

City of Madison
Urban Design Commission
210 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd
Room LL-100
Madison, WI 53703

August 30, 2016

RE: Comprehensive Design Review

Dear Sir or Madame,

On behalf of the design team and WMTV, I would like to formally re-submit our proposed signage for a Comprehensive Design Review. Since receiving signage approval in October of 2015, modifications were requested by the owner in both content and design – some of which fall outside the Urban Design District 2 guidelines. After discussing with city officials (most notably Al Martin and Matt Tucker) it was decided that a re-submission and comprehensive design review would be necessary to accommodate the desired design. This submission details those changes and how they adhere to the seven criteria of a comprehensive signage review.

Wall Sign A

Why is Comprehensive Design Review required?

- Signage previously exceeded the 4'-0" maximum limitation above the roofline.
- Text and Logo of sign exceeds 30% of signable area as dictated by 31.07(4)(b)
- Text and Logo exceed 40sf maximum as dictated by 33.24(9)(d)4.b.viii

How sign adheres to Comprehensive Design Review Criteria

1. Both the sign materiality and scale creates visual harmony between sign, building and site. The opaque corrugated backer blends seamlessly in color and materiality with the architecturally significant façade screen wall at the NW corner of the new WMTV building. This will help make the sign appear smaller and part of a larger whole. The size of the sign is well proportioned to the over 270 foot long north building façade and appropriately scaled for the intended audience – motorists traveling on the high speed beltline. This sign does not face pedestrian right of ways or adjacent properties, reducing concern over size. A reduction in the signable area requirement allows the architecturally significant backlit screen wall to take prominence over the sign. Increasing the size of the opaque backer that comprises the signable area would draw more attention to the sign and reduce the visibility of the light effects. The sign no longer extends beyond roofline by more than the maximum 4'-0". This is now in compliance and was done to further reduce the prominence of the sign to aid in the harmonious relationship with building and site.
2. Wall Sign A and all of its components are necessary. The WMTV call sign and NBC15 logos are the best and will be the most used identifiers for this building. A large range of people will visit the building with a majority arriving to visit or conduct business with WMTV and NBC 15.
3. Wall Sign A does not violate any of the stated purposes described in Sections 31.02(1) or 33.24(2).



4. Wall Sign A meets all minimum construction requirements under Section 31.04(5).
5. Wall Sign A does not contain advertising or off-premise directional signs beyond the restrictions of Sections 31.11 or 31.115 are part of this signage plan.
6. Wall Sign A does not present a hazard to vehicular or pedestrian traffic on public or private property, obstruct views at points of ingress and egress of adjoining properties, obstruct or impede visibility of existing lawful signage on adjacent property, or negatively impact the visual quality of public or private open space.
7. Wall Sign A is solely on private property of the zoning lot and building lot in question.

Wall Sign B

Why is Comprehensive Design Review required?

- Signage previously exceeded the 4'-0" maximum limitation above the roofline.
- Text and Logo of sign exceeds 30% of signable area as dictated by 31.07(4)(b)

