

ZONING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

September 2, 2020



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 1007 Fish Hatchery Road
Project Name: Peloton
Application Type: Approval for Comprehensive Design Review of Signage
Legistar File ID # [60813](#)
Prepared By: Chrissy Thiele, Zoning Inspector
Reviewed By: Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator

The applicant is requesting Comprehensive Design Review of signage for a new building which has a mixture of commercial, apartments, and live-work units. This site is located in a Planned Development (PD) district, with the Zoning Text permitting signage as allowed in the Traditional Shopping Street (TSS) district, and is also located in UDD #7. UDC approved the development February 27, 2019. The property abuts Fish Hatchery Road (2 lanes, 30 mph) and South Park Street (4 lanes, 30 mph).

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(14)(d)6., Signage Criteria for Urban Design District No. 7, indicates the Urban Design Commission shall consider in each case those of the following guidelines and requirements as may be appropriate to signage:

Signage.

a. Guidelines.

- i. Preferred sign types include building mounted signs, window signs, projecting signs, and awning signs.
- ii. Signs should be simple and easy to read.
- iii. Sign colors should relate to and complement the primary colors of the building facade.
- iv. Sign design and placement should fit the character of the building and to obscure architectural details.
- v. Signage should generally be centered within the prescribed signage area of the building.
- vi. Plastic box signs are highly discouraged.
- vii. Internally illuminated signs displaying illuminated copy should be designed so that when illuminated, the sign appears to have light-colored copy on a dark or non-illuminated background.
- viii. Individually mounted backlit letters are an encouraged form of signage.
- ix. The use of small, well-designed building-mounted light fixtures is a preferred method of illuminating signage. No sign or portion of sign shall change its level of illumination more than once every one (1) hour.
- x. Freestanding signs should be attractively designed. Signs should be coordinated with adjoining properties and public street signage to avoid visual clutter.
- xi. Electronic changeable copy signs, if permitted in the District, shall comply with [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. (Cr. by ORD-09-00091, 8-1-09)

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. Standard net area allows for 30% of the signable area. In no case shall the sign exceed 120 sq. ft. in net area. For multi-story buildings with more than one vertical occupancy, there may be up to two additional signable areas per façade displayed above the first story, with no limitation on the height of placement, but only one sign per occupant, per façade.

Proposed Signage: The applicant has already secured and installed permits for canopy signage. Canopy signs are allowed in lieu of a wall sign on the Fish Hatchery Side and South Park frontage. The applicant is requesting to install two large address number signs on the Fish Hatchery façade of the building. 1007 is located between the 4th and 5th story and 1027 is at the 3rd story level. A third oversized address number sign is requested on the south side of the building, above a canopy, next to the garage entrance. All three are red individual channel letters, mounted on a raceway, but vary in size. Each sign would not exceed 30% of the signable area where

located, as noted on the boxes in the submitted graphic. *NOTE: the shown signable areas extend down toward the ground and the signs are located near the very top of the signable areas.*

Staff Comments: The applicant is proposing to utilize address number for signage. These large address numbers are excessive in size relative to required addressing by city code, and are treated as wall signs. While not part of the sign ordinance, Sec. 10.34 of the Madison General Ordinance regulates addressing to enable emergency vehicles to respond quickly, eliminate confusion, and to locate businesses/residences without difficulty. The ordinance requires the numbers to be a minimum of 4" high with a half inch stroke width, be placed in a conspicuous position plainly seen from the street, and shall be no higher than the first or ground floor of the building. As the proposed numbers do not follow these regulations, they are considered signage. Additional addressing will be required by the Fire Department.

The applicant is asking for approval to retain both above canopy signs recently installed, as well as the two large address number wall signs on the same elevation, while the sign ordinance would only permit one of these options. The applicant indicates the proposed wall signage is designed to match the previously approved above canopy signage in style and color, creating a cohesive and visually pleasing look. However, the individual channel letter height on the proposed number signs vary in size, with the largest being almost 30" tall (which would be 6" taller than what is allowed for above canopy signs). The font styles are also a different style than the permitted above canopy sign and appear to have a wider width than the simple, neat look of the Peloton signs. Staff does not believe the proposed design provides a uniform look or relationship between the canopy signs and the address signs.

The applicant also states in the letter that the number signs are needed to help differentiate the two addresses for this development, and provide useful wayfinding for visitors to the various entrances. They also provide an image of the neighboring medical office building on the lot which also has addressing high on the building. *NOTE: This sign was approved before the sign ordinance required PD properties to obtain equivalency districts, and would not have been approved under current code requirements without UDC approval.* Staff believes the sign on the neighboring building is not relevant to the current request because the uses of the buildings are different, have different identification needs, and the sign on the adjacent medical building was placed without requiring a signage exception. Having the address number signs high on the building does not appear necessary, relative CDR Criteria #2. These signs would only be practically visible from a long view, however they would face a 67 unit four-story apartment building across the street, and beyond that a mixture of lower density housing south of Brooks Street.

