

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF YPSILANTI
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
Wednesday, April 2, 2025
6:30 p.m.**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Elizabeth El-Assadi
Stan Eldridge
David Marshall
Ericka Vonyea
Edward Burnett (Arrived at 6:32 p.m.)

STAFF AND CONSULTANTS

Sally Elmiger - Carlisle Wortman

• **CALL TO ORDER/ESTABLISH QUORUM**

MOTION: Ms. El-Assadi called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Ms. El-Assadi completed the roll call and confirmed a quorum was established.

• **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

MOTION: Mr. Eldridge **MOVED** to approve the agenda as presented. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Mr. Marshall and **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

• **APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 5 & MARCH 5, 2025, REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

MOTION: Mr. Eldridge **MOVED** to approve the February 5, 2025 and March 5, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Mr. Marshall and **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

• **PUBLIC HEARING**

Applicant: A1 Signs and Graphics

Location: 1900 Packard Road, Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Parcel ID: K-11-06-479-007

Request: Article 15 – Sec. 1509.6: Permitted Signs in Form-Based Districts: Request for variance to the height and area of ground sign requirements in form-based districts.

Sally Elmiger (Planning Consultant - Carlisle Wortman) informed the Zoning Board that the applicant attended a Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting on November 06, 2024, and had proposed a 72 sq ft and 11-foot-tall sign. The previously requested sign was considerably larger than what the ordinance would permit. The Zoning Board of Appeals made the decision to postpone the permit and requested the applicant to reduce the height of the proposed sign. The applicant has returned with the revised proposal.

The proposal on November 6, 2024, was 72 sq ft (Sign Square Footage); the revised proposal on February 5, 2025, is 37.5 sq ft.

The proposal on November 6, 2024, was 11 feet tall (Sign Height); the revised proposal on February 5, 2025, is 6 feet tall.

Ms. Elmiger stated that Carlisle Wortman has considered the proposal to meet the criteria in the ordinance and there are several unique circumstances to this property that meet these criteria.

The existing building at 1900 Packard Road accommodates seven individual medical/dental businesses. These factors create challenging conditions to advertise the individual medical/dental businesses on one ground sign. The property is located on a 35mph roadway which makes it difficult for people to read the signs while driving.

The General Manager Michael Zacks (A1 Signs and Graphics) thanked the Zoning Board of Appeals for considering the new proposal with the changes in accordance with the ordinance. Mr. Zacks shared with the Zoning Board of Appeals that the current Sign Square Footage is 72 sq ft and it would be revised to 37.5 sq ft. This would accommodate six tenant panels, and this would permit Dr Siddiqui (building owner) to accommodate the tenants that may be in the plaza at some point in time.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED AT 6:39 P.M.

No Comments

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED AT 6:39 P.M.

MOTION: Mr. Elridge **MOVED** to approve the variance requests at 1900 Packard Road, Ypsilanti, MI 48197, Parcel K-11-06-479-007 to the sign requirements of Section 1506.6 of the Township Zoning Ordinance for the construction of a 6-foot tall, 37.5 sq ft ground sign within the building envelope as shown on the plot plan included in the Zoning Board of Appeals Packet dated April 02, 2025 (or as modified at this evening's meeting). Granting of the requested variances meets the criteria for a non-use variance in Section 1704.2(D) of the Zoning Ordinance. Specifically, granting the requested variances is based on the following facts:

1. There are exceptional conditions applying to this property that do not generally apply to other properties in this district, including the multi-tenant nature of the existing building compounded by the location along a 5-lane road with a 35-mph speed limit.
2. The variances are necessary to provide adequate identification for the property's multiple tenants, especially given the high traffic volume on this busy commercial corridor.
3. The variances (as modified) will not be a substantial detriment to adjacent property and will not materially impair the purposes of this ordinance or the public interest.
4. The need for the variances is not self-created, as the applicant did not create the visibility challenges or the multi-tenant nature of the building.
5. The proposed variances (as modified) are the minimum necessary to ensure adequate visibility for the tenants given the site conditions and surrounding context.

This motion is further made with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall obtain the required building permits and applicable trade permits for the construction of the sign.
2. The applicant shall adhere to the electronic changeable message sign ordinance outlined in Article 15 – Sec. 1509.8.

The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Mr. Burnett.

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Elizabeth El-Assadi (Yes); Mr. Stan Eldridge (Yes); Mr. David Marshall (Yes); Mr. Edward Burnett (Yes); Ms. Ericka Vonyea (Yes).

MOTION PASSED.

