

VEB meeting
Wednesday, October 21, 2015

In attendance: Doug Wehrle (DW), Tom Smith (TS), Paul Perreira (PP) and Mayla Hsu (MH).

Sign permit applicant: York Industrial, represented by Russ Rodriguez (RR), Sales Manager of Palisades Fuel, 335 South Riverside Drive.

This sign permit application is for a gas station that will change from Lukoil to Sunoco. DW noted that gas is the only retail commodity that is sold with large signs indicating price, and there was a discussion of their illumination by LED; prompted by the board's concern for the very harsh green lit digits on the recently installed Select sign (previously mentioned in the board's August minutes). RR said the move to LED lighting is for both efficiency and employee safety when changing the digits. He also assured the board that the proposed LED illumination would not be harsh. RR further stated that consumers want to know the prices, and laws require cash and credit to be posted. RR indicated that gasoline sales on this street are very competitive, especially since there are four gas stations within a one mile stretch.

Of particular concern to board members is the proposed canopy, which in effect functions as a four-sided structure mounted sign. Unlike other service station canopy signage, which employ a single colored background (often with a colored accent stripe) and the name of the gasoline brand, the proposed Sunoco canopy would employ multiple bright colors, checkered flags, as well as the brand's name and NASCAR copy. The VEB stated its concern that this canopy design would be excessive for the scale of the street and the small town image of the Village. RR said he would have to consult with Sunoco whether there is a subtler version. RR also asked whether he could continue discussions via email, as timing is very tight, and he would like to have new signs installed before inclement weather will complicate their installation. RR requested partial approval so that signs (not including the canopies) can be ordered for the site. He suggested that further discussions regarding the canopies could be held via email. The VEB agreed. DW noted that he would communicate this partial approval to the Code Enforcement Officer, Joe Sperber.

By email dated October 27th, the VEB followed up by sending RR a graphic canopy proposal that would place the SUNOCO brand on a dark blue background, thereby removing the NACAR flag and copy, along with the corresponding multicolor graphics. In such a case, only the word SUNOCO would be considered as a sign on the blue background of the canopy, rather than the entire canopy acting as a sign. RR responded that Sunoco "cannot make changes to the horizon graphics and the flag cannot be on the canopy without the horizon" and that "without actual zoning regulations that tell us what is permissible\not permissible by law, the best we can do" would be to change the rear façade background color to blue from red as well as removing copy from that panel. The VEB does not consider this change to be significant because the panel in question faces the building and is therefore not seen from the street.

Moreover, while the VEB recognizes that the Village's existing zoning code does not expressly address service station canopies, the code is explicit. Specifically, code allows signage coverage up to 2 feet X the length of the building facing the street (in this case the property is located on a corner so the allowable signage coverage would be 2 feet times the length and width of the service station building (approximately 120 feet X 2 = 240 square allowable). As proposed the 160 linear feet, 3 feet tall canopy would equal 480 square feet, twice the allowable sign coverage.

Given what appears to be a conflict with Village Code, the VEB respectfully requests that this proposal be considered by the Zoning Board of Appeals.