

Lower Paxton Township

Zoning Hearing Board

September 23, 2021

Members Present:

David Dowling

Allen Hansen

Greg Sirb

Jeff Staub

Mark Emery

Joe Murphy

Also, In Attendance: James Turner, Amanda Zerbe, Kristi Focht

Docket 1448

Applicant: Blair Image Elements

Address: 5107 Kissell Ave. Altoona, PA 16601

Property Owner: Quattro Harrisburg, LLC.

Property: 5104 Jonestown Road

Applicant: Variance from regulations to a specific sign in a Planned Center

Fees Paid: August 31, 2021

Property Posted: September 16, 2021

Advertised: September 8, 2021 and September 15, 2021

The Hearing Began at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Dowling swore in applicant Matt Farner with RPM Signs.

Mr. Dowling swore in Amanda Zerbe, Zoning Officer for Lower Paxton Township.

Mr. Dowling questioned Ms. Zerbe on what Township Ordinance is at issue.

Ms. Zerbe answered section 714, Regulations for a specific sign. She noted this sign is in a planned center.

Mr. Dowling questioned Ms. Zerbe if the appropriate fees have been paid.

Ms. Zerbe answered that the applicant paid the fees on August 31, 2021. Mr. Dowling questioned if the application had been properly advertised and hearing notices posted. Ms. Zerbe answered that it was posted on September 16, 2021; and advertised in the Hummelstown Sun on September 8, 2021 and September 15, 2021.

Mr. Dowling requested the applicant to begin his testimony.

Mr. Farner noted the applicant is requesting a larger sign due to the fact their store uses 2/3rd the space. He continued the applicant would like to place a sign on the left elevation as well noting there could be an entrance on that side. Mr. Farner noted he did not have construction drawings with him.

Mr. Sirb questioned how many signs they are allowed.

Ms. Zerbe answered one.

Mr. Sirb questioned if the applicant is requesting three signs.

Mr. Farner noted the monument sign has not been determined but noted that is allowed in the use.

Ms. Zerbe noted the applicant is requesting an additional sign that faces Olive Garden and a larger sign on the front.

Mr. Dowling questioned the applicant had placed the current sign up on the front and what is the size of the sign that is currently up.

Mr. Farner answered they did place the sign up. He noted he does not have the original drawing for the size of the sign.

Mr. Dowling questioned when the applicant installed the sign.

Mr. Farner answered ten days ago.

Mr. Dowling questioned if the sign that was installed allowed under the current ordinance.

Ms. Zerbe answered yes. She explained the applicant used the permitted maximum square footage allowed. She noted that would be basically the same size as the sleep number.

Mr. Dowling noted the sign they have up currently is larger than the Sleep Number sign.

Ms. Zerbe noted their sign can be larger because they have a larger suite. She noted in a Planned Center the sign size is determined by the suite size.

Mr. Sirb questioned the sign in the diagram that was presented to the Board, noting page 4.

Ms. Zerbe noted the sign they are asking for is marked as S1, the second sign the applicant is asking for that is not permitted is the sign for the side of the building is S2. She continued that the applicant is asking for is a sign that is not permitted, a second sign that is not permitted and a larger sign on the front.

Mr. Dowling questioned the sign that was placed ten days ago is the sign that is allowed for that space.

Ms. Zerbe answered yes.

Mr. Dowling noted that if that sign remains unchanged there is no need for a variance for that sign.

Ms. Zerbe answered if the Board would choose to have them keep that size than they would not require a variance.

Mr. Dowling questioned the applicant on why they put up a sign ten days ago when they were seeking a variance.

Mr. Farner answered that was the decision from the corporate office of Mattress Warehouse. He explained the applicant is getting ready for their grand opening and not knowing how long the variance process would take, corporate requested a sign to be installed.

Mr. Dowling questioned the purpose of the additional sign that would face the Olive Garden.

Mr. Farner noted to the side entrance of the building and needing to attract customers to the entrance.

Mr. Dowling noted he was at the sight today and they do not have a side entrance. He noted the only way that sign will be visible is for those who walk out of the Olive Garden. Mr. Dowling noted that for the record the Sleep Number store was granted a second sign because of the entrance to the mall and the road that is located there.

Mr. Sirb noted that between Mattress Warehouse and the Olive Garden there are not many parking spaces.

Ms. Zerbe noted that from the minutes of last month meeting that as you are driving from the West that side of the building it is completely open as you enter the center. She continued that if you are driving East you have the Olive Garden and only that small alley before you see the side of the building. She explained that the meeting minutes reflect that sign was granted because of the allowable vision of traffic coming on 22.

Mr. Farner questioned the totality of the two signs impacting getting a larger sign on the front.

Mr. Hansen noted that the sign that Mattress Warehouse placed on the front of the store is visible.

Mr. Dowling noted he thought the Mattress Warehouse sign that was placed on the store front is the proposed sign they were requesting.

Ms. Zerbe noted to the last meeting, the Board had noted Mattress Warehouse will have a larger space on the monument sign that is right in front of the building.

Mr. Dowling questioned if the applicant has the square footage for the sign that Mattress Warehouse has up currently.

Ms. Zerbe retrieved the permit from the Zoning Office. Ms. Zerbe noted that on Mattress Warehouse they currently have a 51.22 square foot wall sign.

Mr. Sirb questioned Mr. Farner what is being proposed.

Mr. Farner answered 116.

Mr. Dowling questioned if the applicant is requesting a larger sign of 116 square feet on the front of the store than the current sign at 51.22 square feet. He continued that the applicant is also requesting a second sign on the western side of the building. He noted they will be given space on the monument sign.

Mr. Dowling questioned if any Members of the Board had any additional comments or questions for the applicant.

Mr. Emery questioned the thought process into the size of a sign.

Mr. Farner answered that customers always will request the largest sign possible. He noted that with the design of a sign they scale it to how it will look on the building.

Mr. Emery questioned that if you had a sign you had to scale back how would you decide what is the right size to take it down to.

Mr. Farner noted that if they would have to scale the sign down to 89 square feet the applicant could agree to that. He noted that would look appropriate.

Mr. Staub noted the design and size that is currently displayed works well for the building.

Mr. Sirb noted that Mattress Warehouse is a larger store and should have a larger sign.

Mr. Dowling noted that they have the max allowable for the size of their store currently.

Ms. Zerbe noted that because Sleep Number was granted a variance for a larger sign, Mattress Warehouse is currently seeking a variance for a larger sign than what they currently have. She noted aesthetically she likes the current sign and it is balanced out.

Mr. Murphy noted that the Sleep Number sign has block letters and there lettering is actually smaller.

Mr. Emery questioned if they would grant a larger sign on the front they would deny the sign on the sign.

Mr. Sirb noted that if they would receive a larger sign on the front they would still have a monument sign.

Mr. Dowling questioned if any member of the Board wished to make a motion on the request for a docket 1448.

Mr. Sirb motioned to grant a variance to front sign to be no larger than 80 square feet and no sign on the Western side of the building.

Mr. Dowling questioned if there is a second to that motion.

Mr. Emery seconded the motion.

Mr. Dowling requested Mr. Turner to conduct a roll call vote: Mr. Hansen, aye; Mr. Emery, aye; Mr. Staub, no; Mr. Sirb, Aye; Mr. Dowling, aye.

Mr. Dowling noted the variance for the sign of 80 square feet on the front of the store has been granted and the sign on the side of the store has been denied.

This hearing ended at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristi Focht

Kristi Focht, Recording Secretary