

**LOWELL BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS MEETING  
OCTOBER 10, 2013**

Chairman David Shilling called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Recording Secretary Gena Knapp called the roll. Members answering the roll call were David Shilling, Chad Evenhouse, James Konradi, Richard Kelley, and Sean Brady. Also present were Building Official Tom Trulley, Town Attorney Nicole Bennett, Planning Consultant Jim Mandon, and two citizens.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Kelley made a motion to approve the September 12, 2013 regular meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Konradi and carried with five ayes.

**NEW BUSINESS**

BZA #13-0017 – Landmark Signs – 4500 E. 181<sup>st</sup> Ave., Lowell, IN – Variance From Developmental Standards – To Construct a Sign Larger Than the Fifty Square Feet Allowed, Stands Higher Than The Six Feet That is Allowed, and Has an Electronic Animated Message Screen – Rick Willbanks, Landmark Sign Group, 7524 Industrial Ave., Chesterton, IN, stated he was there on behalf of his client the Franciscan Alliance Group. Mr. Willbanks explained that the first design that was presented has changed to something that is a little more traditional and comparable to what they use at all of their other centers. We have reduced the sign to a size smaller, so we are only looking at seven and a half square feet over the fifty square feet that is allowed. Also, the original design had a height of twelve feet from grade, but we have reduced that to ten feet and some change. Mr. Shilling commented that the Board would still need to approve all three variances. Mr. Willbanks stated that was correct. Mr. Mandon stated the sign size is fine as far as being proportional to the site and the building, but he would like to sit down with someone from Franciscan to discuss what type of changeable messages or images they want to place on the sign to make sure that it is not something that is flashing or distracting traffic. The message boards have come a long way and it can be very beneficial to have that aspect of the sign available if it is used in the correct way. He stated he did not believe there would be a problem; but that he just wanted to sit down to discuss what will be on the message board. Mr. Willbanks stated we have these at about six off-site facilities, and they are all hooked to a system called Group Link. Only one person can program this sign and that is a person at the IT Department at the main hospital. We do have these signs in Cedar Lake and in Crown Point by I-65 and they never run videos. Crown Point has also given us some stipulations to where we cannot change the sign but every eight seconds, so we do follow that. Mr. Shilling asked if there were any sample regulations. Mr. Mandon stated he does have some suggestions with time limitations and not using the color red in terms of the print. There have been some guidelines that have been developed by groups that are involved with traffic control and traffic safety that we can talk about. Discussion followed on how the motion should be made or if it should be tabled. Mr. Shilling asked where the ten-foot setback should be from. Mr. Mandon stated from the right-of-way line or the property line.

Mr. Shilling opened the public hearing. With no one to speak for or against the petitioner, Mr. Shilling closed the public hearing.

Mr. Kelley made a motion to grant the seven and a half square foot variance for the sign size, seconded by Mr. Brady and carried by roll call vote with five ayes.

Mr. Konradi made a motion to approve the variance for the additional height of the sign allowing it to be ten feet and one and a half inches rather than the six feet that is allowed. The motion was seconded by Mr. Evenhouse and carried by roll call vote with five ayes.

Mr. Konradi made a motion to approve the variance to allow an electronic message sign, subject to the approval of the discussion between Jim Mandon and the staff at the Franciscan Alliance Group. The motion was seconded by Mr. Brady and carried by roll call vote with five ayes.

Mr. Shilling stated all of the variances have been approved, as long as there can be an agreement on the animation. Mr. Willbanks asked what the next step would be. Mr. Mandon stated he could forward some guidelines to him, and then discuss those at a follow-up meeting with the staff.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further comments or questions Mr. Konradi made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 PM, seconded by Mr. Kelley and carried by voice vote.

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David Shilling, Chairman

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James Konradi, Secretary