Village Of Homewood
Appearance Commission
August 4, 2016
6:00 p.m.

Village Hall Board Room
2020 Chestnut Road
Homewood, IL 60430

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Wright called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Members Hrymak, Pohrte, Knoeppel, and Chairman Wright were present. Members Hayes and Beele were absent. In attendance from the Village were Director of Economic and Community Development Tom Vander Woude. There were 3 people in the audience.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Chairman Wright asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes for June 2, 2016. There being none, Member Hrymak made a motion to approve the minutes of June 2, 2016 as presented, seconded by Member Knoeppel.

AYES: Members Hrymak, Pohrte, Knoeppel, and Chairman Wright
NAYES: None
ABSTENTIONS: None
ABSENT: Members Hayes and Beele
Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There were no comments from the audience.

AGENDA ITEMS:

Case No. 16-21, 17910 Halstead Street, Ross Dress for Less: Chairman Wright introduced the case and invited Staff Liaison Vander Woude to give a brief overview.

Staff Liaison Vander Woude noted the committee was provided with a request from Ross Dress for Less, 17910 Halsted Street, formally Bed Bath & Beyond. They are requesting two variances: (1) to exceed the permitted square footage of their total signs and (2) to exceed the maximum height of signage. They are requesting 373 sq. ft. of signage. Total permitted per ordinance is 2.5 times the linear width of the façade, which is permitted a total 273 sq. ft. They are asking for an additional 100 sq. ft and also want to install the sign with the top at 32 ft our limit capacity at 30 feet 10 inches. Staff Liaison Vander Woude did note that of the tenants in Washington Park Plaza there is only one other store that has been given the sign variance and that is Best Buy. From the minutes of when the Best Buy variance was approved, the rational being grant was to compensate for the yellow box around the words BEST BUY. The thought was that the letters needed to be a certain size, so that the letters could be visible from the highway and in order to get that size the square yellow box had to exceed the square footage allowed by the ordinance. That is not the case for Dress for Less. Note in the memo provided Staff Liaision Vander Woude is not recommending the approval of this variance.

Chairman Wright asked the audience if there where any representatives from Ross and say your name and who you represent.

Ms. Karen Dodge, representing Ross Inc. gave a background on Ross, Inc. stating that Ross, Inc. is currently expanding into Illinois retail markets, currently operating 56 stores in the state and have proven to be an asset to the community. Ross, Inc. finds that they need to holster their identity by increasing the signage entitlement that is stated by the Village zoning ordinance. Board of agents of Ross Companies are verifying for a variance of Section 86-7 Village Municipal code, requesting an increase in the maximum sign area. Ms. Dodge stated that Homewood code establishes a max sign area of 273.5 sq. feet with a max sign height of 30 sq. ft. The proposal for Ross is 72 inches high and the Dress for Less letters are 31 inches and when encapsulated in an eight-sided figure it is 330.75 sq ft.; however when they box the enter signage totals 468 sq. feet and there is 137 sq. feet of blank space. Ms. Dodge also stated that the sign is proposed to be mounted, but the top of the Ross sign is 30.10 inches above grid and that there are also two small oval pedestrian-oriented wall vets that are 8 sq. ft each, one pedestrian-oriented under canopy sign 4 sq. ft. and four panel changes on two doubled sided ground signs; 75 sq. ft total. Plus the total square foot requested totals 551 sq. ft. Final request for a variance is 554 sq. ft. of signage.

Staff Liaison Vander Woude noted that when the Village calculates the signage the Village would not use a box that was totally drawn around the sign. We would actually just look at Ross and draw a box around Ross and then draw a box around Dress for Less and that is why there is a discrepancy in what Karen stated and what I put in the report. Staff Liaison also states that all the signs are included as part of the variance, so with all the signs added up it is 374 sq. ft.

Ms. Dodge stated that the part of the request for the sign deviation from the sign regulation is that a larger sign will ensure that Ross, Inc and the Village that the business will be seen and therefore will improve the prospects of their success. Because the business may have a long Dress for Less title, Ross feels that the need for a larger comp set is becoming more inclusive and just because Best Buy has a process tag that is their identifier, which hampers their ability to comply with the sign code due to boxing in that element the text sign of the lettering we are proposing to be similar to Petco and Best Buy. We are hampered by having to block for Dress for Less which drastically increases the square footage. Ms. Dodge also stated that the Ross Dress for Less is their trademark and that it is not just a tag line.

