

Minutes of Meeting

Planning Commission

Monday, January 13, 2025 at 5:00pm

Members Present: Coyne, Allen, DeMarco, Bishop

Presence Noted: Pamela Bobst, Mayor

Kathryn Kerber, Director of Planning and Community Development

Ray Reich, Building Commissioner

Jane Reich, Member Engagement Manager

Chairman Bishop called to order the January 13, 2025, meeting of the Rocky River Planning Commission at 5:00pm in City Council Chambers of Rocky River City Hall.

Mayor Bobst administered the Oath of the Commission for New Terms as Members of the City of Rocky River Planning Commission to Mr. Bishop and Mr. Coyne.

Mr. Bishop asked for any reviews of the minutes from the previous November 20, 2024, meeting. Mr. DeMarco asked the secretary to amend the first item of the very last paragraph of granting the motion and suggested a revision to say, 'subject to'. Mr. Demarco made a motion to grant approval of the previous minutes, with one revision. Mr. Allen seconded.

4 Ayes – 0 Nays
Passed

1. THE BANK – 20000 Detroit Road -MODIFICATION OF A PREVIOUS APPROVAL.
Development plan for additional ground signage. Owner, Haley Delzani, came forward to discuss modifications of signage.

Mr. Bishop began my saying that when they previously spoke with Ms. Delzani that there was not much retail at the store location. There is now retail at The Bank location and the new sign is to accommodate the new retail. Mr. Bishop wanted to clear up and sort out if the new retail has any effect on the number of current parking spots. He asked Ms. Delzani to clear up which areas were being used for retail. Ms. Delzani stated that Suites 1 & 2 were being used for retail. They are both 10' x 10'. They are styling rooms. They eliminated two styling rooms and now have less stations. Ms. Delzani stated they went trade for trade, and now that the rooms were for retail, they need less room for parking than when they needed the space for a stylist. Mr. Bishop confirmed that 2 spots were needed per station for the stylist, but 3 per 1,000 sq. ft for retail. Ms. Delzani stated they had a variance for 1 spot and currently have 18 spots. Mr. Bishop stated that even though they currently had the variance and 18 spots, that it wasn't needed for the retail.

Mr. Bishop said that needed to discuss the location of the new retail signage. The code states that the sign needs to be 5' from the right of way. It looks like the sign proposal is sitting in the right of way. Ms. Delzani asked for clarification on what the commission calls the right of way. Mr. Bishop explained that it is 1' behind the sidewalk and measures 5' feet. Ms. Delzani asked for

clarification if this meant the area behind the concrete sidewalk and then the brick and then their mulch. Discussion continued about where the sign could be located based off the survey provided by Ms. Delzani. Mr. DeMarco stated that it could not be assumed that the edge of the brick is the property line, and the survey would support that. Ms. Delzani stated there are stakes up along the property to show the property lines. Mr. Bishop stated that the sign was still located in the 5' right of way set back regardless of the signpost being placed on the curb line.

Mr. Bishop continued to discuss that sign overhang was still in the 5' right of way rule. A suggestion was made to put the sign in the southeastern corner. Discussion continued with Ms. Delzani to clarify the 5' right of way rule and how the proposed sign location was encroaching on that area. Ms. Delzani's proposed sign is 1' into the right of way.

Ms. Delzani mentioned a neighboring sign is in the right of way. The commission stated the sign could have been put up prior to when the current code took effect and that they must follow what the current code reads. Ms. Delzani also stated that there were trees that would block the view of the sign if it was placed in the southeastern corner of the property.

Mr. Bishop suggested placing the sign on Smith Ct. in the corner in the mini-island portion of the property. Ms. Delzani said there was a large pole that would obstruct the view. Mr. Bishop clarified the reasoning for the 5' code was so patrons walking, running or biking on the sidewalk did not get in the way of the sign. The code language has been the same since 2010. Ms. Delzani asked if there was a differentiation between the sidewalk and the brick. Mr. DeMarco said yes. Mr. Bishop said it is 5' behind Ms. Delzani's property line.

Mr. Bishop, Mr. DeMarco and Ms. Delzani discussed and reconfirmed the location of 18 spaces on her property.

Mr. Bishop and Mr. DeMarco reconfirmed that the variance proposed by Ms. Delzani would be for the entire sign, not just 1' of the sign. This is a free-standing sign that is proposed. Mr. DeMarco stated that the concern is the projection of the proposed sign, not the signpost. Mr. Bishop suggested turning the sign, but Ms. Delzani said that no one would see the sign if it was turned.

Ms. Delzani asked for additional clarification on what the brick is and its approximation to the sign. Mr. Allen clarified not to count the brick as part of the 5' variance. The 5' starts 1' north of the brick. That is where Ms. Delzani's property starts. Five (5) foot north of that location is where the sign could start. Mr. Bishop clarified that the code is in place to protect patrons on the sidewalk and property owners too. Mr. Allen asked if there was any ground lighting associated with the sign. Ms. Delzani said no. Discussion continued about the previous property owner's sign. It was a much higher sign previously. Mr. DeMarco stated that the sign needed to be 8' off the property line.

