

MEMORANDUM



VILLAGE OF DEERFIELD

TO: Plan Commission

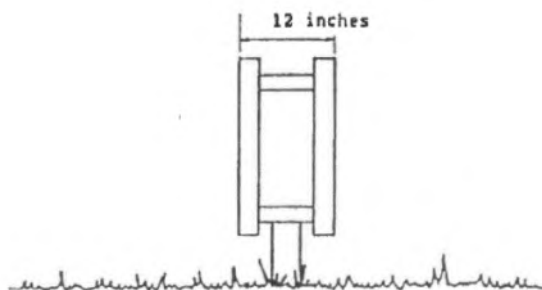
FROM: Jeff Ryckaert, Principal Planner and Dan Nakahara, Planner

DATE: October 18, 2022

RE: Public Hearing on at Request for a Text Amendment to the Deerfield Zoning Ordinance to Increase the Depth (Distance Between Sign Faces) of a Ground Sign

Background

At their February 28, 2022 meeting, the Appearance Review Commission (ARC) discussed the current depth restrictions for ground signs. Section 9.01-B,9,b (Maximum Distances Between Sign Faces) of the Deerfield Zoning Ordinance limits ground sign depths or the distance between two sign faces, to 12 inches. The purpose of the requirement is to create uniformity throughout the Village and prevent the sides of a ground sign from becoming extra sign faces.



Article 9.01-B.9b Maximum distance permitted between sign faces is 12".

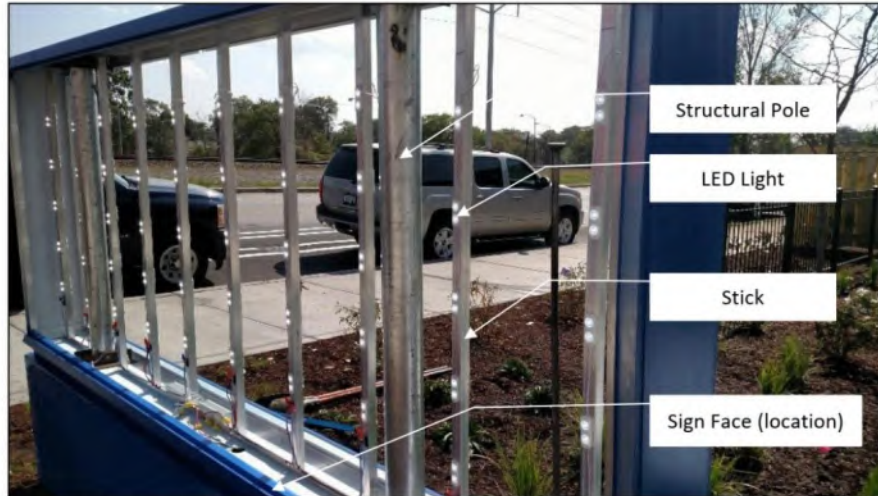
The ARC noted that petitioners often come through requesting exceptions and modifications for greater sign depths. The ARC agreed that 12 inches can be too tight for the sign's structural components and spacing out the LED fixtures. The ARC was in favor a text amendment to the Deerfield Zoning Ordinance to permit ground sign depths greater than 12 inches, but were unsure as to the appropriate ground sign depth. The ARC decided to move forward by surveying sign companies in order to recommend a ground sign depth for new ground signs.

ARC Staff liaison Liz Delevitt surveyed several sign companies to discuss the optimal depth, or distance between two (2) sign faces, for a ground sign. Most sign companies that were surveyed agreed that the majority of ground signs could be constructed with a 12 inches depth, but it was not ideal. The following issues occur when a sign depth is too narrow:

1. Hot Spots – Hot spots are the concentration of light in a single location, creating uneven illumination. LED signs, in particular, are prone to hot spots when there is not a large enough space between the LED fixture and the sign face. Hot spots can be avoided by providing a 5 – 9 inch gap to allow the light to properly diffuse.
2. Structural Issues – 12 inches is often not enough space to contain the structural supports necessary for the anticipated wind loads on a sign. Larger signs, such as the Portillo’s ground sign, require 10 -12 inch structural poles that are anchored to the ground and run vertically between the sign faces. If the structural poles are reduced to fit in a 12 inch deep sign, the structure will be compromised.

Sign Components

The components that make up a ground sign’s depth are the structural poles, LED fixtures and sticks, and sign faces. For a double sided, LED illuminated ground sign the LED fixtures and sticks are approximately 2 inches deep plus 5 – 9 inches spacing on both sides plus 3 inches for the sign faces if there are no extrusions. A 12 inch sign depth does not meet the minimum requirements for a smaller Lexan faced sign. The sign companies that were surveyed indicated increasing the permitted maximum depth to 16 inches or 18 inches would accommodate most ground signs in the Village.