Number two; the Plight of the Owner, due to unique circumstances. In Ross' case the store is set back from Halsted Street is about 400 ft. this unique condition should be taken into account when considering result in size and proportion of the primary sign. Ross feels that when the required 273.5 sq. ft. maximum Ross Dress for Less sign when viewed from such a distance will look disproportionately small compared to stores that are directly front of Halsted Street.

Number three; Request of Relief of Alternative of Central Character, central character of Washington Park. What Ross is proposing is not inconsistence with the appearance or proposes will not alter the central character. Within this plaza Best Buy was granted a variance for 554 sq. ft of signage, in addition Best Buy is set back about 200 ft. where Ross is set back double that distance.

Kate Pulido District Manager, representing Ross Dress for Less, states that bringing about 50 part time jobs. One thing about Ross is that a lot of people think that retail is about a lot of dead and low paying jobs; however, what Ross brings to the committee is long term career potential with the potential to go from part time retail, to ASM to manager and beyond. We will be able to help people

in the committee who may not have higher education really be successful. We are relatively new to Illinois, since 2011 so having this sign will help with brand recognition.

Member Hrymak states that he went on the internet and found that a variety of images the sign looks different. One in particular is the Dress for Less shortens to point that it is almost directly under Ross and I know there is two type of signs, one in particular, which has the blue back round with white lettering and even the main façade that some stores have that are much smaller, Ross has accommodated for that.

Kate states that signage that is below The Ross word is our older stores, so all of the new prototypes have Dress for Less on the side.

Chairman Wright stated that from his perspective the calculations where obtained for all the other tenants in the plaza and all of them came in below their signage is allowed.

Chairman Wright asked if there were any other signs in the plaza that have old entrance logos. Staff Liaison Vander Woude stated that he was not aware of any old logos.

Chairman Wright added that part of the way to eliminate some of the footage is to get rid of the oval entrance. Chairman Wright understands that the Ross letters are fine, but the Dress for Less letters need to be smaller and that if your name is Ross, then you know what Ross is. The letters do not need to be as big as they are in the picture and suggests that if the letters are smaller and the entrance sign is eliminated than it might be enough to get to the required amount.

Member Pohrte states that she agrees with everyone, but does not agree with the 10 inches. Member Pohrte does not know if it is worth it to go for a variance and that there is not a big difference the 10" to the point where no one will even notice the difference. Pedestrian signs are really not needed and most people do not walk the sidewalks, because they know where they want to go. There is no chance that Ross will not lose business if the signs do not go up.

Staff Liaison Vander Woude pointed out in the spreadsheet that the proposed Ross word is exactly the same size as the entire Bed, Bath & Beyond sign that used to be there, which measured 144 sq. ft.

Ms. Davis stated that she spoke with Ross and they can remove the plaques and the pylon signs equal 20 sq. ft. and the under canopy can be removed. The new logo needs to be proportionate. She also stated that Ross would like to have the sign as large as possible.

Chairman Wright advised that maybe it would be better to come back with something for next meeting, instead of taking a vote.

Ms. Davis asked if there are any suggestions with what to do if Ross discounted the pylon signs.

Member Knoeppel responded that no one has objection to the pylon signs because those are standard slots in the signs. The objection that the Committee has is the size of Ross, most particularly Dress for Less, which is what is putting Ross over the top and Dress for Less from each side of the central pilaster area and if Ross proportionately reduce the full sign.

Staff Liaison Vander Woude states that if Ross removed the wall plaques and the under canvas sign, then it would cut 20 sq. ft. and it would reduce the wall sign by 80 sq. ft.

Chairman Wright stated the optimal success would come from being as close, if not, at the signage requirement that is set forth by the Village.

Staff Liaison Vander Woude stated that his recommendations are based on the entire Washington Park Plaza and every other store in the plaza, with the exception of Best Buy has been able to install signs that leave square footage on the table.

Member Pohrte suggested that Ross bring with them, to the next meeting, a drawing of the façade that includes all the stores and the Ross sign, in order to compare signage size. What you want and what it looks like when it meets the requirements.

A motion was made by Member Hrymak to continue the conversation to the next meeting. Seconded by Member Knoeppel.

AYES: Members Hrymak, Pohrte, Knoeppel, and Chairman Wright
NAYES: None
ABSTENTIONS: None
ABSENT: Members Hayes and Beele
Motion passed unanimously.

