

BLUE ASH BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

August 10, 2020

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ITEM 1. – Meeting Called to Order and Roll Call

Chair Brian Gath called the regular meeting of the Board of Zoning Appeals to order at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, August 10, 2020 and requested a roll call.

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Cordell, Bruce Crutcher, Brian Gath, and Zeeshan Pasha

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Joe Hoelker and Jeff Uckotter

ALSO PRESENT: Community Development Assistant Paul Kleier, Council members PJ Jhaveri, Joe Leet, and Katie Schneider, and interested citizens

ITEM 2. – Approval of Minutes

The Board waived the reading and approved the minutes of the Board of Zoning Appeals regular meeting of July 13, 2020.

Chair Gath swore in all those in attendance wishing to testify for any of the agenda items.

ITEM 3. – New Hearings

a) 9290 Kenwood Road – Catch-A-Fire Pizza

Appeal to allow two additional wall signs on a commercial building that exceed 30 inches in height

Jeff Ledford, co-owner of Catch-A-Fire Pizza, described the decision to locate in Blue Ash, the process of preparing the property and building, and the branding reasons for their variance appeal.

Paul Kleier explained that the appeal is needed because two signs already exist on the structure so both additional signs need a variance. Both signs would also exceed the maximum height of 30 inches. He also described the location, appearance, dimensions, and illumination of the signs. Brian Gath asked about a maximum total width of signs on a building and Paul Kleier clarified that the limit of a sign is 60% of the building width.

Mike Meyer, Ray Meyer Sign, explained the existing wall and ground signs on the property. He believes the proposed logo sign for the front of the building is an extension of the existing “Catch-A-Fire Pizza” sign. He showed a smaller-scale model of the logo sign to the Board. He also explained the unique layout of the restaurant with the entrance in the rear necessitating signage on the rear. This sign would not be illuminated internally, but an existing wall sconce above the proposed location would provide illumination. In response to questions from Brian Gath about the feasibility of shrinking the signs, Mr. Meyer expressed that 30 inches would be too restrictive, but he would be open to a compromise. Jeff Ledford confirmed that he was aware of the lot characteristics when he purchased it. John Cordell expressed and the Board agreed the renovation and signs are first-class.

There were no public comments.

Bruce Crutcher said that due to the unique layout of the property and building the Board owed some flexibility to the appellant. Brian Gath suggested a height cap on the text of the rear sign (“Sign B”) of 30 inches with a proportional decrease in the logo. Brian Gath asked about limitations on temporary signs and suggested a restriction on such signs for the front of the building. Bruce Crutcher expressed hesitation to establish a precedent. At the Board’s invitation, Mike Meyer agreed to the proposal for the rear sign and proposed a revised height of 40 inches for the front sign (“Sign A”).

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DECISION: Bruce Crutcher moved, John Cordell seconded to approve the appeal at 9290 Kenwood Road with the conditions that the logo sign on the front of the building be restricted to 40 inches in height, the text on the rear of the building be restricted to 30 inches in height with a proportional decrease in the height of the logo, and a prohibition on any temporary signs on the front of the building. Chair Gath stated there was a motion on the table. For the record, this decision is based on a finding by each member, and the Board as a body, that the application does, or does not, satisfy the factors in Section 1127.07(a)(4) subsections “A” through “J”. Based on the evidence provided, these factors determine if the variance complies with the purpose and intent of this Zoning Code and determine whether literal enforcement of this Zoning Code would result in practical difficulty. These criteria are listed in the Staff Report. As there were no comments or additional discussion, Chair Gath called for a vote. A roll call vote was taken. All members present voted aye. Motion carried to approve.

b) 13 Trailbridge Drive – Sara & Ian Rosenthal
Appeal to allow a reduced front yard setback

Paul Kleier explained the restrictions on setbacks in the R-1 district, the proposed project, and the need for the variance. He confirmed that the front setbacks of neighboring properties on that side of the road are pretty uniform.

Sara Rosenthal explained request to put a roof over their porch to protect the door from the elements and provide appealing architecture. Brian Gath asked about the proposed metal roof compared to the shingle roofing of the house and Ms. Rosenthal expressed a desire for the roof to stand out. In response to questions from Bruce Crutcher she said they are considering a change to porch lighting and they will be hiring a contractor to carry out the work. In response to questions from Brian Gath she said it would not be practical or effective to move the house or build a smaller roof.

There were no public comments.

Brian Gath said he believes the appeal is minimal and the Board agreed.

DECISION: John Cordell moved, Bruce Crutcher seconded to approve the appeal at 13 Trailbridge Drive with the condition that the metal roof be painted black. Chair Gath stated there was a motion on the table. For the record, this decision is based on a finding by each member, and the Board as a body, that the application does, or does not, satisfy the factors in Section 1127.07(a)(4) subsections “A” through “J”. Based on the evidence provided, these factors determine if the variance complies with the purpose and intent of this Zoning Code and determine whether literal enforcement of this Zoning Code would result in practical difficulty. These criteria are listed in the Staff Report. As there were no comments or additional discussion, Chair Gath called for a vote. A roll call vote was taken. All members present voted aye. Motion carried to approve.

ITEM 4. – Continued Hearings

None

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ITEM 5. – Miscellaneous Business

None

ITEM 6. – Adjournment

DECISION: There being no further business Bruce Crutcher moved, John Cordell seconded to adjourn the Board of Zoning Appeals. A voice vote was taken. All members present voted aye. The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Bruce Crutcher, Secretary

MINUTES RECORDED BY:

Traci Smith