

**VILLAGE OF LOMBARD**  
**INTER-DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW GROUP REPORT**

TO: Lombard Plan Commission      HEARING DATE: December 17, 2007  
FROM: Department of Community      PREPARED BY: Michael S. Toth  
Development      Planner I

**TITLE**

**PC 07-33; 5 E. North Avenue:** The petitioner requests that the Village grant a variation from Section 153.505 (B)(6)(d)(2) of the Sign Ordinance to allow for an increase in the height of a freestanding sign from twenty five feet (25) to a height of thirty (30) feet, located within the B3 Community Shopping District.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Petitioner: Skip Spanjer  
North Shore Sign  
1925 Industrial Dr.  
Libertyville, IL 60048

Property Owner: Mohammed Hockla  
5 E. North Ave  
Lombard, IL 60148

**PROPERTY INFORMATION**

Existing Land Use: Philips 66 Gas Station/Mini-Mart  
Size of Property: Approximately 58,900 square feet  
Comprehensive Plan: Recommends Community Commercial  
Existing Zoning: B3 Community Shopping District

Surrounding Zoning and Land Use:

North: I Limited Industrial District; developed as office/contractor's yard known as Adjustable Forms.  
South: R2PD Single Family Residential Planned Development District; developed as single family residences.

East: B3 Community Shopping District; currently undeveloped property.  
West: R2 Single Family Residential District; developed as a religious institution (St. Thomas Marthoma Church).

## **ANALYSIS**

### **SUBMITTALS**

This report is based on the following documents filed on November 13, 2007 with the Department of Community Development:

1. Petition for Public Hearing.
2. Drawings of the proposed sign, prepared by North Shore Sign, dated November 5, 2007.
3. Site Plan, prepared by Illini Consulting Group, Inc, dated January 8, 1998.

### **DESCRIPTION**

The subject property currently is improved with a Philips 66 Gas Station/Mini-Mart, which was originally considered as part of a conditional use approval for automobile service (gas station/mini-mart and car wash) and conditional use approval for two principal structures on one lot-of-record (PC 98-18). A twenty-five (25) foot freestanding sign is located on the northwest corner of the subject property. To increase the visibility of the freestanding sign to patrons traveling eastbound on North Avenue, the petitioner wishes to increase the height of the sign to thirty (30) feet.

### **INTER-DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW COMMENTS**

#### **ENGINEERING**

The Private Engineering Services Division has no comments regarding the petition.

#### **PUBLIC WORKS**

The Department of Public Works, Engineering Division has no comments regarding the petition.

#### **FIRE AND BUILDING**

The Fire Department/Bureau of Inspectional Services has no comments at this time.

## PLANNING

### Compatibility with the Sign Ordinance

The existing freestanding sign on the subject property is for business identification and gasoline price advertisement. The franchisee of the Phillips 66 gas station is proposing to increase their existing twenty-five (25) foot high freestanding sign to thirty (30) feet in height. He is also proposing other modifications to the sign cabinets as shown on the plan set, but the overall sign area will not change. No LED signage is included as part of the sign modifications.

The Phillips 66 gas station received approval in 1998 (PC 98-18) to establish their business on the property. A solid concrete noise/visual barrier wall was erected in 2003 along the southern portion of the North Avenue right of way, directly west of the subject property. The wall was constructed to act as a buffer between North Avenue and the adjacent residential properties. With the wall in place, the petitioner believes the previously approved sign is not sufficient to provide adequate visibility for North Avenue motorists.

In consideration of the petitioner's request, staff surveyed the existing site conditions. As shown on the attached photographs, the existing sign was readily visible prior to the wall installation. The second photograph shows the limited ability motorists have for the sign as one approaches the eastbound leg of the North Avenue/Main Street intersection. In this instance, the sign is still not visible adjacent to the St. Thomas Marthoma Church and the right turn lane onto Main Street.



(A view of the Phillips 66 sign from the aforementioned barrier wall along North Avenue)



(A view from eastbound North Avenue traveling toward the intersection of North Ave. and Main St.)

Staff can conceptually support the increase in sign height for the subject property as a visibility hardship was created by the construction of the concrete wall by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and not by any actions of the owner of the subject property. Moreover, the additional height of the sign would allow motorists to see the sign earlier and make the appropriate traffic movements to safely turn into the establishment.

#### **Compatibility with Surrounding Land Uses**

Staff reviewed the proposed sign relative to adjacent properties. The St. Thomas Marthoma Church building itself already screens much of the sign's visibility from many residential properties west of Main Street. For the residential properties to the east, staff attempted to Photoshop the proposed sign onto a photograph taken from 680 N. Charlotte Street (Appendix A). This effort shows that the proposed sign would now be visible from the neighboring Charlotte Street properties. However, as the sign is approximately 370 feet from the home at 680 N. Charlotte Street, visual and light impacts from the sign would be minimal.

As a separate but related issue, the subject property is served by an overhead electrical utility line extending from an existing pole on the west side of Main Street. In consideration of a previous zoning approval for an adjacent retail center at 25 E. North Avenue (ZBA 03-27), which is also owned by the same property owner, the Village added as a subsequent condition of approval that the existing overhead utility line serving both sites be buried. Since the subject property is also

served by the same line, the requested action involves electrical improvements and modifications and that the burial would also help reduce overall visual impacts of the development, staff suggests that the same condition of approval be applied to this petition as well.

## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff finds that the information presented **have affirmed** the Standards for Variations for the requested variation. Based on the above considerations, the Inter-Departmental Review Committee recommends that the Plan Commission make the following motion recommending **approval** of this petition:

Based on the submitted petition and the testimony presented, the proposal **does comply** with the standards required by the Lombard Zoning and Sign Ordinances; and therefore, I move that the Plan Commission find that the findings included as part of the Inter-department Review Report shall be the findings of the Plan Commission and therefore, I recommend to the Corporate Authorities **approval** of PC 07-33, subject to the following conditions:

1. The approved sign shall be designed and constructed consistent with the drawings of the proposed sign prepared by North Shore Sign, dated November 5, 2007 and the Site Plan, prepared by Illini Consulting Group, Inc, dated January 8, 1998, and shall not exceed thirty feet in height.
2. The petitioner shall apply for and receive a building permit from the Village prior to making any modifications to the sign.
3. The property owner/petitioner shall bury any electrical service lines required to serve the subject property. Compliance shall consist of the removal of the existing overhead electric line crossing Main Street, which serves the subject property and replacing the overhead line with a buried line to be located underneath Main Street and/or North Avenue, with buried service lines to the buildings and structures on the subject property.

Inter-Departmental Review Group Report Approved By:

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David A. Hulseberg, AICP  
Assistant Village Manager/Director of Community Development

DAH/MT:  
att  
c. Petitioner

**APPENDIX A**



(A view of the Phillips 66 gas station sign from the Charlotte Street cul-de-sac.)



(A view of the Phillips 66 gas station sign from the Charlotte Street cul-de-sac.)