

Boulevard One Design Review Committee
June 23, 2021
Video/Audio E-Conference

Attendees:

Committee: Jamie Fogle, Monty Force, Steve Lane, Carla McConnell, Kevin Yoshida
CK: Nick Kitaeff, Bob Koontz, H McNeish, Bonnie Niziolek, Celest Tanner
Public: None

Clarifications to these minutes as submitted by Carla McConnell and approved by the DRC are seen in red on page 4.

- **CK Development**
Signage Variance Hearing
Ground Signs in Quebec ROW

Applicant Presentation:

Bonnie Niziolek explained that the two ground signs with joint tenant ID, referenced in this variance request are to be located on Quebec near 1st Ave and Lowry Blvd. There has been unanimous CCD approval of the Block 7 Comprehensive Signage Plan (CSP) along with necessary Tier 1 encroachment within the Quebec ROW with no hazards noted.

Variance Request and points to be considered:

1. These two signs will not unreasonably burden other properties within Boulevard One.
2. With CCD build-to and transparency requirements building mounted locations proved difficult to find. Therefore, the environment prevents the strict application of the Design Guidelines.
3. Joint tenant identification is extremely important for the success and viability of the retail, restaurant, and office tenants.
4. This type of identification for tenants within the entire block is more appropriate to a monument type sign.
5. Intuitive wayfinding for both pedestrians and vehicles provides necessary visibility for patrons of Exchange.

Nick Kitaeff pointed out that the timing is right to complete the process. The CSP has been approved by CCD Planning Board with comments of “well done”. The entirety of the CSP was also approved by the Boulevard One Design Review Committee, excepting the two monument signs along Quebec, which requires a variance process. The build-to challenges created very few options for placement of the signs that did not create negative effects on the architectural identity and character of the buildings. These two signs are the last component for a unified

CSP. Nick said they believe these monument signs not only comply with the City's regulation but also embraces the intent of the Boulevard One Design Guidelines:

1. Support "place making and intuitive way finding through clarity and hierarchy...and minimizing visual clutter and supporting a unified aesthetic" (DG p. 54). Will be seen by N and S bound traffic along Quebec with direction for entry into the project and provides branding for the tenants.
2. Will be made of "durable, permanent and easy to maintain signage materials" (p. 54). High-quality aluminum and acrylic materials will be used with modular elements for ease of repair or change in tenants. There is also a coating for graffiti resistance and removal. Internal illumination allows white lettering to be seen at night.
3. Signage should be "integral place making that reinforces the identity of Boulevard One as a cohesive neighborhood is encouraged" (p. 54). Intuitive way to access entry at the corners as a component that is integral to tenant success.

H McNeish wanted it noted that the CCD and design review processes have been followed to seek approvals for the CSP. The process is still being followed for these particular signs and is not being taken lightly. He pointed out that these signs in the ROW were looked at as part of the full CSP and acknowledges this variance step is necessary and prudent.

Bob Koontz added that the process has been followed by the DRC to comply with the Design Guidelines. He said the timing is right to seek approval of the signage variance and for the developer to fulfill its commitments to the tenants.

Process Formalities:

Monty referenced Boulevard One Design Guidelines Section 4.69 as the requirements not being met and is the basis for the Variance Request. There are three points from this Section to be considered:

1. Signs not allowed in the public rights-of-way, including tree lawns.
2. Entry signs associated with retail users must not be closer together than 300'. **(It was determined that the entire Quebec frontage is 400' with an estimated 320' between the signs so this can be removed from the need for a variance.)**
3. Size of commercial primary monument signs not to exceed 45 SF (maximum 5' wide and not project higher than 9' above ground level.

Procedural standards for granting or denying a variance request:

- A. Written request and notice of the hearing to adjacent properties.
- B. Strict application of the requirement would be impossible, unduly harsh, or unnecessary of either:
 1. Physical conditions or restraints such as topography, natural obstructions or aesthetic or environmental considerations
 2. Economic or unjustified economic hardship to the Applicant
 3. Although not meeting the requirement, the proposal advances the intent of the Design Guidelines.

- C. The variance would not unreasonably burden other property within the Boulevard One community or an adjacent property.
- D. The variance granted is the minimum possible to alleviate the physical condition or hardship.
- E. The variance requested is not the result of or made necessary by the actions or activities Applicant.

