

# ZONING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

June 26, 2019



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**Project Address:** 216 S. Pinckney Street  
**Project Name:** Judge Doyle Square  
**Application Type:** Comprehensive Design Review Initial/Final Approval  
**Legistar File ID #** [56097](#)  
**Prepared By:** Chrissy Thiele, Zoning Inspector  
**Reviewed By:** Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator

The applicant is requesting Comprehensive Design Review INITIAL/FINAL APPROVAL. This property is currently under construction and is located in a Planned Development (PD) District, which currently allows for signage as it relates to a DC (Downtown Core) district. East Doty Street, South Pinckney Street, and East Wilson Street (all 2 lanes, 25 mph) border this site, and is adjacent to the Madison Municipal Building.

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.*

Wall Signs Permitted per Sign Ordinance: Summarizing Section 31.07, **Wall signs may be attached flat to or affixed parallel with a distance of not more than 15 inches from the wall.** No sign affixed flat against a building wall shall extend beyond any edge of such wall. There shall be one signable area for each façade facing a street or parking lot 33 feet in width or greater. For buildings with more than one tenant, each tenant is allowed a signable area as reasonably close to its tenant space as possible.

Signable area is defined in the ordinance as “one designated area of the facade of the building up to the roof line that is free of doors, windows (for purposes of this definition, spandrel panels or other non-vision glass used as an exterior building material are not considered windows) or other major architectural detail, that extends no higher than the juncture of the wall and the roof.”

Proposed Signage: The applicant is requesting for signage facing South Pinckney to be mounted on raceways that would be affixed to the columns bordering the storefront. The signage is not affixed to the façade but is parallel to the facade, and would be placed in front of windows, instead of a qualifying signable area. These signs are shown to line up with the exterior façade vertically above, so that they are visible but do not obstruct natural light coming into the tenant space. The signs would be individual internally illuminated channel letters no larger than 18” tall and a logo that can be internally lit or halo lit, not to exceed 24” tall. The tenant would be allowed 2 feet per lineal foot of tenant frontage of the tenant’s leased space, with a maximum net of 80 sq. ft.

Staff Comments: The proposed style of signs are unique to Madison, having approved only a few somewhat similar signs in the past (e.g. Park Bank on East Main Street and Hilldale Mall). Usually these types of signs are of high design and high quality material, giving the storefront an original look. There are very few signable areas on these sides of the buildings, and the areas that do qualify are illogical for a sign as they would be much higher on the building, and not appear to relate to the tenant space, and likely would conflict with the Downtown Design Guidelines for Signage.

As for the size of the signs proposed in the CDR, most of the signage shown fits well with the window space it sits in front of, however the proposed requirements would allow for a sign much larger than shown. Instead of allowing for a sign that is 2 feet per lineal foot of tenant frontage, staff recommends that the overall height of the sign not exceed 24 inches, like the Madison Bicycle Center sign shown in the submittal. Planning staff has expressed concern of a sign spanning the entire length of the raceway, making the sign appear crowded. Staff request UDC review the application and require a minimum spacing on the sides of the sign to the wall.

**Staff has no objection to the CDR request and recommends the UDC find the standards for CDR review have been met with the following conditions:**

- **The Commission create requirements for spacing.**
- **In addition to the signs letter and logo height maximums, the overall height of the sign not exceed 24 inches**

Note:

- Applicant shall add the note that all other signage not addressed in this CDR comply with Chapter 31.
- Any future signage that does not comply with code will need to come back to UDC for approval.