How sign adheres to Comprehensive Design Review Criteria

1. Both the sign materiality and scale creates visual harmony between sign, building and site. The opaque corrugated backer blends seamlessly in color and materiality with the architecturally significant façade screen wall at the NW corner of the new WMTV building. This will help make the sign appear smaller and part of a larger whole. The size of the sign is well proportioned to the over 100 foot long west building face and 270 foot long building and appropriately scaled for the intended audience – motorists traveling on the high speed beltline. This sign does not face pedestrian right of ways or adjacent properties, reducing concern over size. A reduction in the signable area requirement allows the architecturally significant backlit screen wall to take prominence over the sign. Increasing the size of the opaque backer that comprises the signable area would draw more attention to the sign and reduce the visibility of the light effects. The sign no longer extends beyond roofline by more than the maximum 4'-0". This is now in compliance and was done to further reduce the prominence of the sign to aid in the harmonious relationship with building and site.
2. Wall Sign B and all of its components are necessary. The CW logos is the second most prominent brand broadcast from the new building and thus will comprise the second largest audience in both viewers and visitors to the sight conducting business. This brand is new to WMTV and will launch with the addition of the second studio provided as part of this construction project.
3. Wall Sign B does not violate any of the stated purposes described in Sections 31.02(1) or 33.24(2).
4. Wall Sign B meets all minimum construction requirements under Section 31.04(5).
5. Wall Sign B does not contain advertising or off-premise directional signs beyond the restrictions of Sections 31.11 or 31.115 are part of this signage plan.
6. Wall Sign B does not present a hazard to vehicular or pedestrian traffic on public or private property, obstruct views at points of ingress and egress of adjoining properties, obstruct or impede visibility of existing lawful signage on adjacent property, or negatively impact the visual quality of public or private open space.
7. Wall Sign B is solely on private property of the zoning lot and building lot in question.

Wall Sign C

Why is Comprehensive Design Review required?

- Signage exceeds maximum of 8 words/symbols as dictated by 33.24(9)(d)4.b.iii



How sign adheres to Comprehensive Design Review Criteria

1. Wall Sign C blends harmoniously with building and sight in multiple ways. It's geometry and materiality are pulled directly from other building elements making it blend rather than stand out. An attached site wall is being constructed to house the sign at a pedestrian level rather than simply attaching it to the side of the building where it would be more visible and less integrated. The visitor parking lot where it is located was placed internal to the site so the sign is not visible from adjacent property owners and simply addresses it's intended audience – those already parked on site.
2. Wall Sign C and all of its components are necessary. All brands located on Wall Sign C are located within and conduct business within this building. All brands need a presence on the exterior of the building to address the arrival of potential ad clients and other visitors to confirm they are in the right location. GrayTV is the corporate entity that owns and broadcasts the rest of the brands identified on the sign. It and the three television stations all have staff within the building and visitors to the building. The fact that this sign exceeds the maximum 8 words/symbols requirement is a condition of so many separate businesses being housed in the same building, as well as the complexity of the GrayTV logo.
3. Wall Sign C does not violate any of the stated purposes described in Sections 31.02(1) or 33.24(2).
4. Wall Sign C meets all minimum construction requirements under Section 31.04(5).
5. Wall Sign C does not contain advertising or off-premise directional signs beyond the restrictions of Sections 31.11 or 31.115 are part of this signage plan.
6. Wall Sign C does not present a hazard to vehicular or pedestrian traffic on public or private property, obstruct views at points of ingress and egress of adjoining properties, obstruct or impede visibility of existing lawful signage on adjacent property, or negatively impact the visual quality of public or private open space.
7. Wall Sign C is solely on private property of the zoning lot and building lot in question.

Monument Sign A

Why is Comprehensive Design Review required?

- Signage infringes on (20) foot setback as required by Section 33.24(9)(d)4.b.vi
- Sign occupies space between (2) and (10) feet above grade within (15) feet of the public right of way as prohibited in Section 33.24(9)(d)4.b.vii

How sign adheres to Comprehensive Design Review Criteria

1. Monument Sign A blends harmoniously with building and sight in multiple ways. Its geometry and materiality are pulled directly from other building elements making it blend rather than stand out. It is scaled for slow moving traffic that exists at the end of the cul-de-sac at which sits. For this reason we designed it lower to the ground than the signage code deems necessary as it is not visually obstructing other properties or traffic signs. Instead we wanted the signs to be less obtrusive than they would have been if mounted on poles to raise them above 10 feet. We instead scaled them so they would be more in line with pedestrian and slow speed traffic thus being less visually jarring and more in line with the geometry of the building. Since the sign was designed for slower speed vehicles and pedestrians and was lowered accordingly, we have moved the sign closer to the public right of way to ensure it is seen.



