



SHAKER HEIGHTS

**Board of Zoning Appeals & City Planning Commission Minutes
Tuesday, February 7, 2023
7 P.M.
City Hall Council Chambers**

Members Present: David E. Weiss, Mayor
Sean P. Malone, Council
John J. Boyle III, Member
Joanna Ganning, Member
Jason Russell, Member

Others Present: Joyce G. Braverman, Director of Planning
William M. Gruber, Director of Law
Daniel Feinstein, Senior Planner

The meeting was called to order by Mayor David Weiss at 7:00 p.m.

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Approval of the January 3, 2023 Meeting Minutes

It was moved by Mr. Russell and seconded by Mr. Malone to approve the minutes.

Roll Call: Ayes: Weiss, Malone, Boyle, Ganning, Russell
Nays: None

Motion Carried

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#2198. SGT CLEAN CAR WASH – 16101 CHAGRIN BOULEVARD:

A Public Hearing was held on the request of Dean Schramm, Schramm Signs, representing Brian Krusz, Sgt. Clean Car Wash, 16101 Chagrin Boulevard, to the Board of Zoning Appeals for variances to the sign regulations. The applicant proposes a primary wall sign and a second primary monument sign for the new car wash building. There is a proposed primary wall sign located on the front building façade that is 107.25 square feet in size. Code allows a primary wall sign to be a maximum of 50 square feet. The monument sign is proposed in the front yard. The 24 square foot, two sided, sign is the second primary sign for this new building. Code only allows one primary sign. The sign meets size and location regulations for monument signs. A landscape plan has been submitted.

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Mr. Feinstein showed pictures of the site. He stated this is a request for a variance to the sign regulations for size and number on this new car wash building. The applicant proposes a primary wall sign and a monument sign on the property. Only one primary sign is allowed. The wall sign is proposed to be “car wash” over a sergeant’s shield on the building’s tower element. The wall sign is a total of 107.25 square feet. Code allows a maximum 50 square foot wall sign. The Architectural Board of Review approved the design of the signs. Staff suggests approval of both signs with the condition that the wall sign is redesigned to be 77 square feet in size and with additional review and approval by the Architectural Board of Review.

Brian Krusz, owner, said they started demolition on the site for the new car wash building. There are two variances requested for a second monument sign and the area of the wall sign. They have 12 locations throughout northeast Ohio. They first proposed car wash signs on multiple sides of the building. Through discussion with the planning staff they eliminated those additional signs. The signage they propose is for visibility and safety, and their branding is important to their business. Car washes are an impulse business, so both signs are needed for good visibility. Their Streetsboro location had signage limited, and it has effected that business and the ability of the public to find it. They are re-addressing that with the city of Streetsboro.

Mr. Malone asked if they can reduce the wall signage to only 77 square feet rather than the proposed size.

Mr. Krusz said much of the 107 square feet is white space around and between the two sign elements. The logo and car wash lettering individually total less than 50 square feet. If they shrink the sign it will make it look too small on the building façade and not be legible from the street.

Mr. Russell asked the hours of operation. The signage lines up with a residential street and impacts the view from Hildana Road.

Mr. Krusz said they are open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. The sign is not visible from a residential front door. The park and RDL Architects are directly across the street. The signs will not shine light down the street.

Mr. Russell said between the car wash letters and the shield, which is more important?

Mr. Krusz said both are important. They go together as a pair for their brand identity.

Dr. Ganning said there are other sign design choices that could be made and allow this to be a smaller overall sign.

Mr. Krusz said if the letters are reduced too much in size, then they are not legible from the street.

Mayor Weiss said he does not think there is an issue with the monument sign as a second primary sign. He likes that sign face design. Compass used a linear sign on their building. Could the monument sign design be on the building tower?

Mr. Krusz said they have tried to lay that out. It does not work in the space. They have 12 other car wash locations with this type of signage.

Dean Schramm, sign designer, said the illumination is low level and meant only to internally illuminate the letters for evening visibility. The stacked design could be changed to shave off negative space. The

key elements of the sign then look out of place on this building. They are not asking for additional signs, just trying to get this sign design to be aesthetically pleasing on the building.

