

January 19, 1999

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

Subject: PC 98-44: 299 W. Roosevelt Road (Pizzeria Uno):

Dear President and Trustees:

Your Plan Commission transmits for your consideration its recommendation regarding the above-referenced petition. This petition requests an amendment to PC 93-16 (Ordinance 3710; amended by Ordinances 3891, 3972, 4192, and 4231), conditional use approval to allow multiple buildings on one lot-of-record and to allow a restaurant with drive-through service and outdoor seating, to grant a variation to allow two (2) freestanding signs on one (1) lot-of-record.

At the December 14, 1998 meeting, the petition was presented by Rob Engler, Senior Director of Design for Pizzeria Uno in Boston, who gave an address in Massachusetts. When planning the restaurant in 1996, he worked with staff and was convinced that Pizzeria Uno needed a freestanding sign. Mr. Engler stated freestanding signs compliment the architecture and help drivers have early recognition so they can make decisions in a timely manner. He then stated the building is in a hollow. It is set back from the street, blocked by trees, and not visible when approaching from either direction, especially from the west. He stated Pizzeria Uno received approval for a 7'2" sign at the time of development. When it came time to install the sign, it could not be put up because of utility easements and Pizzeria Uno could not find a useful location for a 7'2" sign. The sign would not work and the variation expired; however, the hardship still exists.

While investigating ways to put up a sign, Pizzeria Uno found that if they had a separate parcel they would be allowed the sign outright. The sign could be a 25 foot pylon sign and 125 square feet. Mr. Engler stated the owner would let us subdivide the lot. Pizzeria Uno decided this variation process would be easier and cheaper. Mr. Engler stated the proposed sign would be placed 50' from the street and would accomplish Pizzeria Uno's intentions but wouldn't contribute to visual clutter. Mr. Engler stated that staff's recommendation of where to put the sign isn't good because it's too far back from street to be visible.

There was no one present to speak in favor of or in opposition to the proposal.

Nancy Hill, Planner II, presented and summarized the staff report. She indicated that Pizzeria Uno is requesting an amendment to a Conditional Use to allow 2 freestanding signs on one lot of record. She stated the Sign Ordinance allows one freestanding sign per lot of record. Sportmart and Pizzeria Uno are located on the same lot. The freestanding sign that currently exists on the property is a multi-tenant sign. Plan Commission approved a variation to the Conditional Use for a ground mounted sign in 1996. The approval was for a 7'2" sign at a specific location. The sign was never installed due to conflicts with utilities; and the variation expired.

Ms. Hill stated the Plan Commission has heard a similar case this year for El Burrito Loco. That restaurant asked for a freestanding sign and Plan Commission approved this request with conditions. Plan Commission recommended in that case a monument sign would be better. Staff feels that a monument sign would be better than a pylon sign for Pizzeria Uno, as well. The location is not a problem with staff.

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

Commissioner Sweetser asked why the motion is prepared this way; it doesn't seem that it is what they are asking for. She asked for clarification as to what the petition is for.

Ms. Hill responded that staff doesn't have a problem with Pizzeria Uno having a second sign, but with the size. Commissioner Sweetser asked, isn't the petition for a pylon sign. Janet Petsche clarified that there is more to the petition than the size of the sign. She stated that staff would try to condition it if it is accepted.

Commissioner Olbrysh asked the petitioner to address the multi-tenant sign.

Mr. Engler, the petitioner, responded that when they first asked staff if they could be on the multi-tenant sign in 1996 they were told that they couldn't. He also indicated that the landlord denied his request.

David Sundland clarified the petitioner's statement. He stated that Staff may have had objections to sign size, but staff does not have the ability to restrict what businesses can go on the sign once the sign is approved.

Mr. Engler said staff said they wouldn't approve more panels for the sign.

Commissioner Olbrysh asked if the landlord felt that way now. The petitioner responded that he did not discuss this with the landlord.

Commissioner Kramer stated she doesn't like to mess with the Sign Ordinance. She agreed that visibility is very low for the store. A monument sign would not be very good. It's attractive but too low, and automobiles would be late in making the decision to turn by the time they see the sign. She indicated she would be willing to accept a pylon sign if it was set back far enough. A monument sign wouldn't do any good and would be a hazard because of poor visibility. She has no problem with it if it is set back at least 50 feet.

Commissioner Olbrysh stated that he thinks the petitioner's concerns would be addressed if Pizzeria Uno could be on the multi-tenant sign. There is something there that might meet the petitioner's needs without erecting a new sign.

Mr. Engler, the petitioner responded that he could take a look at that.

Commissioner Sweetser stated that the multi-tenant sign would need more panels to put Pizzeria Uno on the existing sign. Plan Commission does not have the authority to increase the panels. Staff would not allow additional panels on the pylon signs as it is. She asked staff to comment on this.