2. Monument Sign A and all of its components are necessary. There are two very distinct types of vehicles arriving on sight – visitor and employee. Monument Sign A calls attention to the visitors to the site so they are not led into the employee lot which is secured by a locking gate.
3. Monument Sign A does not violate any of the stated purposes described in Sections 31.02(1) or 33.24(2).
4. Monument Sign A meets all minimum construction requirements under Section 31.04(5).
5. Monument Sign A does not contain advertising or off-premise directional signs beyond the restrictions of Sections 31.11 or 31.115 are part of this signage plan.
6. Monument Sign A does not present a hazard to vehicular or pedestrian traffic on public or private property, obstruct views at points of ingress and egress of adjoining properties, obstruct or impede visibility of existing lawful signage on adjacent property, or negatively impact the visual quality of public or private open space.
7. Monument Sign A is solely on private property of the zoning lot and building lot in question.

Monument Sign B

Why is Comprehensive Design Review required?

- Signage infringes on (20) foot setback as required by Section 33.24(9)(d)4.b.vi
- Sign occupies space between (2) and (10) feet above grade within (15) feet of the public right of way as prohibited in Section 33.24(9)(d)4.b.vii

How sign adheres to Comprehensive Design Review Criteria

1. Monument Sign B blends harmoniously with building and sight in multiple ways. Its geometry and materiality are pulled directly from other building elements making it blend rather than stand out. It is scaled for slow moving traffic that exists at the end of the cul-de-sac at which sits and is further shrunk as its intended audience – employees – are familiar with the traffic pattern and entrance location. For this reason we designed it lower to the ground than the signage code deems necessary as it is not visually obstructing other properties or traffic signs. Instead we wanted the signs to be less obtrusive than they would have been if mounted on poles to raise them above 10 feet. We instead scaled them so they would be more in line with pedestrian and slow speed traffic thus being less visually jarring and more in line with the geometry of the building. Since the sign was designed for slower speed vehicles and pedestrians and was lowered accordingly, we have moved the sign closer to the public right of way to ensure it is seen.
2. Monument Sign B and all of its components are necessary. There are two very distinct types of vehicles arriving on sight – visitor and employee. Monument Sign B calls attention to the employees and informs visitors to not enter.
3. Monument Sign B does not violate any of the stated purposes described in Sections 31.02(1) or 33.24(2).
4. Monument Sign B meets all minimum construction requirements under Section 31.04(5).
5. Monument Sign B does not contain advertising or off-premise directional signs beyond the restrictions of Sections 31.11 or 31.115 are part of this signage plan.
6. Monument Sign B does not present a hazard to vehicular or pedestrian traffic on public or private property, obstruct views at points of ingress and egress of adjoining properties, obstruct or impede visibility of existing lawful signage on adjacent property, or negatively impact the visual quality of public or private open space.
7. Monument Sign B is solely on private property of the zoning lot and building lot in question.



The following paragraphs are directly from our previously approved submission with the obsolete information stricken and modified information clearly marked in bold.

*“On behalf of the design team and WMTV, I would like to make our formal submittal for the proposed signage on the new building at 615 Forward Drive. The design of the new building was submitted for review and approval on September 16, **2015**, after an initial submittal on August 19, **2015**, and presentation to the committee on September 2, **2015**. This separate signage submission is in response to comments received at the UDC informational presentation, and a subsequent meeting with city staff on September 23, **2015**. This letter and associated drawings is intended to supplement the full package of drawings that describe the project in full.*

Signage Summary

Existing Signage on Site

*There are currently two billboards along the beltline highway at the north end of the site, which will be removed as part of this project. Additionally, there is a wall sign on the existing building, which will be demolished once the new facility is up and running. These three elements are 293 sf (billboard #1), 864 sf (billboard #2), and 59 sf (wall sign) for a total of 1,216 sf of signage to be removed from the site as part of this project. **These can be found on the existing site plan sheet ASK 0.1 as part of the comprehensive design review materials.***