Dr. Ganning asked about moving a smaller shield up closer to the words “car wash” to reduce the overall square footage of the sign.

Mr. Russell asked about the signage location in Lakewood. What is the total square feet?

Mr. Krusz said the Lakewood location was an existing building that had a blade sign and two additional signs on the façades.

Mr. Schramm said the Lakewood location is a lower automotive speed location like Shaker Heights. It has multiple signs to be visible and is limited by the existing building design.

Mr. Krusz said their Strongsville north location is similar and next to residential development. The Lakewood location is a rebuild of a car wash location. They have received no complaints about their business locations and submitted support letters from Strongsville officials.

Ms. Braverman said the other precedent of wall sign sizes that are larger than this proposal are on much larger buildings like the University Hospitals building on Warrensville Center Road.

Mr. Krusz said the sign is only 8 percent of the face of the building, and only 3 percent if they take out the white space.

Ms. Braverman suggested the “car wash” language stay the same size and the shield get smaller and closer to the “car wash” letters. The letters seem to be an appropriate size to be legible from the street.

Mr. Boyle asked if this proposal could be considered 3 signs on the building. The car wash lettering, the badge, and the monument sign all as separate signs. Then each sign is under the square footage and a size variance is not needed.

Ms. Braverman said the code directs the sign be measured as one entity.

Mr. Feinstein said the sign elements are close to each other, relate, and are designed to be viewed together.

Mr. Schramm said if they raise the shield 1.5 foot higher, it takes 20 square feet off the overall size. Would it be more acceptable for three signs to be approved than the one larger wall sign?

Mr. Malone asked how this compares to the three signs approved for the Shaker Animal Hospital.

Mr. Feinstein said the Shaker Animal Hospital has two wall signs as allowed on a corner lot and added another ground sign at their door. It was small and a cut out metal design.

Dr. Ganning said she understands the logo is important to the business owner, but thinks that customers will still understand and recognize the car wash business.

Mayor Weiss asked how much smaller would the badge and letters have to get in order to be 77 square feet in size like the Auto Hospital building sign.

Mr. Schramm said the car wash letters are the appropriate size to be viewed from the road. Any smaller and these letters will not be legible. The majority of the sign size is white space between the badge and letters that make the sign measurement seem so large.

Mayor Weiss opened the Public Hearing.

Vicki Elder, 3559 Hildana Road, said it is good to consider this new business signage. She encourages the Board to consider the staff recommendation and moderate the size of the sign. She is not concerned with customer's ability to see the car wash.

Mr. Russell said this Board could approve a certain size sign and then let the Architectural Board of Review resolve the appearance and design.

Mr. Malone asked for a reminder of how the process of a car wash emergency shutdown works. Does it include additional signage?

Mr. Krusz said there is a 5-point process including blocking the entry with mobile signage and team members to wave vehicles on. The location of the shield on the tower is located to be able to construct it on the window dividers. They can certainly get the total sign under 100 square feet. A smaller logo is not too large of an impact.

Ms. Braverman said the car wash letters are more important for customers. The logo may not be as important to identify the business.

Mr. Schramm said they are not requesting more signage, just negative space around the two elements. He understands precedent for the square footage. Could they consider it two separate signs?

Mr. Russell said the issue is the type and style of the building with the tower element that drives the layout of the sign.

Dr. Ganning said other recent precedent like the yarn shop sign is not similar to this proposal. That was a smaller sign element, which created a larger measurement, but did not visually appear as a large sign.

Mr. Schramm said if they reduce 10 inches off the shield, for a 4-foot shield, then the whole sign is about 90 square feet.

Ms. Braverman said she thinks the combination of the monument sign and car wash letters on the wall identify the business.

Mr. Krusz said the sergeant's shield is a recognizable brand throughout off their locations.

Dr. Ganning said the sign on the building is visible. Customers will be able to identify the business. There were a lot of other options to design this building to accept different sign designs.

