

ZONING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

October 7, 2020



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 1201 Tompkins Drive
Project Name: Dr. Virginia Henderson Elementary School
Application Type: Approval for Comprehensive Design Review of Signage
Legistar File ID # [61849](#)
Prepared By: Chrissy Thiele, Zoning Inspector
Reviewed By: Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator

The applicant is requesting Comprehensive Design Review of signage for an elementary school which was originally known as Glendale Elementary School, but has now been renamed after Dr. Virginia Henderson. This site is located in a Suburban Residential – Consistent 1 (SR-C1) district, and abuts Tompkins Drive, which has 2 lanes and is 30 mph.

Pursuant to Section 31.043(4)(b), MGO, the UDC shall apply the following criteria upon review of an application for a Comprehensive Sign Plan:

1. *The Sign Plan shall create visual harmony between the signs, building(s), and building site through unique and exceptional use of materials, design, color, any lighting, and other design elements; and shall result in signs of appropriate scale and character to the uses and building(s) on the zoning lot as well as adjacent buildings, structures and uses.*
2. *Each element of the Sign Plan shall be found to be necessary due to unique or unusual design aspects in the architecture or limitations in the building site or surrounding environment; except that when a request for an Additional Sign Code Approval under Sec. 31.043(3) is included in the Comprehensive Design Review, the sign(s) eligible for approval under Sec. 31.043(3) shall meet the applicable criteria of Sec. 31.043(3), except that sign approvals that come to Comprehensive Design Review from MXC and EC districts pursuant to 31.13(3) and (7) need not meet the criteria of this paragraph.*
3. *The Sign Plan shall not violate any of the stated purposes described in Sec. 31.02(1) and 33.24(2).*
4. *All signs must meet minimum construction requirements under Sec. 31.04(5).*
5. *The Sign Plan shall not approve Advertising beyond the restrictions in Sec. 31.11 or Off-Premise Directional Signs beyond the restrictions in Sec. 31.115.*
6. *The Sign Plan shall not be approved if any element of the plan:*
 - a. *presents a hazard to vehicular or pedestrian traffic on public or private property,*
 - b. *obstructs views at points of ingress and egress of adjoining properties,*
 - c. *obstructs or impedes the visibility of existing lawful signs on adjacent property, or*
 - d. *negatively impacts the visual quality of public or private open space.*
7. *The Sign Plan may only encompass signs on private property of the zoning lot or building site in question, and shall not approve any signs in the right of way or on public property.*

Permitted per Sign Ordinance: Sec. 31.14(3)(e) allows for a church, hospital, school, and residential building complex in a SR-C1 district one wall and one ground signs per street frontage may be displayed identifying the entity, with a maximum of two ground signs and two wall signs per zoning lot. Signs, whether displayed on a wall or the ground, shall not exceed 12 sq. ft. in net area, nor be closer than ten feet to any lot line, except such signs may be increased in net area by one square foot for each additional foot that the sign is set back more than 12 feet from the street lot line. No sign under this section shall exceed 32 square feet in net area. No sign shall project higher than one story, or 12 feet above the curb level, whichever is lower.

Proposed Signage: The applicant is proposing an under-canopy sign that would have a letter height of 11" and span the entire canopy width of 29'. The sign would hang 19" below the canopy and have a total net area of 26.68 sq. ft.

Staff Comments: On January 27, 2020, the Madison School Board approved to rename Glendale Elementary School after Dr. Virginia Henderson. As the applicant indicated in the letter of intent, the original sign was installed prior to the sign ordinance adopted May 3rd, 1977, which limited signage for districts in districts zoned residential. And while a permit could not be found for the original sign, the location seems to be appropriate. As the canopy is about 130' from the right-of-way, and the school set back about 150', neither would be legible from the street. Having the sign to the left or right of the canopy would not be as noticeable as having the sign under the canopy, which is the main entrance to the building. The size of the sign itself is compliant with what the code would allow. The sign is of high quality material and design, made of individual brushed aluminum letters and the mounting brackets will match the trim color of the school. **Staff has no objection to these CDR requests and recommends the UDC find the criteria for CDR review have been met.**