Proposed Signage on Site

*There are a total of five new signs that are proposed on the site **(totaling 169sf – a reduction of over 1,000sf in total signage area on site after construction is complete)** related to the new building project, three wall signs, and two monument signs. We are requesting exceptions to a few urban design district guideline requirements to allow for these signs to be erected as designed. **The following are descriptions of each sign and the sheet to reference for colored and dimensioned graphic:***

Wall Signs

*Wall Sign ‘A’ – North Façade ~~‘WMTV’ call letters – 87 sf~~ **‘WMTV’ call letters & ‘NBC 15’ Logo – 54sf***

- **This represents a significant reduction in size from the previously approved signage despite the addition of the NBC 15 logo.**

*Wall Sign ‘B’ – West Face ~~‘15’ station number identification – 29 sf~~ **‘CW’ logo – 17 sf***

- **This represents a significant reduction in size from the previously approved signage.**

*Wall Sign ‘C’ – ~~Gray TV Logo – 31~~ **‘WMTV News Studios’ with smaller ‘Gray TV’, ‘NBC 15’, ‘CW’ and ‘Antenna TV’ logos – 39sf***

- **This represents a small increase in total area compared to previously approved signage. However, this signage faces the interior of the property, not a public right away.**

Monument Signs

Monument Sign ‘A’ – Visitor entrance drive – 36 sf

- **Addition of ‘NBC 15’ and ‘CW’ logos have been added. The signage area has remained the same by reducing the size of the ‘WMTV’ ‘Visitor Entrance’ copy.**

*Monument Sign ‘B’ – Employee entrance drive – ~~36 sf~~ - **22.5 sf***

- This represents a significant reduction in scale as the owner has requested the employee entrance sign be recessive to the visitor entrance.

Description of Deviation from UDC signage guidelines

- **Wall Sign 'A' - WMTV + NBC15 logo**
 - The design team is requesting a sign that is larger than the maximum 40sf (33.24(9)(d)4.b.viii) to a size of 54sf. The letters/logo would be 40 inches tall which is appropriate due to the speed of the target audience traveling on the beltline and is appropriately scaled for the building which is nearly the length of a football field – 270 feet.
 - The design team is requesting a reduction in the requirement that the sign takes up no more than 30% of the signable area. It is our belief that increasing the size of the signable area (opaque/solid corrugation in larger field of perforated corrugation) to meet this requirement would negatively impact the design and detract from the visual harmony listed as Comprehensive Design Review Criteria number 1. The larger signable area would be out of scale with the surrounding geometry and obscure the unique façade lighting that is a large part of the project's design and appeal at night. Additionally, more attention would be drawn to the sign due to its overall larger size.
 - The NBC15 logo was added from the previous submission. This does not represent a deviation from allowances. However, this change was made at the request of the owner as not all target audiences (viewers, ad clients, visitors and interview subjects) know and would recognize the building by the call sign 'WMTV'.
 - This sign complies with the guideline that it may extend a maximum of 4'-0" above the roofline.
 - This is the only wall sign on this façade.
- **Wall Sign 'B' - CW logo**
 - The design team is requesting a reduction in the requirement that the sign takes up no more than 30% of the signable area. It is our belief that increasing the size of the signable area to meet this requirement would negatively impact the design and detract from the visual harmony listed as Comprehensive Design Review Criteria number 1. The larger signable area would be out of scale with the surrounding geometry and obscure the unique façade lighting that is a large part of the project's design and appeal at night. Additionally, more attention would be drawn to the sign due to its overall larger size.
 - The content of the sign was changed from a '15' to the 'CW' logo. This change was made as the addition of a second studio afforded by this construction project has allowed GrayTV and WMTV to expand its offerings. In addition to NBC15 and AntennaTV, the studio will now offer CW and the owner would like to have identification on the outside for multiple audience types (viewers, ad clients, visitors, interview subjects).
 - This sign is well within the maximum 40sf maximum allowance.
 - This sign complies with the guideline that it may extend a maximum of 4'-0" above the roofline.
 - This is the only wall sign on this façade.
- **Wall Sign 'C' - WMTV News Studios and Logos**



