

Approved

**Village of Gurnee**  
**Planning and Zoning Board Minutes**  
**October 16, 2019**

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

Planning and Zoning Board Members Present: Chairman James Sula, Tim Garrity, David Nordentoft, Edwin Paff, Josh Pejsach, \*Brian Baugh

\* Mr. Baugh arrived at 7:32 p.m.

Planning and Zoning Members Absent: Laura Reilly

Other Officials Present: Tracy Velkover, Planning Manager; Clara Gable, Associate Planner; and Bryan Winter, Village Attorney

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

**3. Approval of PZB Meeting Minutes**

**a. August 7, 2019 PZB Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Garrity motioned, seconded by Mr. Pejsach, to approve the August 7, 2019 meeting minutes.

Voice vote:

All "Ayes," no "Nays," none abstaining

Motion carried: 5-0-0

**b. August 21, 2019 PZB Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Nordentoft motioned, seconded by Mr. Garrity, to approve the August 21, 2019 meeting minutes.

Voice vote:

All "Ayes," no "Nays," none abstaining

Motion carried: 5-0-0

**c. September 4, 2019 PZB Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Paff motioned, seconded by Mr. Pejsach, to approve the September 4, 2019 meeting minutes.

Voice vote:

All "Ayes," no "Nays," none abstaining

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Motion carried: 6-0-0

#### **4. Minor Sign Exception petition by Mustafa Abdalla for 3545-3575 Route 132**

*Mustafa Abdalla is requesting the following Minor Sign Exceptions associated with a new ground sign for 3545-3575 Route 132: 1) Minor Sign Exception to allow a ground sign to exceed the allowable height by 25%; 2) Minor Sign Exception to allow the size of a ground sign to exceed the allowable size by 24.4%; 3) Minor Sign Exception to allow the number of tenant panels for a multi-tenant ground sign to be increased from 4 to 8; 4) Minor Sign Exception to allow a multitenant ground sign to have less than the required 40% of sign area dedicated to the name and address of the shopping center (32%); and 5) Minor Sign Exception to allow a 6 foot setback from the Grand Avenue property line versus the required 10 foot setback*

Ms. Gable stated that Mustafa Abdalla is requesting the following Minor Sign Exceptions associated with a new ground sign for 3545-3575 Route 132: 1) A ground sign to exceed the allowable height by 25%; 2) A ground sign to exceed the allowable size by 24.4%; 3) Increase the number of tenant panels for a multi-tenant ground sign from 4 to 8; 4) Allow a multi-tenant ground sign to have less than the required 40% of sign area dedicated to the name and address of the shopping center (proposed at 32%); and 5) Allow a 6-foot setback from the Grand Avenue property line versus the required 10-foot setback. As part of this request, Mr. Abdalla has committed to taking down the two existing pole signs on the property. The proposed sign is a screened box sign with recessed letters. Per the sign code, this type of commercial ground sign is allowed to be 12 feet in height and 90 sq. ft. in size. The applicant is requesting a sign that is 15 feet tall and 112 sq. ft. in size. A Minor Sign Exception can be granted by the Planning & Zoning Board if they find that the number, size, design, and placement of all proposed signs within the development are consistent with the stated purpose of the sign regulations. The Planning & Zoning Board has the final decision making authority in this matter. The petitioner is in attendance to present their request and answer any questions the Board may have.

Mr. Sula asked the Petitioner is there was anything else he wished to add.

Mr. Abdalla, owner of the property, explained that he is simply hoping to increase the visibility of his tenants' businesses and the services they offer. He stressed the importance of revitalizing the east side of Gurnee, as it has suffered from the disruption in traffic during the reconstruction of the nearby Route 41 bridge. The exceptions he is asking for are to place as many of the major tenants on the sign as possible (along with the name and address of the development) while providing visibility from all directions of traffic.

Mr. Paff asked if the address is supposed to be on the top or bottom of the sign.

Ms. Velkover responded that the ordinance doesn't specify location, only that the address number be located on the sign.

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Mr. Nordentoft acknowledged the efforts of the proposal, and stressed that what is being asked for are understandable, expected, and will aid businesses in the area that have been struggling.

