

North: B5A Downtown Perimeter District; developed as a Tae Kwon Do learning center

South: R2 Single-Family Residence District; developed as the Illinois Prairie Path

East: B5A Downtown Perimeter District; developed as mixed-use commercial/multiple family housing

West: R5 General Residence District; developed as multiple –family (apartment) residences

ANALYSIS

SUBMITTALS

This report is based on the following documents, which were filed with the Department of Community Development on April 9, 2009 and included within the petitioner’s application packet:

1. Petition for Public Hearing
2. Narrative prepared by the petitioner, undated.
3. Applicable Response to Standards for:
 - a. Planned Developments (General Standards)
 - b. Planned Developments with Use Exceptions
 - c. Planned Developments with Other Exceptions
 - d. Variations
4. Plans for the proposed wall sign prepared by Olympic Signs, dated January 9, 2009.

DESCRIPTION

The petitioner, Dr. Daniel Coffey of D.C. Spinal Wellness and Sport Rehabilitation, is proposing to install a box style wall sign on the eastern façade of the Prairie Path Villas building. Ordinance 5802 (PC 05-43), approved the Prairie Path Villas Planned Development. As part of the approvals, all wall signage associated with the development was to be in accordance with the approved elevation plan as shown on exhibit “A”. In addition, as a condition of approval, signage associated with the development was to consist of channel letters. Since the proposed new sign would not be of a design or in a location approved as part of Ordinance 5802, a planned development amendment is required.

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW REPORT

PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works has reviewed the petition and has no comments.

PRIVATE ENGINEERING

The PES Division of Community Development has no comments on the above petition.

FIRE AND BUILDING

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

PLANNING

The petitioner is proposing to install a box style wall at Prairie Path Villas located at 310-312 S. Main St. The wall sign is proposed to be installed on the eastern elevation of the building and will face Main Street. The petitioner is the owner of the far northern commercial condominium unit on the Main Street side of the building. The proposed sign would be installed above the awning just south of the Main Street entrance to this unit. As the sign is proposed to be placed in



a location not depicted on the approved building elevations, an amendment to the planned development for signage location would be necessary. In addition, the planned development required that all exterior walls signs on the building be of a channel letter design. As the proposed sign consists of a single interiorly illuminated aluminum cabinet, the petitioner is requesting that the conditional use for a planned development be amended to allow a box style wall sign.

Compatibility with the Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan identifies the site for Community Commercial uses. The existing use is therefore consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Compatibility with the Surrounding Land Uses

The subject property is bordered other commercial uses, a recreational pathway, and multi-family housing. The proposed signage is not expected to negatively impact the surrounding land uses. The request is generally compatible with the surrounding land uses.

Compatibility with the Sign Ordinance

In PC 05-43, Prairie Path Villas was granted the following deviations related to signage:

- g) A deviation from Sections 153.211(F) and 153.508(B)(19)(a) of the Sign Ordinance to allow for awning and canopy signs to be displayed in conjunction with wall signs;
- h) A deviation from Section 153.508(B)(19)(c) to allow for more than one wall sign per street frontage; and

The deviation for the number of signs was supported by staff to allow a sufficient number of signs to identify the individual commercial tenants in the building. The use of mixed signage was supported by staff to promote the aesthetic effect of breaking up the building's street elevations. The intention was to contribute to the impression of a series of separate buildings, effectively reducing the single, larger building to a more pedestrian scale.

The petitioner's proposed wall sign would be installed on the eastern elevation of Prairie Path Villas. The proposed signage measures four feet (4') by twelve feet (12') for a total of forty-eight (48) square feet. The Sign Ordinance requires that the total sign area of all wall signs on a property in the B5A District shall not exceed one times the lineal front footage of the property and that no one wall sign shall exceed fifty (50) square feet. Therefore, no variation for signage area is necessary as the proposed wall sign does meet the pertinent regulations.

Staff also notes that the petitioner has indicated on his submitted permit plans that his tenant space has sixty feet (60') of frontage along Main Street. The proposed signage area would only make use of forty-eight feet (48') of frontage along Main Street.

