

ZONING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

February 27, 2019



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 1702 Pankratz Street
Project Name: MSA
Application Type: Comprehensive Design Review Initial/Final Approval
Legistar File ID # [54468](#)
Prepared By: Chrissy Thiele, Zoning Inspector
Reviewed By: Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator

The applicant is requesting Comprehensive Design Review INITIAL/FINAL APPROVAL for a recently constructed office building. This property is located in a Suburban Employment (SE) District, as well as in Urban Design District No. 4, facing both Pankratz Street and Packers Avenue, although this lot can only be accessed via Pankratz Street. The Urban Design Commission approved the building June 6, 2018.

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.*

Section 33.24(11)(d)3., Signage Criteria for Urban Design District No. 4, indicates the Urban Design Commission shall consider in each case those of the following guidelines and requirements as may be appropriate to signage:

Signs. The mixed land use patterns that characterize substantial portions of the district contribute to a proliferation of business and product identification signs which detract from the appearance of these areas.

a. Requirements.

- i. Signs in the district shall conform to all provisions of [Chapter 31](#) of the Madison General Ordinances.
- ii. Signs shall be integrated with the architecture of the building.
- iii. Electronic changeable copy signs, if permitted in the District, shall comply with [Sec. 31.046\(1\)](#) which requires that electronic changeable copy signs in Urban Design Districts shall not alternate, change, fade in, fade out, or otherwise change more frequently than once every one (1) hour. Additionally, no sign or portion of sign shall change its level of illumination more than once every one (1) hour. (Am. by ORD-09-00091, 8-1-09)
- iv. Signs along East Washington Avenue west of First Street shall not be so high or so large that they detract from the view of the State Capitol.

b. Guidelines.

- i. A sign should identify the activity without imposing upon the view of residents, businesses or activities of the district.
- ii. A sign should be appropriate to the type of activity and clientele at which its message is directed.
- iii. Signs should be designed so as to be legible to the intended viewer in relation to the surrounding circumstances.
- iv. Signs should avoid covering or impinging upon landscape features or significant structures.
- v. Illuminated signs should be lit internally or from the ground, not with fixtures projecting from the signs.
- vi. Internally illuminated signs displaying illuminated copy shall be designed in such a way so that when illuminated, the sign appears to have light-colored copy on a dark or non-illuminated background. (Am. by ORD-09-00091, 8-1-09)

Canopy Signs Permitted per Sign Ordinance: Summarizing Section 31.071, below-canopy signs may be suspended below an attached canopy in a position parallel to the building face, in lieu of a wall sign, and here is no canopy fascia sign visible when facing the building. These signs are to be mounted beneath the canopy, and shall not project or extend beyond the limits of the attached canopy in any direction. The sign face shall have a maximum vertical height of two feet, shall not hang more than one foot from the lower most edge of the canopy, and must have a vertical clearance of 9 feet for pedestrian areas, and 14 feet for vehicular ways.

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 code 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 exception from the wall sign requirements, however after further review, the proposed sign does not appear to fit any category in the sign ordinance. The proposed sign is comparable to an under-canopy sign, except that the sign hangs below the overhang of the building. The applicant states that the sign is approximately 66 sq. ft., but only provides two dimensions (4’ 10” in height by 16’ 9” in length), with it totaling to almost 81 sq. ft. This net could be reduced further if three boxes were used.

Staff Comments: This sign is comprised of a logo element and individual front-lit channel letters, attached to a highly visible architecturally complimentary dual-raceway, and hangs from under an overhang of the building. This sign closely resembles the design of the ground sign on the opposite side of the lot. The grade of the property which this building sits on is somewhat higher than the street level, and the proposed sign is located approximately 52 feet away from the property line, making it prominently visible from the street. The sign appears to measure just slightly under 80 sq. ft., which is the maximum allowable wall sign for a building of this size. Although this sign complies with the maximum size allowances for a wall sign on this property, staff recognizes this sign will appear relatively large as viewed from traffic, and potentially out-of-scale with the building. The hanging design for the sign also make the sign appear to cross architectural detail of the building. . Note: the building has been constructed and the application does not include pictures of the building as constructed, and how it relates to the street. **Staff has no objection to overall design of the CDR request; however, staff recommends UDC discuss the possibility of having the sign reduced in size, to result in a sign more in scale with the building.**

Staff Comments regarding other shown signage: The application also shows a ground sign in the CDR package, located near Pankratz Street, which complies with code and was issued a sign permit January 22nd, 2019.

Notes:

- Final submittal should include language stating all other signage not mentioned in this CDR shall comply with Chapter 31.
- The applicant shall provide dimensions of boxing for determining the net.