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September 27, 2021

Ms. Emily Liu, Director
Louisville Metro Planning & Design Services
444 S. 5th Street, Suite 300
Louisville, KY 40202

RE: Attached signage for the Jewish Community Center

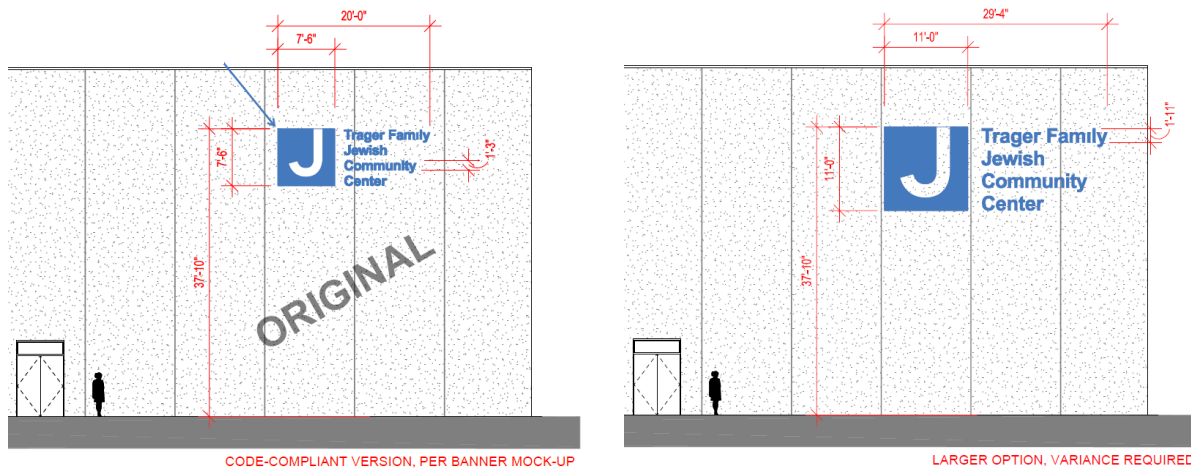
Ms. Liu,

Enclosed please find an application for a variance related to attached signage at the new Jewish Community Center. The development plan for this site was approved in February of 2020 under case number 19-CUP-1056 (with references to 19-CUP-0279). Construction began in August of 2020 and is currently on-going.

Due to its prime location at the rear of the property, the new Jewish Community Center will be visible to traffic on the Watterson Expressway. The prominent rear façade of the gym and aquatic center create a prime location for signage. As a part of the signage design process the contractor created a mock-up of an attached sign that measures 7'6" x 20' or 150 SF which is the maximum permitted by the Land Development Code for an institutional use in the Neighborhood Form District. The photo below was taken from the Watterson Expressway, and as you can see, this sign is unreadable and looks ridiculous on a building of this scale.



Therefore, the applicant is requesting a variance from LDC Table 8.3.2 to allow an 11' x 29'4" or 320 SF attached sign on the south facing façade of the new Jewish Community Center. The proposed sign is comparable to the 300 SF maximum size that would be permitted for a commercial user on this site and equals 2% of the total area of the south façade which measures 15,400 SF. The proposed signage faces the expressway and will not have a negative effect on any surrounding residential uses. The images below are a side-by-side comparison of what is permitted vs what is proposed. Again, the sign on the left is 150 SF and the sign on the right is 320 SF (as measured in a rectangle).



With regard to the specific justification for this request, please note the following:

- 1. Explain how the variance will not adversely affect the public health, safety, or welfare.**
This variance will not affect the public health, safety, or welfare because the proposed sign will be facing the Watterson Expressway, and it will be large enough to be read quickly as a vehicle drives by at expressway speeds. A smaller sign could be a distraction for expressway drivers as they try to read the smaller print.
- 2. Explain how the variance will not alter the essential character of the general vicinity.**
The proposed sign is just over 300 SF. If this property were occupied by a commercial user rather than an institutional user, a 300 SF sign would be permitted. In addition, the Hosparus facility to the west has a large sign facing the expressway. Therefore, this variance will not alter the essential character of the general vicinity.
- 3. Explain how the variance will not cause a hazard or a nuisance to the public.**
This sign will be facing the Watterson Expressway and will not impact any adjoining residential properties. In addition, if this were a commercial user a comparable sign size would be permitted. The larger letter size will also be more readable from the adjacent Watterson Expressway and will not cause a distraction for drivers. Therefore, this variance will not cause a hazard or a nuisance to the public.

4. Explain how the variance will not allow an unreasonable circumvention of the requirements of the zoning regulations.

The applicant put in the work and went through the process to mock-up the permitted sign size prior to asking for this variance and it is obviously not large enough. In addition, the sign is only about 2% of the façade area and if this were a commercial user, a 300 SF sign would be permitted. Therefore, this variance is not an unreasonable circumvention of the requirements of the zoning regulations.

Additional Considerations

1. Explain how the variance arises from special circumstances, which do not generally apply to land in the general vicinity.

This variance arises mostly due to the properties' classification as an institutional use because if it were a commercial use, a larger sign would be permitted. Many institutional uses such as public schools don't rely on advertisement or visibility to attract people. That is not the case for the Jewish Community Center. Although many of their patrons come here because they have friend and family connections, others come because they hear about the quality programs that are offered. This visibility on the Watterson Expressway opens opportunities for the JCC to reach even more people.

2. Explain how the strict application of the provisions of the regulation would deprive the applicant of the reasonable use of the land or would create unnecessary hardship.

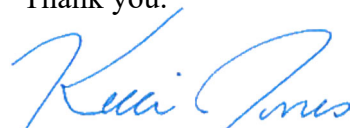
The strict application of the regulations would require the applicant to install a much smaller sign that is not readable from the Watterson Expressway. This would create an unnecessary hardship on the applicant.

3. Are the circumstances the result of actions of the applicant taken subsequent to the adoption of the regulation from which relief is sought?

No. The applicant began with a temporary mock-up of the sign to get a feel for scale and readability. The mock-up made it clear that the permitted signage size is too small so the applicant is requesting this variance prior to installing a permanent sign.

Please schedule this matter for the next available BOZA hearing. Please reach out with any questions. I can be reached at 502-584-621 x 237 and kelli.jones@swlinc.com.

Thank you.


Kelli Jones, RLA