



Project Address: 1920 Monroe Street

Application Type: Signage Exception Pursuant to MGO 31.043(3) to Permit the Use of Wall signs on a Building Façade not Adjacent to Off-Street Parking Area
UDC is an Approving Body

Legistar File ID #: [82713](#)

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Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Sara Alvarado, Alvarado Real Estate Group

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, a non-qualifying elevation for signage, for a building directory sign.

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."*

Summary of Design Considerations

Project Site Location and Context. The project site is located mid-block on Monroe Street, between Harrison Street and S Prospect Avenue. The site is home to a relatively low profile, single-story building that is setback further than the adjacent development. The building design is such that there are limited opportunities for signage on qualifying elevations as the street facing façade is comprised of windows, and the parking lot side of the building is located significantly behind the main entrance.

Existing Signage. There is currently no signage on the building or site.

Summary of Sign Code Requirements and Proposed Signage. The applicant is proposing a non-illuminated wall sign to be located on the north elevation of the building, which faces a drive aisle. Since the north façade is not adjacent to an off-street parking area associated with the development or street, signage is not allowed on this elevation. As noted above, the UDC may grant an exception to this requirement provided that the signage shall not exceed the area of wall signage permitted on the front of the building. Staff notes that there is a narrow signable area to the right of the door that has a total area of 9.42 square-feet. The Sign Code would permit a sign here, however that sign would be limited to either 40 percent of the signable area (just under four square-feet), or two feet per lineal foot of building frontage (about 32 square-feet), not to exceed 100 percent of the signable area. The lineal foot method of calculating permitted sign area would not be allowed in this case since it results in a sign that is in excess of the signable area. In this case, due to the building design, there is not really a signable area on the front of the building that would provide enough space for functional signage.

In addition, the proposed sign is also not allowed to be larger than 40 percent of the identifiable signable area on the non-qualifying façade. Based on the proposed sign graphics, the sign appears to meet this requirement, however the permit graphics will need to be updated to include the dimensions of the wall on which the sign is located, and the sign dimensions need to be adjusted to remove fractional numbers to confirm the sign area.

Summary of Staff Analysis. A signage exception is required because the proposed sign is located on a non-qualifying elevation, not facing a street or parking area associated with the building. Based on the information presented in the application materials related to design aesthetic, illumination, and justification related to visibility and business identification, staff is supportive of this request based on the following:

- The proposed wall sign appears to be consistent with the code limitations regarding size.
- The placement of the sign on a non-qualifying elevation is necessary as there is not another signable area located in proximity to the building main entrance.
- The location and size of the proposed sign are such that the sign will not impose upon the view of residents, businesses, etc. but will clearly identify the tenants to visitors.
- Generally, the proposed sign appears to be of a quality design aesthetic (wood or metal panel), and is not illuminated, so adverse impacts from the proposed sign will be minimized.

Staff Conditions/Required Plan Revisions:

1. The sign size shall be limited to 100% of the permitted sign area, 9.42 square-feet. The sign permit graphics shall be updated to show compliance with this size limitation.
2. The dimensions of the signable area on which the proposed sign is located shall be confirmed and included in the sign permit application materials.
3. The materials of the proposed sign shall be confirmed and included in the sign permit application materials.
4. If illumination is proposed, additional review and approval by the Urban Design Commission shall be required.