



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 120 E Lakeside Street
Application Type: Signage Exception
UDC is an Approving Body
Legistar File ID #: [91180](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Lindsey Mickelson, Sign Art Studio

Project Description: The applicant is proposing the installation of a wall sign on a wall that is not directly adjacent to a parking lot or street, on the south elevation of the building, a non-qualifying elevation for signage. In addition, the sign is proposed to be mounted at a height that is above the UDD 1 mounting height requirements (18 feet) at just under 29 feet and is larger in size than the UDD wall sign requirements allow (72 square feet) at 79.97 square feet.

Approval Standards: The UDC is an **approving body** on this request.

The Sign Control Ordinance, [MGO Sec. 31.043\(3\)\(d\)](#) states that: *“After a public hearing as provided in Sec. 33.24(4)(e)3(d), the Urban Design Commission (UDC) may permit the use of wall signs on building façades not adjacent to off-street parking areas where, due to a variation of building setbacks, a signable area exists, provided the area of the sign shall not exceed the area of the wall sign permitted on the front of the building.”*

UDD 1 Sign Requirements ([MGO 33.24\(8\)c.4.a.vii](#)) states that *“The height of a ground or wall sign shall not exceed ten (10) feet along John Nolen Drive or eighteen (18) feet elsewhere in the district unless a higher sign is specifically approved by the Urban Design Commission based on the following criteria:*

- A. *An exception from the height limitation 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. *An exception from the height limitation will result in a sign more in scale with the building and site and will result in a superior overall design,” and*

MGO 33.24(8)c.4.vii states that *“The net area of a ground or wall sign shall not exceed forty (40) square feet along John Nolen Drive or seventy-two (72) square feet elsewhere in the district unless a larger sign is specifically approved by the Urban Design Commission...”*. The review of such approvals are based upon the same criteria as noted above.

Summary of Design Considerations

Project Site Location. The project site is generally located at the intersection of Lakeside Drive and Sayle Street, just off John Nolen Drive. While the project site is visible from John Nolen Drive, it does not have frontage on John Nolen Drive due to the railroad right-of-way which is situated between the project site and John Nolen Drive. This renders the elevation facing John Nolen Drive a non-qualifying elevation for signage.

While the project site has frontage on Lakeside Drive and Besland Court, the primary business identification is from John Nolen Drive.

Existing Signage. There is one existing wall sign for Vandewalle & Associates on the building, which faces Besland Court. UDC approval of this sign was not required as permit records indicate that it was installed in 2000 prior to UDD 1 Sign requirements being adopted in 2009. This sign is mounted on the second floor, consistent with the proposed mounting height and is 82 square-feet.

Staff note that while signage is not existing in the proposed location today, the UDC has historically approved signage on this elevation, mounting height and size as part of Legistar File ID [56978](#). This approval would be consistent with those past approvals.

Summary of Sign Code Requirements and Proposed Signage. Since the east elevation is not adjacent to an off-street parking area or street, signage is not allowed on this elevation. As noted above, UDC may grant an exception to this requirement provided that the signage shall not exceed the area of wall sign permitted on the qualifying elevation. In this case, the code would allow for an 80 square-foot wall sign on the Besland Court elevation. At 79.97 square-feet, the proposed sign is smaller than what the code would allow.

The proposed sign will be mounted at a height of just under 29 feet, where the UDD 1 requirements limit wall sign height to 18 feet.

The proposed sign is comprised of white individual channel lettering with acrylic faces and halo illumination, mounted on a raceway painted to match the building.

Summary of Staff Analysis. A signage exception to the Sign Code is required because the proposed sign is located on a non-qualifying elevation, not facing/abutting a street or parking area associated with the building. Exceptions to the UDD 1 Sign requirements are required because the proposed sign will be mounted higher on the building than what UDD 1 allows and the sign is larger than what UDD 1 allows.

Staff believe that the approval criteria, including those outlined in both the Sign Code (MGO 31.043) and UDD 1 requirements (MGO 33.24(8)), have been met and are supportive of the proposed sign given that:

- The proposed wall sign is smaller than what the code would allow on the street-facing elevation.
- The proposed sign is of a higher quality design aesthetic with individual channel lettering and halo illumination.
- The proposed mounting height is consistent with the placement of other signage on the building providing balance and consistency between the two facades.
- Placing a sign lower on the building or that is smaller in size would result in a sign that has limited visibility/legibility from the intended street view and that would likely be visibly disproportionate to the signable area in which it is located.