Mr. Garrity and Mr. Sula agreed with Mr. Nordentoft, noting the potential benefits of the proportionately minimal requested exceptions.

Mr. Sula reminded that the Board has decision making authority on Minor Sign Exception requests.

Mr. Garrity motioned, seconded by Mr. Pejsach, to approve the petition of Mustafa Abdalla for the following: 1) Minor Sign Exception to allow a ground sign to exceed the allowable height by 25%; 2) Minor Sign Exception to allow the size of a ground sign to exceed the allowable size by 24.4%; 3) Minor Sign Exception to allow the number of tenant panels for a multi-tenant ground sign to be increased from 4 to 8 per face; 4) Minor Sign Exception to allow a multi-tenant ground sign to have less than the required 40% of sign area dedicated to the name and address of the shopping center (32%); and 5) Minor Sign Exception to allow a ground sign to be setback 6 feet from the Grand Avenue property line.

Mr. Sula asked if there was any discussion on the motion. As there was not, a vote was taken.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Garrity, Nordentoft, Paff, Pejsach, Baugh, and Sula

Nays: None

Motion Approved: 6-0-0

**5. Public Hearing: Special Use Permit petition by Henry Klover of Klover Architects on behalf of Helzberg Diamonds (6557 Route 132, Suite 200)**

**6. Minor Sign Exception petition by Henry Klover of Klover Architects on behalf of Helzberg Diamonds (6557 Route 132, Suite 200)**

Mr. Sula asked that item number 5 and 6 on the agenda be introduced and discussed together, but voted on separately.

With regard to the Public Hearing, he asked that anyone wishing to speak on the matter be sworn in. Mr. Winter conducted the swearing-in.

Ms. Gable stated that Henry Klover of Klover Architects, on behalf of Helzberg Diamonds, has requested Special Use Permits for 1) two additional wall signs; and 2) a wall sign on the north elevation that exceeds the size allowed by the sign ordinance for 6557 Route 132, Suite 200. This site is completely surrounded by commercially-zoned property. Based on the tenant's frontage and the proposed signage type (internally illuminated and pin-mounted), the tenant is allowed two wall signs, 56 sq. ft. and 125 sq. ft. in size, per the sign code. Three of the proposed wall signs

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that are located on the north, west, and south walls are 62 sq. ft. in size (this includes the burgundy metal backer panel that will stand off the building wall by approximately 1.5 inches so that concealed tape lighting can be placed behind the panel to create a halo effect). Without the backer panel, the three signs would be approximately 40 sq. ft. each in size. The fourth wall sign, a back-lit metal facet panel sign, is located on the corner of the north and west walls and is 162 sq. ft. in size. As with all Special Use petitions, the Planning and Zoning Board will make a recommendation that will be forwarded to the Village Board for their determination. The petitioner was in attendance to present their request and answer any questions the board may have. In regards to the Minor Sign Exception, the request is to allow a wall sign on the south wall to be located on a wall not associated directly with the tenant space. The south wall of the Helzberg's tenant space is adjacent to the recessed loading area. The applicant is seeking to locate a sign on this wall to west of the McAlister's Deli sign because a sign directly south of the Helzberg tenant space would not be visible from Hunt Club Road. A Minor Sign Exception can be granted by the Planning & Zoning Board if they find that the number, size, design, and placement of all proposed signs within the development are consistent with the stated purpose of the sign regulations. The Planning & Zoning Board has the final decision making authority in this matter. The petitioner is in attendance to present their requests and answer any questions the Board may have.

Mr. Klover, architect of the project, introduced Ms. Parke Wellman, with Helzberg Diamonds, then began a presentation on their proposal. He explained that the building, built in 1994, and—with himself serving as its architect—is 25 years old. He went on to explain that Helzberg Diamonds is updating all its stores in the Chicagoland area, and that this store is among the first to undergo this update. He explained that these new updates will be undertaken with the changes in the land upon which the development is placed (maturity of trees, fellow tenants, etc.) and that they complement such changes. Noting that a genuine investment is being made to update the stores, he elaborated on the quality of lighting that will be used to illuminate the store and the signage that will identify it in an effort to create a new image for the brand.