Applicant: Charles Paisley of UPH Ypsilanti Property LLC

Location: 1410 S. Huron Street, Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Parcel ID: K-11-38-280-018

Request: Article 5 – Form-Based Districts of the Township Zoning Ordinance to allow the construction of a drive-through restaurant that exceeds the minimum setback (Sec. 503 – Standards) and minimum window transparency limits (Sec. 507 – Design Standards).

Ms. Elmiger informed the Zoning Board of Appeals that the applicant is proposing to develop a Culver’s restaurant with a drive-through. The applicant is requesting three setback variances.

Building setback from S. Huron St. – Proposing a 74-foot front-yard setback instead of the 30-foot setback allowed Sec. 503, Building Form B if an outdoor plaza is incorporated into the site design. The required variance dimension is 44 feet.

Parking in front yard along S. Huron St. – Proposing to locate a service lane from the drive-through, and approximately 5 waiting spaces in the front yard along S. Huron, when Sec. 1204 of the ordinance requires that parking and associated maneuvering lanes be in a side or rear yard.

There is deficient glazing on the facade facing S. Huron St. Fifty percent glazing is required on a front building facade that faces a right-of-way, Per Sec. 507 of the ordinance. The proposal offers 41% glazing in this façade, for a needed variance of 9%.

Ms. Elmiger informed the Zoning Board of Appeals that Carlisle Wortman has provided the following analysis:

Granting the front setback variance will allow for the development of this

property. The unusual topography along the west side of S. Huron St., and the location of a new water main easement, create unique challenges when coupled with the requirements of the specific business type (drive-through) proposed for this site. As mentioned under Criterion 1, if the building wall were only as tall as a “first floor,” the proposed windows would exceed the 50% transparency requirement. The proposed design meets the intent of the ordinance by allowing views between the inside diners and the pedestrian activity on the street. Granting this variance will allow for the development of the property, as proposed.

Matt Cole (Roosien and Associates) (Engineer for the proposed restaurant project) informed the Zoning Board of Appeals that the proposed plan is a revised version that meets variance requests (front building setback in compliance with ADA; building height and transparency).

The Board inquired about what was preventing the parking from being in the back as opposed to the front; Mr. Cole stated that the parking spaces are located at the side of the building and Culver’s restaurant usually has a drive-through. After a customer order from the menu with a payment; they are required to move and pull into a space ahead where they would receive their food parcel. This would require extra vehicle use.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED AT 6:49 P.M.

No Comments

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED AT 6:49 P.M.

MOTION: Mr. Elridge **MOVED** to approve the variance requests at 1410 S. Huron, Ypsilanti, MI 48197, Parcel K-11-38-280-016 to the requirements of Section 503, Standards; and Section 507, Design standards of the Township Zoning Ordinance for the construction of Culver’s restaurant with drive-through facilities as shown on the plans included in the Zoning Board of Appeals Packet dated April 02, 2025, (or as modified at this evening’s meeting). Granting of the requested variances meets the criteria for a non-use variance in Section 1704.2(D) of the Zoning Ordinance. Specifically, granting the requested variances is based on the following facts:

1. There are exceptional conditions applying to this property that do not generally apply to other properties in this district, including the topography, existing grade of the access road, location of a new 15-foot-wide utility easement along the east side of the site that cannot be encumbered by construction, and the unique design feature of the building.
2. The variances are necessary to allow the development of this property, given the unusual topography, access road, utility easement, and “first-floor” condition of the building.
3. The variances will not be a substantial detriment to adjacent property and will not materially impair the purposes of this ordinance or the public interest.
4. The need for the variances is not self-created, as the applicant did not create the site conditions or building conventions for traditional architecture.
5. The proposed variances are the minimum necessary to allow the development of this property given the unusual site features and traditional building conventions.

The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Mr. Burnett.

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Elizabeth El-Assadi (Yes); Mr. Stan Eldridge (Yes); Mr. David Marshall (Yes); Mr. Edward Burnett (Yes); Ms. Ericka Vonyea (Yes).

MOTION PASSED.

- **OPEN DISCUSSION FOR ISSUES NOT ON AGENDA**

- **PLANNING DEPARTMENT REPORT**

- No Report

- **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**

- No Report

- **ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS MEMBERS**

- No Report

- **MEMBERS OF THE AUDIENCE/PUBLIC**

No Report

- **OTHER BUSINESS THAT MAY COME BEFORE THE ZONING BOARD**

No Report

- **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: Mr. Eldridge **MOVED** to adjourn at 6:52 p.m. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Mr. Burnett and **PASSED** by unanimous consent.

Respectfully Submitted by Minutes Services LLC