

August 20, 2009

Mr. William J. Mueller,
Village President, and
Board of Trustees
Village of Lombard

Subject: PC 09-22: 555 E. Butterfield Road (Comar Offices Planned Development)

Dear President and Trustees:

Your Plan Commission transmits for your consideration its recommendation regarding the above-referenced petition. The petitioner requests that Village grant approval of the following actions for the subject property located within the O-Office District:

1. A conditional use to establish the subject property as a planned development, pursuant to Section 155.502(F)(3), with the following deviations:
 - a. A deviation from Section 153.502(B)(5)(b) of the Sign Ordinance to increase the maximum allowable area of a freestanding sign from thirty (30) square feet to ninety-eight (98) square feet.
 - b. A deviation from Section 153.502(B)(5)(c) of the Sign Ordinance to increase the maximum allowable height of a freestanding sign from six (6) feet to twenty (20) feet.
 - c. A deviation from Section 153.502(B)(5)(f) of the Sign Ordinance to decrease the minimum allowable distance of a freestanding sign from a property line from ten (10) feet to two (2) feet. (This request has been withdrawn by the petitioner.)

After due notice and as required by law, the Plan Commission conducted a public hearing for this petition on July 20, 2009.

George Kourafas, 1S660 Midwest Road, Oakbrook Terrace, presented the petition. He stated that he is asking for permission to take down a multi-tenant sign at 555 E. Butterfield Road and replace it. The original sign was built in 1984 and times have changed. He stated that they are looking to have a modern sign,

upgrade it, and give a face lift. He thinks that the sign is too large right now and they want to reduce it to 96 square feet. Granting this variation would be significant to other businesses in the nearby area. He stated that they will be building this sign with a stone base bottom and stone columns to match the building more closely. Times in the office/retail markets are tough and landlords need to make sure things are fresh. The new sign will not interfere with any property values or create obstructions to vehicles driving on Butterfield Road.

Chairperson Ryan asked if anyone was present to speak in favor or against the petition. No one spoke in favor or against.

Chairperson Ryan then requested the staff report.

Stuart Moynihan, Associate Planner, presented the staff report. The petitioner, Comar Properties, is proposing to replace a freestanding sign near the northeastern corner of the property located at 555 E. Butterfield Road. The proposed new sign will replace the larger existing sign in the same location. The Zoning Ordinance limits freestanding signs located in the O – Office District to thirty (30) square feet in area and six (6) feet in height. The proposed sign is ninety-eight (98) square feet in area and is twenty (20) feet in height. Therefore, deviations for sign height and area are required.

The petitioner had originally proposed to install the new sign in the same location as the existing sign which is setback two feet (2') from the northern property line. The Zoning Ordinance requires a minimum setback of ten feet (10') from all property lines. Since the submittal, the petitioner has agreed to meet the required setback of ten feet (10'). Therefore, the third deviation is not necessary.

Staff has researched the history of the subject property and has found no records of zoning relief granted to the property. Therefore, any structures, uses, or other situations on the subject property which are not in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance and which were lawfully established at the time can be considered legal non-conforming. The petitioner has decided not to apply for additional zoning relief on the subject property as part of this petition. However, future development activity may require that any such items be brought into compliance or granted the requisite zoning relief.

Section 155.503(F)(3) of the Zoning Ordinance requires that a planned development be established with any variation request on a property which is zoned O – Office District and meets the minimum requirements for lot area and frontage for a planned development. In the O District, the minimum lot area is 45,000 square feet and the minimum frontage is three hundred feet (300'). The subject property is approximately 78,000 square feet and has approximately five hundred thirty-six feet (536') of frontage. Therefore, the petitioner is requesting approval of a planned development on the property.

The Zoning Ordinance encourages and/or requires the establishment of planned developments for large-scale developments. Staff believes establishing a planned development will provide the Village Board with an instrument for managing the multiple uses on the property and encouraging high quality development. Office District Planned Developments have been

established on many nearby properties south of Butterfield Road, including the two properties directly east of the subject property. Staff supports the establishment of a planned development on the subject property.