Mr. Garrity clarified with Mr. Klover that the paneling used in the design will be lit from behind.

Mr. Sula clarified with Ms. Gable that the metal facet panel is considered a sign, as determined by the Zoning Administrator (Mr. Ziegler) and thus, requires a SUP because of the repetitive pattern of diamonds in the metal panel, which is a product sold at the facility and because it is back-lit.

The Board members discussed whether the metal facet panel is a sign or an architectural feature.

Mr. Klover indicated that some communities view the panel as signage, while others (majority) view it as an architectural feature. He added that this is part of the store's new branding.

Mr. Paff stated that he felt the façade design was a definite upgrade, and described it as "classy." He asked what would happen if Sprint, which is between McAllister's Deli and Helzberg's wanted a sign on the back wall (south).

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Ms. Velkover stated that Sprint doesn't have frontage on the south wall. The division of the interior of the building is unique and Sprint's storefront ends prior to the north wall. However, she noted that the tenant could, with the property owner's approval, petition for a Special Use Permit and Minor Sign Exception to allow a wall on the south wall. She noted that there is room on the south wall for other tenants' signs east of the McAllister's Deli sign.

Mr. Sula suggested that such a matter is really between landlord and tenant. Mr. Paff agreed.

Mr. Sula opened the floor to the public for the public hearing items. As there was no one from the public who wanted to make comments, he closed the floor.

Mr. Pejsach clarified with Ms. Gable exactly how many signs are requested, and the amount square footage of these signs. He also asked to what extent the amount of square footage is in excess of what would be allowed. While acknowledging the need for signage, he expressed concern over allowing the amount of signage being requested for this proposal.

Ms. Velkover noted that the ordinance allows the building 2 wall signs and 4 signs are requested (the metal facet sign that wraps around the north and west sides of the building is considered one wall sign). As for the additional square footage, she noted that based on the size allowed for a raceway mounted channel letter sign and a distinctive materials/design sign (the metal facet sign is a distinctive materials/design sign and would be allowed to be 175 sq. ft. in size), the tenant would be allowed a total of 231 sq. ft. of signage. The proposal is for 348 sq. ft. of signage. She noted that, as some Board members were struggling with whether to treat the metal facet panel as a sign, the total square footage of signs for the site would drop to 186 sq. ft. if the metal facet panel as not viewed as a sign.

Mr. Paff asked if signs with such features as those on, for instance, Best Buy would be counted as a sign (specifically the blue feature to the side and top of the storefront).

Ms. Velkover stated that discussion regarding how to view these types of building features was held at the time the Village updated the Sign Ordinance. In the instance of Best Buy, the blue bands were not viewed as signage as it is not illuminated and does not relay any product information sold by the business. She noted that if this is something that the Board would like to revisit we could. She cautioned that staff is hesitant to be too restrictive on these matters as it can stymie creativity for businesses exterior façades.

Mr. Sula gave the example of the Target logo, and how it would be considered in such a decision. Also, Mr. Winter advised that, even though the interpretation about whether the feature is a sign or not is made by the Zoning Administrator, it is a decision ultimately made by the Board, not staff.

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Mr. Garrity expressed concern over the size of the sign in the rear of the building, especially after an exception for such a sign was made for McAllister's Deli. He suggested that it might be best for the sign in the rear of the building to match the size of McAllister's.

Mr. Paff noted that the size of the sign is larger simply because of the added back-lit paneling to achieve the halo effect. He noted that otherwise, the lettering in the sign is very close to the size of the McAllister's Deli sign. He felt that the back-lit panel creates higher quality sign.

Mr. Sula clarified with Mr. Garrity that he would asked for the sign in the rear of the building be in scale to the size of the sign for McAllister's in the rear of the building.

Ms. Velkover reminded them both that the sign for McAllister's is a different type of sign, and that allowing the same amount of square footage may not actually result in the same size of sign.

