

August 18, 2005

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

Subject: PC 05-23; 455 East 22nd Street (Town Place Suites Planned Development)

Dear President and Trustees:

Your Plan Commission transmits for your consideration its recommendation regarding the above-referenced petition. The petitioner is requesting an amendment to the conditions of approval associated with Ordinance Number 4682 which granted a conditional use for a Planned Development located in the B3 Community Shopping District.

After due notice and as required by law, the Plan Commission conducted a public hearing for this petition on July 18, 2005. Joseph Gutsell of Location Finders International, 515 N. Lincoln Street, Hinsdale, representative for the petitioner, Lombard 1 Hotel LLC and Marriott Towne Place Suites, presented the petition.

Mr. Gutsell reviewed their request for an amendment to the approved planned development ordinance to allow for wall signs associated with the Towne Place Suites hotel. He stated that since the hotel opened it has not done as well as anticipated. Towne Place Suites, which is part of Marriott's holdings, is not a well known name. They are proposing to modify their signage for the property to tie the Towne Place Suites name with the Marriott corporate name and branding. But for the proposed wall signage, the re-signing proposed throughout the site is intended to be done within the signage requirements of the Village.

He then described the proposed wall signage as it is depicted on the submitted plans. The wall signage will meet the area and number requirements in the Sign Ordinance. Their request is intended to amend the planned development approval ordinance to allow it to be put on the north building.

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He then referenced the staff report and expressed a concern regarding condition #4 within the report, which raised the potential of limiting access to the property from 22nd Street and Fairfield Avenue. A right-in, right-out configuration would severely affect the ability for guests to access the hotel and he stated that it is not appropriate to tie the signage request to their approval of the wall sign amendment. He also raised concerns regarding emergency vehicle access to the site if the intersection is modified.

Acting Chairperson Sweetser then opened the meeting for public comment. There were no comments in favor or in opposition to the proposal. She then requested the staff report.

William Heniff, Senior Planner, reiterated the requested actions, summarized the project and submitted the IDRC report to the public record in its entirety. He noted that the subject property is presently improved with an extended stay hotel and is located along 22nd Street directly west of Target. This development was approved by the Village in 1999 as part of a new planned development. Ordinance 4682 included a condition of approval that prohibited any wall sign on the site. The petitioner is requesting that the Village reconsider this condition of approval as they would like to install wall signs on the west and east elevation, per the submitted plans. As the condition was a condition of the approved planned development, this signage must be approved through a planned development amendment process.

The petitioner is proposing other signage changes on the subject property as part of Marriott's re-branding of their hotels. With the exception of the proposed wall sign changes, all of the signage included as part of this packet could be approved by staff as part of a building permit application as it would meet the provisions of the underlying zoning district and/or the planned development provisions. However, staff asked the petitioner to supply this additional signage information as part of the Plan Commission submittal so the Commissioners could review the wall sign request in conjunction with their other signage elements on the subject property.

He noted that the proposed wall signage is intended to be integrated into the overall building elevations as shown on the submitted plans, which will be in keeping with the intended residential appearance of the project. There are also three hotels to the west of the site on the north side of 22nd Street. Each of these hotels has wall signage. Condominiums and apartments abut the site to the west and southwest, Target abuts the site to the east, and Target's parking lot abuts the site to the southeast. As stated above, the proposed use provides a transition between the residential and the commercial uses, as the proposed use is somewhat commercial in character and somewhat residential in character.

Any impact on the adjacent condominiums will be minimized by how the signage will be situated on the building elevations. The proposed wall sign on the east side of the building will not be visible from the condominiums. The wall sign on the west elevation will be visible from Yorktown II Apartments and only indirectly visible from some of the units in the adjacent Yorktown Condominiums. No wall signage is proposed for the southern hotel building. Given the proposed design of the signage, staff does not believe the wall signage will negatively impact adjacent properties.

