



Agenda Item #: 4

Project Title: 702 Pflaum Road - Public Building, Comprehensive Design Review of Signage (CDR). 15th Ald. Dist.

Legistar File ID #: 77012

Members Present: Cliff Goodhart, Chair; Wendy Von Below, Rafeeq Asad, Christian Harper, Jessica Klehr, Russell Knudson, and Marsha Rummel

Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Summary

At its meeting of August 16, 2023, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL** of a Comprehensive Design Review of Signage (CDR) for a Public Building located at 702 Pflaum Road. Registered and speaking in support was Alisa Brown.

Matt Tucker, Building Inspection Director gave an overview of the proposal. An architectural feature and building addition were previously approved for a new front entry into the school. A CDR was approved years ago to allow for multiple ground signs on the property. The applicant is changing or adding signage on the side and at the front of the building, including two above-canopy signs at the side of the building. Staff is supportive of these signs. The applicant is proposing a wall sign along Pflaum Road, the size of the sign measures 140 square feet. This size is larger than the largest allowable sign in any commercial place in the City of Madison. The maximum size of a permissible sign at a school is 32 square feet when the sign is at least 32-feet back from the property line. The City agrees that a visible sign is warranted given the setback of the building. The sign code is designed to reduce the impacts of large signs on residential neighborhoods. An alternative sign would be an above-canopy measuring 50 square feet with channel letters, interestingly enough are not allowed. But that is what CDR's are for, to recognize the appropriate signage is for a place ad allowing it. Overall, staff feels that above-canopy sign would be more appropriate for this scenario. Staff feels this is consistent with signage on the side of the building for maintaining consistency.

We are presenting both options. The signage was designed as part of the RFP. While we are happy with the canopy, we felt strongly about the oversized wall sign. We wanted to show both for discussion.

The Commission had the following questions for staff and the development team:

- You're fine with the 50 square foot sign?
 - Yeah, and the staff review was more agreeable than on the oversized sign.
- The red super structure it's mounted on, does that have any purpose, is it intended to be an aesthetic element or included to be a structure for the sign?
 - It was definitely included as a structure for the sign. We were going with a city grid system, "sole of the city" design philosophy. This is creating a truly welcoming and secure entrance and is on the main thoroughfare.
- (M. Tucker) This feature is not even eligible for a sign and would need a CDR exception to be mounted on the architectural feature; signs can't be mounted on clear, see-through things like this. They need to be mounted on walls.
- The larger version appears mounted to a perforated screen. Will there be any other visual structure added to that screen to hold that sign or do we expect to see what is shown in the rendering?

- We expect to see what you're seeing in the rendering. The above-canopy sign shows horizontal bars, to add articulation.
- The letters are mounted to canopy, correct?
 - Correct.
- If you could say again, that right now we don't have a way to approve signage mounted to a perforated screen.
- (M. Tucker) It's not a signable area that schools are allowed to utilize. They are allowed to place signs on walls or on the ground (staff pointed out the wall area where signs could be mounted).
- Based on what you just said mounting on the canopy would be permissible?
- (M. Tucker) No, either options are not permissible. A CDR exception can be granted and is necessary for both. One is to allow for the above-canopy sign, which are not typically seen in residential or residential like applications, like schools and churches. They are asking for this to identify the entries for the specific services. This is a very clean and nice way or just used wall signs, which would have been allowed. But they're asking to do this high quality sign design.
- I wondered if the wall had any structural aspect to it or if it was just decorative?
- (M. Tucker) We've seen people utilize these when they create areas on this perforation for signage. Channel 15 on the West Beltline has a backer panel with channel letters where the panel creates a wall. And the letters sit within that area. That is an example of where perforation could become a wall eligible for wall signs.
- (Secretary) It's more of an architectural feature, which signs are not allowed to be mounted to or cross versus Matt's scenario which is more of a wall. The staff position on the front entry signage is purely related to size and context; 140 square feet in a residential neighborhood. If we are thinking about the front entry sign, we are looking for the Commission to make findings related to the proposed size, as well as consistency with the other proposed signage, which is also above-canopy signage. As part of the above-canopy signage, the horizontal slats seen in the renderings would require administrative review and approval.

Action

On a motion by Asad, seconded by Klehr, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL**. The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (6-0). The motion amended the CDR to allow for above-canopy signage, including the 50 square foot above-canopy sign at the front entry and the above-canopy signs proposed at the side entrances for both the Athletics and Performing Arts.