Interior Components of a Ground Sign

At the May 23, 2022 meeting, the ARC recommended a text amendment that amends Section 9.01.B,9(b) of the Deerfield Zoning Ordinance so that the maximum distance allowed between two parallel or nearly parallel sign faces shall not exceed eighteen (18) inches.

Proposed Text Amendments to Maximum Distance Between Sign Faces

Amend Article 9.01-B.9,b of the Zoning Ordinance:

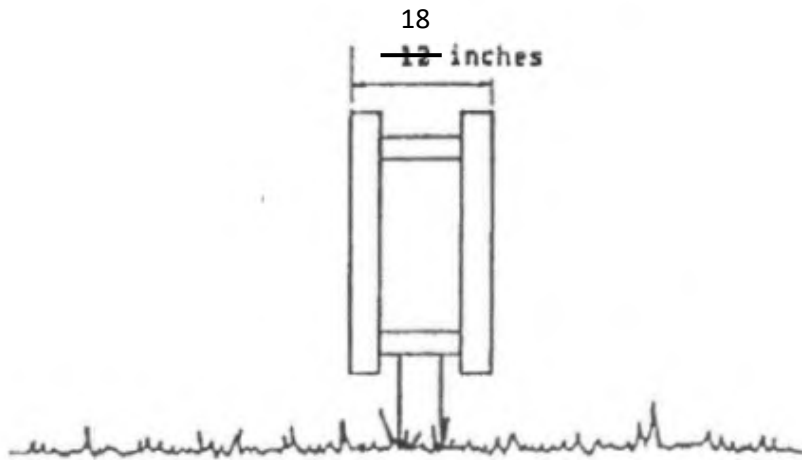
b. Maximum Distances Between Sign Faces

The maximum distance allowed between two parallel or nearly parallel sign faces shall not exceed ~~twelve (12)~~ eighteen (18) inches unless otherwise specifically provided for in this Ordinance. If the maximum distance is to exceed ~~twelve (12)~~ eighteen (18) inches, a sign modification must be sought and approved by the Board of Trustees. In such cases the areas of the two open sides or two side panels shall be included in the computation of the gross surface area of the sign.

Amend Appendix II

Maximum Distance Between Sign Faces – Article 9.01-B.9,b

Note- Maximum distance permitted is ~~12~~ 18 inches.



The standard for a text amendment to the zoning ordinance is that it must be in the public interest and is not solely for the interest of the applicant.

Planning and Design Specialist and Staff Liaison to the ARC, Liz Delevitt will be available at the meeting to answer any questions.

Recall at our May 12, 2022 meeting, the Plan Commission recommended an exception to the Zoning Ordinance to allow for a ground sign depth of 23-1/2 inches for the Old National Bank ground signs and the Board of Trustees approved the request.

Note: Article 9.01-B-9,a. states that for ground signs where two (2) faces are allowed, the backs of the sign faces must be parallel or nearly parallel to each other and Article 9.01-B-9,d. states where a two faced sign is permitted the two sign faces must be oriented so that the backs of the sign faces are opposite each other.

Prefiling Conference Minutes

Attached are the Plan Commission September 22, 2022 minutes.

Commissioner Stolman asked if there will there be a route to direct cars for the drive-thru, similar to how Portillo's is. Mr. Goltz replied that the site has more stacking capability than is needed. It will be clear that drive-thru stacking will wrap around the perimeter and will not interfere with parking or access. Commissioner Stolman asked if traffic could backup onto Waukegan Road and cause delays. Mr. Goltz replied that the way it is set up the cars will also stack from Central Avenue and it would not back up that far. Mr. Goltz added that having access on Waukegan Road and Central Avenue allows cars to get out where it is most convenient.

Chair Pro-Tem Goldstone suggested including images of the signage for the Public Hearing. Mr. Goltz replied that he will include this in the Public Hearing materials. He added that the intent is that all signage will comply with code.

Chair Pro-Tem Goldstone asked for clarification on the number of customers, as transactions were discussed but not the number of customers. Mr. Goltz replied that numbers are an approximate total customer count of 480 transactions split between 50 percent drive thru and 50 percent dine in. So it could be up to 140 transactions per hour on the high end at lunch and peak dinner times. He added that dine in times are typically 20 to 40 minutes and the drive-thru stacking allows for up to 30 cars and this will allow for sufficient parking and traffic flow.