Mr. Reich stated that the CVS located to the east has stamped brick that is broken up with flower boxes. Discussions continued about adding in something to break up with brick in front of Ms. Delzani's property, such as a bench or planter box. Mr. Reich and Mr. Bishop suggested they speak with the Service Commissioner about the possibility of adding in a bench or flower box.

Adding in plants would make its own natural buffer from the sign. The commission continued to state that although other locations were open on the property, logically there is no better location than what is proposed. There are hazards in other locations.

Mr. Reich said that the city is moving to making the sidewalks located on Detroit Road more walkable. The commission continued to stand by the code and not set a precedent to allow Ms. Delzani the variance, even though her location and scenario are a little different. Mr. DeMarco stated that adding planter boxes could possibly recreate the same situation that is happening in the southeast corner of the property. The sign could potentially be covered by landscaping. Mr. Bishop was thinking of lower landscaping options. Mr. DeMarco also proposed a bench in lieu of planter boxes.

Mr. Reich stated he would need to get the Service Commissioner in discussions with Ms. Delzani first, with no investment, until Ms. Delzani went to the BZA. Mr. Reich stated he would help facilitate that interaction.

Mr. DeMarco made a motion to grant approval of the modification of the previous approval for The Bank at 20000 Detroit Rd subject to First: conversation with the City Safety Service Department about providing pedestrian amenities in front of the proposed sign and Second: approval of a variance by BZA reducing the setback from 5' to 2'. Mr. Bishop seconded.

4 Ayes – 0 Nays
Approved

SOOTHE – 20015 Detroit Road -MODIFICATION OF A PREVIOUS APPROVAL.
Development plan for signage. Owner, Mike Sanchez came forward to discuss modifications of signage. James Vacey from Signature Signs was there to discuss sign approval.

Mr. Vacey discussed the two sign options for the current building. One being the word Soothe with illumination surrounding it, and the words A Rocky River Spa underneath. An additional sign in a different front facing section of the building also reads three additional words.

Mr. Bishop stated there is only space permitted on front elevation and the drawings are currently showing two. An option would be to place the three worded sign on the awnings shown on the drawings. A second option would be to remove the wording below 'Soothe' and add the words below. But they are currently not permitted to have both sign options.

Mr. Sanchez and the commission discussed moving the three words to the awnings. Mr. Sanchez asked about putting the sign on the side wall. The commission stated unless they were on a side lot, adding an additional sign to the front wall is not permitted. Mr. DeMarco suggested putting the signage in the grey stone would be an option.

Mr. Sanchez said they would investigate moving the three words underneath the word Soothe and see what options they liked best. Mr. Bishop suggested stretching out the word Soothe on the wall, giving additional space below to add in the three words. Also, the awnings could be illuminated. Mr. Vacey and the commission discussed the awning and lighting options.

Mr. Sanchez asked if anything else could be added to the side of the building once the awnings were installed. Mr. Bishop said the code did not allow it. Mr. Sanchez was asked by Mr. Allen if there was something to differentiate the two Soothe locations. Mr. Sanchez said just the address of his two building locations is different. Mr. Bishop suggested approving the main Soothe sign section and discussion on the size of the sign and number of elements continued.

Mr. Bishop made a motion to grant approval to Soothe for signage as presented deleting the words Massage, Couples and Groups from the east end of the building and granting permission to apply the same three words to the three window awnings. Mr. DeMarco seconded.

4 Ayes – 0 Nays
Approved

MITCHELLS ICE CREAM – 19700 Detroit Road -MODIFICATION OF A PREVIOUS APPROVAL. Modification of wall and ground signage. Mr. James Vacey came forward to discuss the modifications of the signage.

Mr. Vacey stated that they would not be changing a lot with the signage. They will be replacing the two oval signs on the building and replacing them with signs that are a little smaller. They will be illuminated. For the ground/monument sign it has been redesigned to look like an ice cream cone. Mr. Bishop stated this looked like reversed branding and Mr. Vacey agreed. Mr. Bishop asked if the existing landscaping would be staying. Mr. Vacey concurred. Mr. DeMarco asked if the setback had been confirmed. Mr. Bishop said it had been, but Mr. DeMarco asked for verification from Mr. Reich.

The commission discussed what other locations had occupied the space. Mr. DeMarco asked what additional exterior changes are happening to the building. Mr. Reich stated the exterior was remaining the same but that the interior of the building would be completely renovated.

Mr. Bishop made a motion to grant approval for the modifications to Mitchell's Ice Cream subject to a verification of the 5' setback by the Building Commissioner. Mr. DeMarco seconded.

4 Ayes – 0 Nays
Approved

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm.

William Bishop, Chairman

Michael DeMarco, Vice-Chairman

Date: _____