
**MINUTES OF SYMMES TOWNSHIP BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
REGULAR MEETING
May 3, 2021**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Members of the Commission present were: Mr. Fowler, Ms. Harlow, Mr. Havill, Mr. Horvath, and Mr. Wolfe.

Also present were: Bryan Snyder, Hamilton County Zoning Inspector and Luanne Felter, Zoning Secretary.

PUBLIC HEARING

MR. FOWLER convened the public hearing for BZA 2021-02 for the property at 12156 Montgomery Road.

MR. SNYDER stated that this is a request for a variance for signage for a new Thorntons gas station at the corner of Montgomery and Fields Ertel Road. The existing commercial building would be razed for a new store and gas fueling station. As part of the development the appellant is proposing to erect one wall sign on the northwestern façade of the building facing Fields Ertel Road and one wall sign on the northeastern gas canopy façade facing Fields Ertel Road. Both of these signs are permitted within the Zoning Resolution. The appellant would also like to erect an additional 17 square foot wall sign on the southern façade of the building to help customers see the station from all angles of the intersection. Under the Zoning Resolution, signs are prohibited on this façade since this façade does not front a public street. However, the façade does face an entrance drive into the adjacent shopping center and could improve visibility for motorists travelling northwest along Montgomery Road.

In addition, the appellant is proposing to construct a 20-foot-high pole sign on the northeast corner of the site for visibility. However, all such signs are required to be ground mounted and shall not exceed 10 feet in height from the finished grade level which should be sufficient for customers to navigate to their site. There are other pole signs in this area. However, it is likely that they were installed before Symmes Township adopted zoning in 1996. The Montgomery Road corridor has been transitioning to smaller signage in the past several years.

Lastly, the appellant is proposing to install three, six square-foot directional signs on site instead of the required four-square foot directional signs. Nevertheless, the standard size would still allow for adequate visibility.

MR. WOLFE wanted to know if the shopping center was going to lose the parking spaces located on the side of the existing building.

MR. SNYDER stated that the parking spaces will remain for use of the shopping center.

TODD SMUTZ (Thorntons, 2600 James Thornton Way, Louisville, KY) stated he is the Project Manager. He believes they have submitted a very modest sign package than they normally do. The site is unique as it faces the intersection. The channel letters on the canopy would complement the letters on the front of the building. There will be a parking lot in the rear of the building with a rear entry so they would like to add a third sign. In the Zoning Resolution we are permitted to have 198 square feet of signage but we are only requesting 106 square feet which is far under that requirement. As for the 20-foot-tall pole sign we want to compete with UDF and allow customers to easily read it from 600 feet so they can get into the appropriate turn lane. It will not be much taller than the canopy. Lastly, the directional signage needs to be larger than normal to help patrons utilizing the strip mall to navigate back onto Montgomery Road safely. The text would be too small with the graphics provided.

MR. FOWLER wanted to know where the pole sign would be located on the site and if he would be willing to go with a monument sign.

MR. SMUTZ noted that the pole sign would be located at the corner of Montgomery and Fields Ertel Road at a 45-degree angle to face the various lanes of traffic. They believe a monument sign would not be as visible.

JEFF TEPE (Robert McCabe Real Estate Group, 118 Northeast Drive, Loveland) stated that he represents the property owner. He is in favor of this request. He noted that At Home located at 9570 Fields Ertel Road has a third sign on the back of their building.

MR. SNYDER stated that was approved by the Zoning Commission as part of the Final Development Plan. They are a separate board.

MS. HARLOW stated that she is not in favor of the 20-foot pole sign. A monument sign should be sufficient.

MR. HORVATH stated that he also is not in support of the pole sign or the larger directional signs. However, he is in support of the additional wall sign because it will help customers see the station from all angles of the intersection.

MS. HARLOW noted that this site is near a residential area. She thinks the additional wall sign is not necessary. People will not have an issue seeing the gas station.

MR. HORVATH made a motion to approve the variance request for a 17 square foot wall sign on the southern façade of the new Thortons gas station located at 12156 Montgomery Road.

MR. HAVILL seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows: Mr. Fowler – ‘aye’, Mr. Horvath – ‘aye’, Ms. Harlow – ‘nay’, Mr. Havill ‘aye’ and Mr. Wolfe – ‘aye’.

OLD BUSINESS

MR. SNYDER noted that the Board’s denial for the construction of an outdoor fireplace at 11988 Timberlake Drive (BZA 2020-09) was upheld by the Hamilton County Court of Common Pleas.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

MR. FOWLER made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 1, 2021 meeting. MR. HORVATH second the meeting and the roll call vote was as follows: Mr. Fowler – ‘aye’, Mr. Horvath – ‘aye’, Ms. Harlow – ‘aye’, Mr. Havill ‘aye’ and Mr. Wolfe – ‘aye’.

ADJOURNMENT

MR. FOWLER adjourned the meeting at 8:57pm.

Approved:

Byron Fowler, Chairperson

Luanne Felter, Zoning Secretary