Signage Conditions of the Planned Development

Ordinance 5802 which established the Prairie Path Villas Planned Development requires that wall signage be of a channel letter design. The following conditions are applicable to this petition:

- 3. As part of the building permit submittal, the petitioner shall satisfactorily address the comments included as part of the Inter-Departmental Review Report.
- 9. The proposed wall and awning signs on the building shall be designed and located on the building consistent with the submitted plans.

Regarding Condition 3, staff made several comments concerning signage in the Inter-Departmental Review Report of PC 05-43. Among those comments were the following:

- *“Based upon the submitted elevations, two deviations are required - a deviation from Sections 153.211(F) and 153.508(B)(19)(a) of the Sign Ordinance to allow for awning and canopy signs to be displayed in conjunction with wall signs, and a deviation from Section 153.508(B)(19)(c) to allow for more than one wall sign per street frontage.”*
- *“The petitioner’s request for a mixed sign package is intended to break up the scale of the building along Main Street to give it the appearance of multiple structures at a pedestrian level. The awning signage is meant to “frame” the center façade of the Main Street elevation, while the other wall sign elements identify the respective business establishments.”*
- *“Staff would be supportive of this request provided that the wall signage follows the same guidelines the Village has approved for many recent developments, including the Main Street Place planned development (SPA 05-05), kitty-corner to the site. These provisions include the requirement that all wall signage to be installed on the building shall be of a uniform design and shall be placed on the building in accordance with the wall sign package as depicted on the submitted building elevations.”*

As noted above in the IDRC and as a condition of approval, signage in the Prairie Path Villas Development was to be of a uniform design and placed according to submitted building elevations, same as the guidelines established for Main Street Place at 229 S. Main Street (SPA 05-05). That development was approved with the following condition:



1. **All wall signage to be installed on the subject property shall be of a channel letter design** and shall be placed on the building in accordance with the wall sign package as depicted on the submitted building elevations.

The photograph to the left shows the channel letter signage as installed at Main Street Place.

The approval of Prairie Path Villas was conditioned that it meet the same signage design standards required at Main Street Place, specifically channel letter design, and that the

signage be located as depicted on the approved plans. These conditions were recommended by staff and approved by the Village Board as a means to improving the overall quality and uniformity of signage design and to ensure consistency in location. As the approved plans were interpreted during the public hearing to be consistent with the requirement for channel letter signs, there was no condition written as part of Ordinance 5802 which specifically stated that channel letter signs would be required at Prairie Path Villas.

It is the opinion of staff that these amendments could potentially reduce the quality of signage on the building and the quality of the development as a whole. A future tenant could replace this box style wall sign with one of an inferior quality. If other signs on the building are to be channel letter in design, a box style sign would also degrade the uniformity of the signage package which was preferred in PC 05-43. Staff also notes that the approval of these amendments may set a precedent for other tenants in the Prairie Path Villas building and other nearby buildings, such as Main Street Place, should they desire to install box style wall signs.

Staff is not supportive of this request for amendments to the planned development due to the potential reduction in signage quality and the quality of the development itself.

Alternate Recommendation

If the Plan Commission does determine that proposed amendments are desirable, the Commissioners may want to consider similar amendments for the entire planned development, allowing for any future signage to only meet the requirements of the Sign Ordinance. This would avoid the possible situation in which public hearings are necessary on a sign by sign basis, should similar signs be requested. The following condition could be added to any motion for approval:

1. But for the two deviations granted by Ordinance 5802, wall signs installed on the exterior elevations of the Prairie Path Villas Planned Development shall be subject only to the requirements of the Sign Ordinance.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above considerations, the Inter-Departmental Review Committee recommends that the Plan Commission make the following motion recommending **denial** of this petition:

Based on the submitted petition and the testimony presented, the proposed amendments to a conditional use for a planned development do not comply with the standards required by the Lombard Zoning and Sign Ordinances; and, therefore, I move that the Plan Commission accept the findings of the Inter-departmental Review Report as the findings of the Plan Commission and therefore, I move that the Plan Commission recommend to the Corporate Authorities denial of the amendments to a conditional use for a planned development associated with PC 09-05.

Plan Commission
Re: PC 09-05
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Inter-Departmental Review Group Report Approved By:

William J. Heniff, AICP
Director of Community Development

WJH
c: Petitioner

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EXHIBIT A