The petitioner is proposing to install a new freestanding sign on the subject property. At ninety-eight (98) square feet in area, the proposed sign would exceed the maximum of thirty (30) square feet permitted by the Zoning Ordinance.

The petitioner and the sign contractor have cited several reasons for the size of the proposed sign. The size of the sign is necessary to provide sufficient room to advertise each of the tenants which occupy the building on the subject property. In addition, each sign cabinet must be large enough to be visible from Butterfield Road.

At twenty feet (20') in height, the sign would exceed the maximum of six feet (6') permitted by the Zoning Ordinance. Arguments similar to those made for the sign's area can be made for the sign's height. The additional sign height will allow the petitioner to provide advertising space for each tenant. The height is also requested to allow for a stone base and a decorative roof.

Staff notes that if the property were zoned B3, B4, or B4A no deviations for the proposed signage would be needed. As the property fronts on a state right-of-way (Illinois 56), the Sign Ordinance would allow a freestanding sign up to one hundred twenty-five (125) square feet in area and up to twenty-five feet (25') in height. As the building contains multiple tenants, including a bank which draws customers to the site, it is reasonable to consider that the property may have similar signage needs to those in the B3, B4, or B4A zoning districts.

The existing freestanding sign on the property, permitted in 1984, is larger in both height and area than the proposed sign. Staff estimates the area of the existing sign to be two hundred two and one-half (202.5) square feet. The estimated height of the sign is twenty-two and one-half feet (22.5').

Staff supports the requested signage deviations, with the exception of a reduced setback, due to site considerations, multiple uses on the property, aesthetic enhancements, and size reductions from the existing sign which brings it into closer compliance with Village code.

Chairperson Ryan then opened the meeting for comments among the Commissioners.

Commissioner Olbrysh stated that the new sign is being reduced in overall size and is much more attractive. He stated that he noticed that the old sign has the address and the new proposal does not. He asked if they will rely on the address being on the building.

Mr. Kourafas stated that they have not ruled out putting the address on the new sign. He stated that right now they are in talks with the designer and architect to remodel the building. So the address would be on the building if not on the pylon.

On a motion by Commissioner Cooper and a second by Commissioner Sweetser, the Plan Commission voted 4 to 0 that the Village Board **approve** the petition based on the finding that the petitioner had met the required Standards as set forth in the Zoning and Sign Ordinances.

Based on the submitted petition and the testimony presented, the proposed conditional use to establish a planned development and deviations do comply with the standards required by the Lombard Zoning and Sign Ordinances and that granting the planned development approval enhances the overall development and is within the public interest; and, therefore, I move that the Plan Commission adopt the findings included within the Inter-department Group Report as the findings of the Lombard Plan Commission, and recommend to the Corporate Authorities **approval** PC 09-22, subject to the following conditions:

1. The proposed sign shall be constructed in accordance with the plans prepared by Grate Signs, Inc., dated May 26, 2004, revised March 25, 2009 and as depicted in Exhibit A, and made a part of this petition, except as they may be changed to conform with Village code and the conditions below.
2. The proposed freestanding sign shall have a setback of no less than ten feet (10') from all property lines.
3. The existing retaining wall surrounding the sign shall be removed from the public right-of-way and shall be sufficiently set back from all property lines so as to not conflict with public utilities. All disturbed areas shall be restored with topsoil and sod in a manner acceptable to the Director of Community Development.
4. The petitioner shall submit a Plat of Resubdivision to establish a Lot of Record on the subject property.
5. As part of the approval, the petitioner shall also address the comments included within the IDRC Report.

Respectfully,

VILLAGE OF LOMBARD

Donald Ryan, Chairperson
Lombard Plan Commission

c. Petitioner
Lombard Plan Commission