Case No. 16-27, 17725 Halsted Street – Visionworks:

Staff Liaison Vander Woude gave a brief overview stating that this was another variance for signage and provided the calculations, as well as, rendering of the signs. Not a whole lot to say other than they have three visible signs since the building is in the out lot and they would like to have centrally normal sized signs on all three signs, similar to what was done with Mattress Firm next door. The total request is 244 sq. ft.; however, 90 sq. ft. are permitted. This creates a difference of 154 sq. ft.and would keep with what was granted with the other unit.

Mr. Fred Esparza, representing Visionworks stated that in the packet there are some drawings that the total sq ft. totals 234 sq. ft with 78 sq. ft per sign.

Staff Liaison Vander Woude noted that the monument sign was the reason that the sq. ft. was higher than requested it all totals together.

Mr. Esparza stated that their case is that the location had three sides of the building; Halsted St., one facing the mall, and north. They are requesting to use all three sides, because they would like for people to know that there is a Visionworks there. Mr. Esparza pointed out in the photos that a variance was granted to Mattress Firm and we would like to stay consistent with that. The total signage for each of the signs is 78 sq. ft., which we are allowed 90 sq. ft. for the linear frontage with the ordinances it doesn't say what each side is allowed and would like to be granted the ability to use all three sides.

Chairman Wright questioned the total sq. ft. of Mattress Firm. Staff Liaison Vander Woude responded with the total sq. ft of the signage at 300 sq. ft. and that he total permitted is 167 sq. ft., concluding that Mattress Firm exceeded the ordinance by 133 sq. ft.

Member Hrymak asked if there is anyway that we can make these signs a little smaller. In response to questioning from Hrymak, Mr. Esperza stated that they could make them smaller, but they are actually smaller than what the ordinance allows; 12 sq. ft. smaller.

Staff Liaison Vander Woude stated that Mattress Firm does not have the same size sign on each side and the largest sign is on the west side facing Halsted and their smaller sizes are on the other two elevations.

In response to Staff Liaison Vander Woude, Mr. Esperza noted that they could make them smaller, but when they sized them they did not take the code into consideration.

Member Knoeppel noted that the sign on Halsted is probably the one that needs to remain the largest and the signs leading up to the door can be smaller.

Mr. Esperza stated that the reason for the variance is that there is three sides that Visionworks would like to use and if the Committee could adjust the code to where companies can get 90 sq. ft. per side this would well fit in that ordinance.

Staff Liaison Vander Woude noted that the code permitted additional signage for multiple frontages on a public road, but in this case there is only one frontage on a public road, which is Halsted.

A motion was made by Member Hrymak to grant approval of Case 16-27, would grant the sign variance to Visionworks, exceeding the total amount permitted to signage at 17725 Halstead Street. This motion dies, due to lack of second vote.

Chairman Wright asked if there were any objections to the signs on the side and there were no objections. Chairman Wright then asked if there were any objections to the signage on the west side; there were no objections.

Staff Liaison Vander Woude stated that from his standpoint he would not suggest to reduce the signs to 32 sq. ft. and that he was not sure of the rationale behind trying for 32 sq. ft. The goal is to keep it proportional in same way, whether or not it is proportionate to the canopies.

Mr. Espenza stated that there was a concern with the letters being too small, especially the lower case letters that make up the majority of the sign. Staff Liaison Vander Woude responded by stating that the word would be boxed together; however, it is not that which is putting the sign over the ordinance.

Chairman Wright stated that perhaps there is a consensus and if the design is provided with renderings and deemed acceptable to the Committee and staff then they can approve it with the Committee's consensus tonight or the plans can be brought back to another meeting.

Staff Liaison Vander Woude responded by stating that the problem with that is a variance requires a Village Board approval, so actually documentation would be needed within the minutes and an action.

A motion was made by Member Hrymak to approve the plan with one size of the side that was submitted and two at 75% of the two sides of the size submitted right now and if the Village later feels that if not appropriate, once receiving the details, they can go ahead and proceed based on that variance. Seconded by Knoeppel

AYES: Members Hrymak, Pohrte, Knoeppel, and Chairman Wright
NAYES: None
ABSTENTIONS: None
ABSENT: Members Hayes and Beele
Motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS: There was no new business discussed.

OLD BUSINESS: There was no old business discussed.

A motion was made by Member Hrymak to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m. Seconded by Member Knoeppel. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Vander Woude
Staff Liaison