Ms. Wellman stressed the importance of the sign in in the rear of the building, as it would face the point of entrance to the shopping center that is primarily used. She noted that this entrance, from Hunt Club Road, is the main entrance for the center. The building's orientation, with the back facing this entrance drive, and Helzberg's location on the west end of the building, results in the tenant only having sign visibility for vehicles traveling south on Hunt Club. Even then, with the number of trees between the storefront and the road that sign's visibility is limited. She further stressed that this sign is so important to Helzberg's that it is a requirement of their signing an extension to their lease for this location. She noted that the increased sign quality, the back-lit panel, is propose in an effort to update the store's look while keeping it in the same location and "cementing" its presence there.

Mr. Sula pointed out the uniqueness of the building's location, and that—in all actuality—it is the rear of the building that faces a major access point to the shopping area.

Ms. Wellman, when discussing the possibility of scaling the rear sign to that of McAllister's rear sign, noted that the differences between the signs is the halo lit background panel only and not the internally illuminated channel letter sign.

Mr. Pejsach asked if granting these requests would lead to other such requests, and expressed concern over an excessive amount of signage being allowed.

Mr. Sula responded that such speculation is not the Board's to make.

Ms. Velkover provided some history on the building/site and signage. She noted that it was originally constructed as a single tenant building (Crown Bookstore) that was approved, via the PUD agreement, for 2 wall signs of 60 sq. ft. each. The building was then converted to a 2 unit building and signage was modified to allow each tenant one 60 sq. ft. wall sign. Then the building was converted to a 4 tenant building. Every time tenant space was further subdivided, the original PUD's sign standards were amended to try to accommodate the additional tenants. She also noted that the building, if it was constructed today, knowing the rules regarding how a

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building/tenant is allowed signage, the building probably would probably have been constructed with windows on the south wall in order to be allowed signs on the south wall by right. The only thing keeping this tenants in this building from being able to have wall signs by right is the lack of windows on this south wall.

Mr. Paff remarked that he felt the building looks better with the signage in the back. This was the consensus of the Board.

Mr. Sula stated that the two separate items regarding this petitioner should have separate motions, as one is a request for a Special Use Permit that the PZB has only advisory authority over, while the other is for a Minor Exception, which the Board has decision making authority over.

Mr. Garrity motioned, seconded by Mr. Baugh, to forward a favorable recommendation on the petition of Henry Klover of Klover Architects, on behalf of Helzberg Diamonds, for Special Use Permits for the following: 1) two additional wall signs, including a distinctive materials/design sign that is located on the north wall and wraps around onto the west wall that is no larger than 162 sq. ft. in size; and 2) a wall sign on the north elevation that exceeds the size allowed by the sign ordinance, in substantial conformance with the wall sign plans dated 8-21-2019.

Mr. Sula asked if there was any discussion on the motion. As there was not, a vote was taken.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Garrity, Nordentoft, Paff, Pejsach, Baugh, and Sula

Nays: None

Motion Approved: 6-0-0

Mr. Nordentoft motioned, seconded by Mr. Garrity, to approve the petition of Henry Klover of Klover Architects, on behalf of Helzberg Diamonds, for a Minor Sign Exception to allow a wall sign on the south wall to be located on a wall not associated directly with the tenant space.

Mr. Sula asked if there was any discussion on the motion. As there was not, a vote was taken.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Garrity, Nordentoft, Paff, Baugh, and Sula

Nays: Pejsach

Motion Approved: 5-1-0

## **7. Next Meeting Date: November 6, 2019**

Ms. Velkover stated that there was a good possibility that the PZB would have a public hearing item for this meeting.

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## **8. Public Comment**

Mr. Sula stated that staff put together an update of matters recently reviewed by the PZB. He asked if there were any questions regarding these items. There were none, but a question was asked about the status of the breakfast place that requested a Minor PUD Amendment before the Board for the former Krispy Kreme site.

Ms. Velkover stated that staff has reached out to the petitioner periodically and that they assure the Village that the project is still going forward.

Mr. Garrity noted that the applicant presented a proposed menu for the facility at a recent Chamber meeting.

There were no public comments at this meeting

## **9. Adjournment**

Mr. Nordentoft motioned, seconded by Mr. Pejsach, to adjourn the meeting.

Voice vote:

All "Ayes," no "Nays," none abstaining

Motion carried: 6-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joann Metzger,  
Recording Secretary, Planning and Zoning Board