

## ZONING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

October 30, 2019



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**Project Address:** 201 South Gammon Road  
**Project Name:** James Madison Memorial High School Campus  
**Application Type:** Approval for an Alteration to an Approved Comprehensive Design Plan  
**Legistar File ID #** [53077](#)  
**Prepared By:** Chrissy Thiele, Zoning Inspector

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The applicant is requesting an amendment to a previously approved Comprehensive Design Review. The Urban Design Commission approved the original Comprehensive Design Plan Sept. 7, 2011, for the High School electronic message sign and UDC approved an amended to the CDR Sept. 11, 2013 for the High School wall sign. The high school shares the lot with Jefferson Middle School, which has a total of five ground signs. The lot is zoned Campus Institutional, and is bordered by Mineral Point Road (4 lanes, 40 mph) and South Gammon Road (4 lanes, 35 mph). Both school's primary frontages face South Gammon Road.

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.*

**Ground Signs Permitted by Sign Ordinance:** Summarizing 31.14(1)(e), 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 Ground Signage:** The applicant proposing to replace the old Jefferson Middle School sign (which has already been removed) with 6.42' tall, internally illuminated, single sided monument styled sign, with manual change of copy, and a total net of 31.88 sq. ft. The sign appears to be well over 32' from the property line, but exact distance has not been provided.

**Staff Comments:** The sign itself appears to comply with code in terms of size and location, just not for the number of ground signs. This lot is unique in that both the high school and the middle school share the lot, with both schools having the main access point off of South Gammon Road. The way the code is written prevents each school from having their own sign. As of now, the Memorial High School has two ground signs, and the existing ground sign for the Jefferson has been taken down in preparation for a new sign. The Lussier ground sign is located on its own parcel, however the property is also owned by the school and is therefore part of this CDR. The proposed sign for Jefferson is of similar designed and style when compared to other elementary and middle school ground signs in found in Madison. **Staff has no objection to the CDR request and recommends the UDC find the standards for CDR review have been met.**

**Notes:**

- The applicant shall provide a clearer locator map showing where the proposed sign will be located on the lot and the distance from the right of way.