Regarding the 1027 address sign facing south, the applicant indicates the sign would be viewable from traffic moving northbound on Fish Hatchery, however, no pictures or materials have been presented to support this claim.

Recommendation: Staff does not believe the applicant has satisfied the criteria for CDR approval for the larger address signs facing Fish Hatchery, and recommends the UDC find the criteria for CDR review have not been met and refer the request for more information or deny the request as submitted, subject to further information being provided during the UDC meeting.

Projecting Signs Permitted per Sign Ordinance: Summarizing Section 30.09, occupants may display a total of one (1) projecting sign on a facade facing a street and may be displayed in addition to a wall sign. Normally this site would be allowed projecting signs with a net area of 32 sq. ft. per side, based on the number of traffic lanes. However, as this site is also proposing a ground sign with a total net area of 60 sq. ft., the projecting signs are

allowed a net area of 12 sq. ft. per side. Projecting signs must vertically clear any pedestrian area by at least ten feet and may not extend above the third story.

Proposed Signage: The applicant is proposing projecting signs for some tenants of the building. One projecting sign is for a commercial tenant space along S. Park Street, near the intersection of Fish Hatchery Road. The additional projecting signs are for the live-work units to have the option of a projecting sign for their tenant space. There are three different styles proposed, two of which are non-illuminated and would have a net area of 6 sq. ft. per side. The third would be internally illuminated and have a net area of 9 sq. ft. per side. The projecting signs would have a vertical clearance of 7.5' – 9.5' from grade, but would be installed above landscaping or next to entrances stairs and out of pedestrian way.

Staff Comments: The applicant is proposing two forms of signage for the five live-work spaces on the ground floor. The proposal would allow the tenants to have an above-canopy sign with 8" letters (which would comply with the sign ordinance), a projecting sign, or possibly both, as it is not clear in the application. The proposed projecting signs would not have a vertical clearance of 10' above the pedestrian way as required per the sign ordinance; however, the proposed locations of the signs would be placed next to the live-work unit stair entrances, creating a barrier to prevent pedestrians from walking into/under the signs. There is a sixth projecting sign for the main commercial tenant of 1007 S. Park Street which would have no other signage except for a projecting sign, which is also lower than 10' from grade. Not enough detail has been provided for this sign placement to be reviewed by staff.

As the proposed projecting signs will be technically located out of pedestrian walkways, staff does not have a basic concern about the height exception. However, in regard to illumination, the proposed locations for the projecting signs are also below sconces and canopies, which will provide illumination at night. One of the proposals allows for an internally illuminated sign and to have it also be externally illuminated, which seems excessive. The result will probably be an excessively illuminated sign, due to both methods of illumination being employed. Staff believes that if the projecting signs are approved and placed under the light fixtures, they should be able to adequately illuminate a non-internally illuminated sign.

Staff also feels the proposal for both above canopy signage and projecting signage could create clutter along the façade of the live-work units. Staff requests UDC determine if both options should be allowed, or whether just the projecting signs or the above canopy signs be permitted for the commercial on the main floor.

Recommendation: The recurring theme with this submittal is that it lacks detail necessary to be included for staff and UDC review relative to the criteria for CDR approval. The submitted application does not provide enough detail for staff to understand what permits can be issued for the desired signs. Some of the concepts appear as though they could satisfy CDR criteria, but the details have not been included that are necessary for the CDR.

Canopy Signs Permitted per Sign Ordinance: Summarizing Section 31.071, above-canopy signs can be installed instead of wall signs, but are restricted to the business name and logo, be constructed of freestanding characters and the logo, have a max height of 2' and the next of the logo being a max size of 4 sq. ft. These signs also cannot be wider than the width of the canopy or the corresponding façade, whichever is narrower. Above-canopy signage may not project further than from the building than the canopy to which it is attached and a sign that crosses architectural detail may not be displayed closer than three feet from the nearest face of the building.

Proposed Signage: The applicant shows for each live work unit to have the option of an above canopy sign and/or projecting sign. It appears (based on the above canopy sign example) that these signs would be limited to individual red channel letters, with a maximum letter height of 8". It is unknown if there is a maximum width or if it spanning the entire canopy would be permitted. The letter states the logos would be allowed up to 4 sq. ft. in net area.

Staff Comments: No exception is needed.

Ground Signs Permitted by Sign Ordinance: This zoning lot is allowed up to two ground signs with a combined net area of 64 sq. ft., and a maximum height of 8' for monument style signs, based off of the prevailing speeds and number of traffic lanes.

Proposed Ground Signage: The applicant proposes a three sided 4' tall monument styled ground sign, with a total net area of 60 sq. ft.

Staff Comments: No exception is needed.

Notes:

- The final CDR plan shall have corrected images of where the projecting signs will go, keeping the locations consistent.
- The final CDR documents shall state that all other signage not requiring permits shall comply with MGO 31.
- If above canopy signs are approved, applicant will work with staff on the details for the final CDR approval.