- The design team is requesting an allowance to increase the maximum allowable symbols and/or words from 8 to 10. This will allow for all entities that conduct business and broadcast from this building to be represented on the exterior of the building. For the purposes of this request each logo including text but excluding station channel number is treated as a single symbol.
- As mandated by UDC Chapter 33, all brands/logos on this sign are located here to inform an intended audience. All four brands conduct business or are broadcast from this building. GrayTV is the larger national corporation that owns and operates the building and stations. They sell ad space from this building and conduct the business of running each studio from this building. Each station listed also sells ad space from this building and have production staff that coordinate and execute broadcasts from this building. Each entity has multiple intended audiences ranging from potential ad clients to interview subjects to visiting school groups and more.
- This sign is geometrically and materially harmonious with the surrounding architecture.
- This sign complies with the maximum 40sf maximum allowance.
- This sign faces the interior of the property, not a public right of way.
- This is the only wall sign on this façade.

All three wall signs are fixed to exterior walls attached to the building. Wall signs 'A' & 'B' will be 8" x 5" deep internally lit acrylic letters mounted to an opaque corrugated metal panel wall system. The adjacent panels around the sign will be perforated and back lit, but the area directly behind the sign will be opaque and therefore not back lit, per the request of city staff at our meeting on September 23. **This opaque area acts as the signable area.** The wall upon which Wall sign 'C' is attached returns back to the building, and is not a free standing planter wall, per the request of city staff. **Wall Sign 'C' has been modified to make the words 'WMTV News Studios' the prominent feature with the logos of the corporate company and station affiliates secondary.**

We are requesting an exception for wall signs 'A' & 'B', given that Sec. 33.24(9)(d)4.b.viii limits to the net area of an attached wall sign to 40 sf. We feel that given the scale of the building, its orientation to the beltline, and the speed of the traffic, an exemption to this size limit is reasonable to allow the sign to be identifiable and legible from the nearest road at prevailing speeds. A 40 sf sign at ~~these~~ **this** locations would not be legible from the beltline, disproportional to the size of the building, and therefore ineffective. ~~These~~ **This** proposed signs ~~are~~ **is** well below the limits outlined in Chapter 31 of the signage control ordinance, which would dictate if this site is not subject to the requirements of the UDC district and Chapter 33.

We are requesting an exception to the 20'-0" setback requirement for these two monument signs as described in Sec. 33.24(9)(d)4.b.vi, to allow for a setback of 7'-0" from the property line. These monument signs are near the end of a cul-de-sac portion of the road, and only visible to drivers visiting this building. With a speed limit of 35 MPH it is important to have the signs as close to the road and entrances they identify, to make sure visitors do not try to enter a secure driveway with no turnaround. We feel that a 20'-0" setback is too great, and a lesser setback will allow for a more effective sign.

As part of this resubmission we have provide updated visuals produced by the project's signage vendor – Michael's Signs. These provide updated dimensioned elevations of each sign as well as description of materiality and construction. It is our belief that we have adhered to the seven criteria of a Comprehensive Design Review and the spirit of both the chapter 31 signage ordinance and Chapter 33 Urban Design District No. 2 signage guidelines.



Please find attached our drawing submission that describes the proposed signage for the project. If you have any questions about the project, please feel free to contact me to discuss. Thank you so much for your attention.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Joseph B. Leffelman', is positioned below the text 'Kind Regards,'.

Joseph B. (Buzz) Leffelman, AIA
Project Architect
Partners by Design

213 W Institute Place | Suite 203
Chicago, IL 60610
T 312.649.1111 | D 312.649.0624
leffelman@pbdinc.com