

GORDIE BOUCHER SHOWROOM AND SIGN

To: Thiensville Plan Commission

Prepared by: Jonathan Censky, Planner

Date: February 4, 2020

Item No. III. B. and C.

General Information

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Applicant: | Gordie Boucher Ford Dealership |
| Status of Applicant: | Owner |
| Requested Action: | Building Renovation and Sign Code Waiver/Plan Approval |
| Existing Zoning: | B-4, Highway Business District |
| Proposed Zoning: | No Change |
| Location: | 101 N. Main Street |
| Land Use Plan Designation: | Business |
| Existing Land Use: | Automobile Dealership |

Proposal:

Gordie Boucher is proposing to update, renovate and, to some degree restore, the historic corner building on their site and convert it into a separate showroom for automobile sales. While this building is part of the Boucher complex of buildings, it stands alone on a parcel by itself. This building is classified as legal nonconforming due to setback, however, the proposed changes are permitted by law.

As part of this restoration, the first floor will be lowered to align with the elevation of the asphalt parking lot to the north. The realignment of the first floor will impact the dimensions of the ground floor windows and doorway on the east and south building elevations and those will be replaced with new black aluminum storefront windows with low-E clear glaze glass. The existing pedestrian door on this side will be removed and replaced with same type of black aluminum store front window. The plan also shows the introduction of a new store front window directly west of the existing one on the south façade. All other first and second floor windows on the building will be replaced with double-hung blue aluminum-clad wood windows and those on the north building extension will be prepared to be painted blue to match the new windows.

As part of this project, the applicant is proposing to install two new business identification signs; one on the east side and another on the south to go along with the exiting one on the north elevation. According to the Sign Code, **one wall sign is allowed but shall not to exceed 0.5 feet in area for every one linear foot of building front width or 60 square feet, whichever is smaller. Internally lit**

signs shall be constructed with an opaque surface to allow light to only project through cut-out letters or logos. Directional signs are exempt but cannot exceed 6 square feet each. I would note that the existing one on the north building wall is 28 square feet in size and exceeds the maximum allowed by Code, but that sign received a waiver from this Commission at your August 2016 meeting. The proposed sign above the new storefront windows on the east elevation is to be 37 square feet in size and that exceeds the maximum permitted by 22 square feet. The proposed sign on the south facade is code compliant for size but it exceeds the number of signs allowed by code as buildings in the Historic District are limited to one sign. Staff notes that corner buildings in other districts are permitted one sign per façade facing a public street and a waiver is reasonable.

Accordingly, since the applicant is proposing two signs on this building that exceeds the maximum permitted, the applicant is requesting a Sign Code waiver. **Section 16.24 - Variances, does provide the Plan Commission permission to consider such a waiver if, in your judgment, a waiver or modification to the provisions of this chapter would further the public interests.**

Planner's Comments:

When considering a Sign Code waiver of this nature the applicant must provide justification that the waiver is critical to further the public interest. With all the existing signs currently on display at this site, this Planner feels that the site is more than adequately identified and therefore my recommendation is that the new sign on the east elevation be reduced to no larger than 15 square feet in size. Staff has no objection to allowing the proposed sign on the south façade by waiver.

With regards to the building renovation, staff has no objection recommends approval.