sign would actually occupy 44.1% of the signable area.

Staff requested additional artwork showing the sign occupying 40% of the signable area, which can be seen on the last page of the submittal. This sign would have a total net of 70.76 sq. ft. and appears to be better proportioned for the area above the second story windows and this meet standard #2 for sign size variance. **Staff has no objection to the Variance request for the wall signs and recommends the UDC find the standards for Variance review have been met for the sign that is 40% of the signable area (the 70± sq. ft. sign option).**