

## ZONING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

October 8, 2025



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**Project Address:** 1704 Roberts Ct.  
**Project Name:** Madison Friends Meeting  
**Application Type:** Comprehensive Design Review for Signage  
**Legistar File ID #** [89410](#)  
**Prepared By:** Chrissy Thiele, Zoning Inspector

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The applicant is requesting Comprehensive Design Review for Signage for an existing church. This parcel is in the Traditional Residential – Consistent 2 (TR-C2) district, which is a group 1 district, and abuts Roberts Court (2 lanes, 25 mph) and Stockton Court (2 lanes, 25 mph). The properties in the surrounding area also consist of residential districts. As part of the CDR request, the applicant is requesting one canopy fascia sign, which is not a permitted sign type for Group 1 zoning districts.

### **Comprehensive Design Review - Approval Criteria**

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.*

**Signage Permitted by Sign Ordinance:** Summarizing Sec. 31.14(3)(e), A church, hospital, school, and residential building complex in a Group 1 district is allowed one ground sign and one wall sign per street frontage, with a maximum of two per zoning lot. These signs shall not exceed 12 sq. ft. in net area nor be closer than 10 feet to any lot line, except such signs may be increase 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 may exceed 32 sq. ft. in net area. The maximum height is 12 feet above the curb level and signs are allowed to be illuminated.

**Proposed Signage:** The applicant is proposing a canopy fascia sign with an overall net area of 23.5 sq. ft., which is located above the main entrance of the church, facing Roberts Court. The sign is made of nonilluminated aluminum cut letters, stud mounted to the canopy fascia.

Staff note that the existing ground sign was recently replaced by the church without a permit. This sign does not comply with previous approvals, including as it relates to setback (6.24 ft) and size (12 sq.ft.). The applicant will be correcting the ground sign to either comply with the Sign Code setbacks (15 ft) and size (15 sf), or be reduced in size in its current location to be consistent with the previous approval (12 sq.ft.).

**Staff Comments:** With regard to CDR Criterion No. 1, which speaks to design, the canopy above the main entrance is a viable location for a sign that identifies the building, as well as the building entrance. In addition, the sign is placed centered along the canopy element and within the height, appearing proportional. The sign is simple in design, consisting of non-illuminated black metal letters that will contrast with the white façade of the canopy, matching the ground sign, which has black letters on a white background.

With regard to CDR Criterion No. 2, the net area of the proposed sign complies with the code in size, as the site plan shows the sign 55' away from the property line and the net area is less than 32 sq. ft. In addition, there appear to be limited signable areas available on the street facing elevation to locate a wall sign no more than 12' above grade on the building. The signable areas that are available would constrict the layout of the sign and are not located near the entrance of the building.

**Recommendation:** Staff have no objection to the requested canopy fascia sign and recommend the UDC find the CDR criteria have been met. This recommendation is subject to further testimony and new information provided during the hearing.

**Recommended Condition of Approval:**

- The applicant shall obtain a sign permit for the ground sign currently on site.