Ms. Hill responded that the property owner would not be allowed to make the sign larger. Currently, the sign is a non-conforming sign as to location and size. If panels were added to the sign, they would have to come through this process as well.

Commissioner Kramer stated that the petitioner has recourse to make a separate lot of record. It's up to the petitioner if he wants a vote tonight or consult with the landlord regarding the extra panels.

Mr. Engler said he would prefer to subdivide the lot. He stated Pizzeria Uno would prefer to have its own sign.

David Sundland cautioned the Commissioners that there will be variations that will accompany this subdivision and indicated what those were. It would be a more complicated matter.

Mr. Engler said that in discussing the subdivision with Ms. Hill, she indicated that we might be able to meet all those requirements without any variations.

Chairperson Ryan asked the petitioner if he wanted to vote on a continuance and try to work out issues with staff.

Commissioner Sweetser stated she thought it sounded like a good idea and Mr. Engler could also approach the landlord about the multi-tenant sign. She said that she thinks that would be easier.

Commissioner Sweetser moved to continue to January 18, 1999 meeting. Commissioner Olbrysh seconded the motion.

At the January 18, 1999 meeting, Jacquelyn Jensen, 1322 Barclay Boulevard, Buffalo Grove, presented the petition. She stated she represented Kieffer and Company, a sign company, which was representing Pizzeria Uno. She summarized the request for the Plan Commission. She then stated Pizzeria Uno had secured a letter from Sportmart Plaza stating Pizzeria Uno could not place a sign on the multi-tenant sign. Ms. Jensen then read the letter into the record. She stated the letter was addressed to Mr. Maurice Molod of Uno Restaurant Corporation. The letter states the following: "As you know, pursuant to the terms of your lease, Pizzeria Uno in Lombard, Illinois has no right to any signage on the multi-tenant sign on Roosevelt Road in Lombard, Illinois. I am sorry we cannot accommodate your desires. If you have any questions or if I can be of any further assistance, as always, please feel free to call." Ms. Jensen stated the letter was signed by Mitchell P. Kahn.

There was no one present to speak for or against the petition.

Ms. Hill presented a staff memo to the Plan Commission. She stated at the December meeting, the Plan Commission directed Pizzeria Uno to look into placing a sign on the Sportmart multi-tenant sign. Secondly, the Plan Commission directed staff to examine the possibilities of Pizzeria Uno subdividing the property to create their own lot of record.

Ms. Hill stated that staff had looked into the possibility of subdividing the property, but discouraged Pizzeria Uno from doing so since so many variations would be required. Staff and Pizzeria Uno have looked into placing a sign on the multi-tenant sign. Sportmart is very adamant about not allowing Pizzeria Uno to use the three vacant panels on the multi-tenant sign. At the same time, Pizzeria Uno cannot place additional panels to the multi-tenant sign without a variation, as the multi-tenant sign is nonconforming. Staff recommend approval of a monument sign, as stated in the December staff report.

Ms. Olbrysh stated he had no problem with an additional sign since they could not have a sign on the Sportmart multi-tenant sign.

Ms. Hill reminded the Commission at the last meeting they heard Mr. Engler testify that the Pizzeria Uno property sits very low. Mr. Engler argued a pylon sign was necessary because passersby on Roosevelt Road would not be able to see a monument sign.

Commissioner Sweetser asked where a monument sign could be located. Ms. Hill responded by stating any freestanding sign would have to be located in the parking lot landscape island.

Commissioner Olbrysh stated he believed a monument sign, sitting low to the ground, far from Roosevelt Road would not be seen by traffic on Roosevelt Road. Therefore, Pizzeria Uno does have a unique situation and believes a monument sign would not do the restaurant any good. A pylon sign is more appropriate.

Ms. Hill stated if Pizzeria Uno were to subdivide the property, creating a separate lot of record for their building, the restaurant would be entitled to the sign they are requesting. Ms. Hill reminded the Commission that the staff was recommending the restaurant not subdivide the property because of the number of variations that would be necessary.

Commissioner Flint stated he believed the property has a unique situation, as it sits very low. He also stated he believes all options have been exhausted and that a pylon sign was appropriate.

After due consideration of the petition and the testimony presented, the Plan Commission found that the conditional use approval complied with the standards of the Zoning Ordinance. Therefore, the Plan Commission, by a roll

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call vote of 5 to 0, recommended to the Corporate Authorities, approval of the petition associated with PC 98-44, subject to the following conditions:

1. The sign shall be located in the parking lot landscape island in a manner that does not block a driver's view; and
2. Documentation of the location of the private watermain easement shall be provided during the sign permit process.

Respectfully,

VILLAGE OF LOMBARD

Donald F. Ryan
Chairperson
Lombard Plan Commission

DAH:jd
att-

c. Petitioner
Lombard Plan Commission

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