The options for action:

- 1. Table or delay for further information at a future hearing
- 2. Motion for approval
- 3. Motion for approval with restrictions
- 4. Motion for denial

- Committee questions (**with responses from Applicant in bold**):

Carla – Is there a perspective showing light poles, trees, speed sign, etc. along Quebec to determine locations in relation to the signs and will a tree be lost? **Bonnie showed drawings of the length of the Quebec frontage with indicators of pole/tree locations that are not near the signs. No tree will be lost.**

- **Public Comments – None**

- **Discussion by the Committee:**

Location in the Public ROW

Section A

This condition has been met with a written submittal and notice given to adjacent property owner within Boulevard One.

Section B

Kevin – This variance is generally supportable, but he wondered about the retail signage along the frontage that is out of sight of the thoroughfare. With Target having a building mounted sign and on the monument, there is unnecessary duplication. He understands the Planning Dept. concept of build-to requirements does create a problem. **Tenants want to be at Boulevard One because of signage opportunities. Flexibility is important. If a tenant has a presence on Quebec but cannot be on the monument sign that is a difficult position to take with the tenants.**

Monty – Signage content is not relevant to the variance question but could be discussed at a separate time.

Kevin – The signage location within the tree lawn is supportable in response to Section B.1

Carla – Her main concern is **the creation of an additional distraction for drivers south-bound along Quebec** that especially the north sign facilitates. She asked that the two signs be

separated in the committee's consideration. Pedestrian and bicycle crossing of Quebec from east to west on 1st Ave is already hazardous. This monument sign would be one more distraction to drivers adding to the lack of safety for pedestrians. **The sign would help the driver focus on eye level and not search for building signage. Provides easier orientation for north/south bound traffic. There is also a Quebec improvement plan at a cost of approximately \$400,000 that is being done by the LRA and CCD.** Monty confirmed that a pedestrian enhancement plan for Quebec and from the library is already planned and awaiting permitting from CCD. He opined that substituting judgment on safety, which is CCD oversight, might not be appropriate within the context of this hearing. He pointed out that CCD has already approved both signs with no safety issues noted.

Carla noted that the north sign is not reasonable with her previous safety concerns. That is why she asked that consideration for the signs be separated.

Monty – Only one of the criteria within Section B need apply and not all three. He said that he relies on the expertise of CCD staff and that the coming improvement plans were considered and acted upon in the reviews by various CCD agencies. **Bonnie confirmed that the plan was reviewed by all CCD agencies.**

Section C

The Variance responds to Section C in that it does not unreasonably burden other properties.

Section D

Kevin – A separation of the two signs and only approving one could be considered as meeting the “minimum” alleviation.

Section E

The condition of signs in the ROW was not due to any action by the Applicant, but rather the result of CCD build-to requirements.

Vote on Location of Signs:

Carla requested that the committee address the two signs as separate items.

A motion by Kevin Yoshida and seconded by Carla McConnell was passed unanimously to approve the request for a variance to locate the southern ground sign within the Quebec ROW (tree lawn) as having met criteria A, B.1, C, D and E.

A motion by Kevin Yoshida and seconded by Steve Lane was passed with four ayes and one nay vote to approve the location of the north ROW sign in the Quebec tree lawn by meeting criteria A, B.1, C D, and E.

Carla explained that her negative vote is based on the general Design Guideline of “no signs in the ROW (with the approval of the south sign not setting a precedent) and she thought Section C was not met. Allowing only the southern sign would have been the “minimum”.

Size of Signage:

Kevin – The size is not supportable at 12’5”H x 6’3”W with the requirement of 9’H x 5’W in Section 4.69 of the Design Guidelines. **The three extra feet in height is from the base and not within the feet of the signage.** There is no granular direction on the signage vs the base or supportive structure. It would be up to the discretion or interpretation of the DRC with no specific guidance in the Design Guidelines. His opinion is that the 45 SF applies to the entire structure. **Perhaps the Guidelines, which were written years ago, had no concept of what would be coming and the number of tenants and marketing needs.**

Since the size criteria was not included in the application for a variance, Monty asked if the Applicant would want to include the size difference in the variance request.

Bob Koontz wanted to clarify what he heard – that the DRC feels the size of the ground signs on Quebec was not addressed in the variance application. He asked for time for the team to gather data and to complete the application properly.

A motion by Steve Lane and seconded by Carla McConnell was passed for a continuance of the Hearing to July 1 for consideration by the DRC on the size of the signs.

- **Adjournment**

The hearing was adjourned at 9:25 a.m.