Mr. Nakahara asked if Shake Shack plans to sell liquor. Mr. Goltz replied that alcohol sales is a small incidental with just beer and wine available for dine in only, and it is by no means a bar. Mr. Nakahara reported that there are municipal regulations that require the outdoor seating area must be fully enclosed if the restaurant serves alcohol. Mr. Goltz replied that they will adhere to this and reiterated that beer and wine sales is a very small percentage of total sales.

Mr. Nakahara commented that the total number of employees shows 18 to 25. Mr. Goltz clarified that this is the total number and the number on site at any time depends on the shift. He added that there is an area for employee parking area in the back.

Mr. Nakahara reported that the Public Hearing on this matter will be October 27, 2022.

2) Prefiling Conference on the Request for a Text Amendment to the Deerfield Zoning Ordinance to Increase the Depth (Distance Between Sign Faces) of a Ground Sign

Liz Delevitt, Village Staff liaison to the Appearance Review Commission (ARC) addressed the Commissioner and reviewed a proposed text amendment to address an ongoing issue that the ARC has been experiencing.

She shared that the ARC will often have petitioners appear before them for ground signs. Currently, the Zoning Ordinance restricts the depth, or distance between the two sign faces, to 12 inches. She stated that this ordinance is in need of an update and at the time it was created there was different lighting technology for these types of signs. Lately, this issue has been coming up more often, where petitioners will and ask for a ground sign deeper than 12 inches and when it is explained to them that they need to appear before the Plan Commission and the Board of Trustees (and it will likely take three to four months for approval of a sign exception), they often decide to squeeze it into 12 inches. When this happens there is a risk of a ground sign with hot spots. Hot spots occur when the lighting elements are too close to the sign faces and the sign starts to read spotty with areas with more light and areas that may not get light.

Ms. Delevitt reported that the materials provided include photos of the interior components of a ground sign. In between the two faces of the sign are the structural poles and also the small sticks that hold the light source. There needs to be adequate space to distribute the light in the sign face and this is difficult with 12 inches of depth. So the ARC first began looking at this issue in February of this year and decided they wanted to keep a depth restriction, otherwise signs could become inconsistent. Ms. Delevitt reported that she spoke to several sign companies, and learned that it is possible to include lighting in a sign depth of 12 inches, but everything would be very "squished". She learned from her research that if you want to have an optimal sign. There is a need to have 18 to 24 inches in depth and most signs can be done in 18 inches. She brought this information back to the ARC in May and the ARC voted to increase the distance between the two sign faces from 12 to 18 inches. The ARC is now looking for feedback from the Plan Commission on this proposed Text Amendment.

Ms. Delevitt reported that in Deerfield most signs have been restricted and kept at 12 inches in depth. However, some examples of exceptions with 18 inch ground sign depths include Portillo's and Northwestern Medical on Waukegan Road. The recently approved reuse of the structural components of the Old National Bank ground sign that was before the Plan Commission a couple of months ago was 23 inches in depth.

Chair Pro-Tem Goldstone asked if most neighboring municipalities also have an 18 inch requirement for their sign depth. Ms. Delevitt replied that she learned that no other municipality around has a sign depth restriction and Deerfield is the only one. The ARC discussed this, and they do not want to eliminate the depth restriction and as they feel it was an important standard for Deerfield to keep signage uniform as well as to keep signs from being too deep and attention-getting. Ms. Delevitt added that there is enough room in 18 inches, and many could still be 12 inches in depth, but this amendment gives a little bit more wiggle room.

Commissioner Crist stated that she would like to make sure that the side panels are not used as sign faces. Ms. Delevitt replied that this is not permitted by code with the signage face calculation requirements. Ms. Delevitt referenced 9.01-B,9a in the Zoning Ordinance regarding the maximum number of sign faces. It states that in no event shall the total number of sign faces be more than two unless otherwise approved. There is also a section that says no "V"ing of sign faces and the sign faces must be parallel.

Commissioner Keefe commented that he has no issue with the request to increase the depth to 18 inches. Chair Pro-Tem Goldstone agreed.

Mr. Ryckaert reported that the Public Hearing on this matter will be on October 27, 2022.

~~DOCUMENT APPROVAL~~

- ~~1. August 25, 2022 Plan Commission Minutes~~

~~Commissioner Keefe moved, seconded by Commissioner Stolman to approve the minutes. The motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.~~

~~Items from the Staff~~

~~Mr. Ryckaert reported that the next meeting will be October 13, 2022 for document approval only.~~