The petitioner's request to strike the wall sign prohibition is requested as a modification to the planned development ordinance exclusively. The amendment request would lift the wall signage restriction and would allow the petitioner to install wall signs, consistent with the B3 regulations. The petitioner's wall signage is proposed to be about ninety (90) square feet in size. The underlying B3 signage provisions would allow for two wall signs by right (one sign for frontage on Grace and one sign for frontage on 22nd Street) with the maximum sign area not to be greater than one-hundred square feet in overall size. Signage can be placed either perpendicular or parallel to the adjacent street.

In review of the proposed wall sign plans, the wall signage is proposed of a channel letter design and will be tucked between the highest window row and below the existing roof vent. The wall sign is intended to be an identifier of the exiting use on the property and is intended to address sight line issues along 22nd Street. The petitioner notes that existing grade changes and mature landscaping does not provide substantial visibility for the free-standing signs. Staff does not object to this amendment, provided that the signage restrictions are closely tied to the petitioner's exhibits.

Mr. Heniff stated that staff can support the wall sign provisions, particularly in consideration of potential access reconfiguration issues along 22nd Street. Right now, primary access from the east into the subject property is achieved from an access drive on the adjacent Target driveway. As the Commissioners are aware, the Village has approved a hotel/convention hall for the vacant lot south of Target. Moreover, Target will be applying to the Plan Commission for an amendment to their 1995 approval to allow for a building expansion. In conjunction with these expansions, Convention Way, proposed east of Target will include a traffic signal at 22nd Street. Once these improvements are made, the Village may look at modifications to the Fairfield/22nd Street intersection to restrict some traffic movements. This issue is currently in the review stages by KLOA, the Village's traffic consultant.

At some point in the future the Village Board may want to revisit the traffic issues at this intersection. Staff is supportive of the signage amendment as the need to provide greater identification to the building and hence provide motorists with a greater amount of time to react accordingly. In further consideration of the signage request, staff suggests that this approval be tied to a provision that limits the property owner's ability to object to such restrictions. However, before any restrictions are approved or implemented staff would share the proposed changes with the affected property owners accordingly.

Acting Chairperson Sweetser opened the public hearing for discussion and questions by the Plan Commission.

Commissioner Burke questioned the condition of limiting the access to the hotel on 22nd Street as it pertains to this petition. He stated that the condition within the staff report was too vague and should not be tied to the conditions of approval for this petition. Commissioner Olbrish also expressed reservations regarding the condition.

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Acting Chairperson Sweetser inquired as to the Village's ability to restrict access or modify the intersection at a later date if conditions warrant such a measure. Specifically, if the petition is approved without the condition, does that limit the Village's ability to reconsider this issue at a later date? Mr. Heniff stated that the Village still has rights to modify the intersection at a later date if traffic safety and operating conditions warrant such a measure.

After due consideration of the petition and the testimony presented, the Plan Commission found that the petition complies with the standards required by the Lombard Zoning, Sign and Subdivision and Development Ordinances and the planned development would be within the public interest. Therefore, the Plan Commission, by a roll call vote of 4 to 0, accepted the findings of the Inter-departmental Review Report as the findings of the Plan Commission and recommended to the Corporate Authorities **approval** of PC 05-23, subject to the following amended conditions:

1. That condition F of Section 5 of Ordinance 4682 shall be removed in its entirety. All other provisions associated with Ordinance 4682 shall remain in full force and effect.
2. That the proposed wall signage shall be developed and installed in compliance with the Sign Plan, prepared by Persona Sign Makers, dated March 30, 2005 and made a part of this request. The wall signage must meet of a channel letter design and shall meet the wall signage requirements established within the Sign Ordinance within the B3 District.
3. That the petitioner shall apply for and receive a building permit for all new signage proposed for the subject property.

Respectfully,

VILLAGE OF LOMBARD

Ruth Sweetser, Acting Chairperson
Lombard Plan Commission

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c. Petitioner
Lombard Plan Commission