

MEMORANDUM



VILLAGE OF DEERFIELD

TO: Plan Commission

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

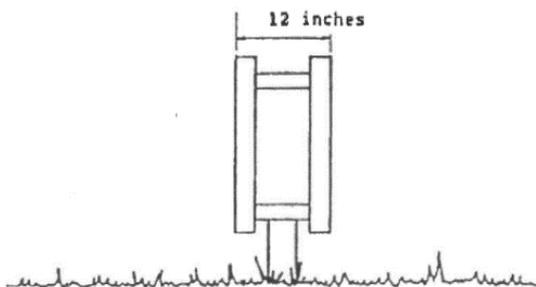
DATE: September 15, 2022

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

The purpose of a prefiling conference is to provide the applicant feedback, input, and direction on their proposal prior to the public hearing.

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

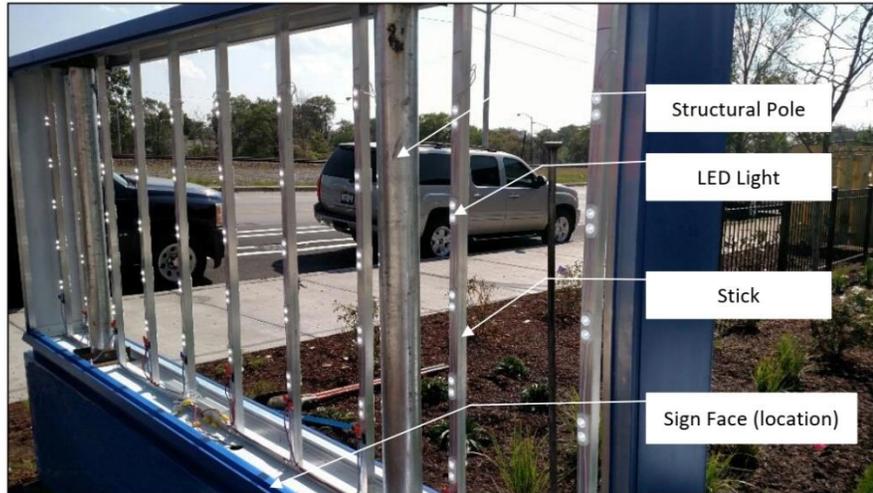
ground sign depths greater than 12 inches, but were unsure as to the appropriate ground sign depth. The ARC decided to move forward by surveying sign companies in order to recommend a ground sign depth for new ground signs.

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 occurred 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 inch deep + 5 – 9 inches spacing on both sides + 3 inches for the sign faces if there are no extrusions. A 12 inch sign depth does not even meet the minimum requirements for a smaller Lexan faced sign. The sign companies that were surveyed indicated increasing the maximum depth permitted 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 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

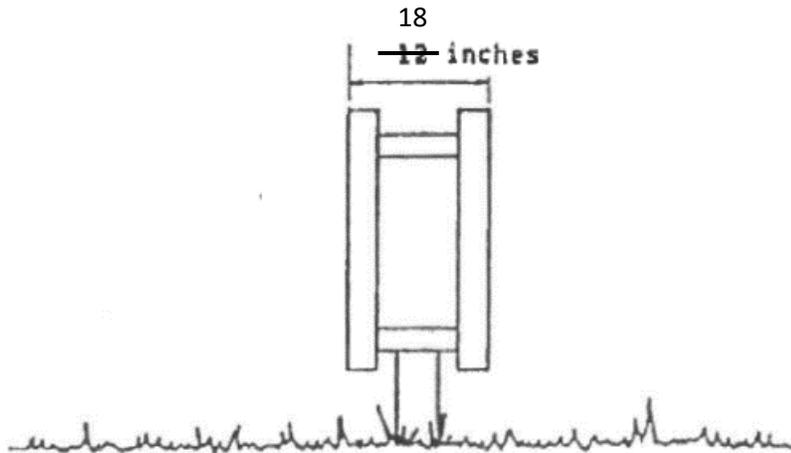
Amend Article 9.01-B.9,b of the Zoning Ordinance:

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.

Deerfield location would not have a canopy. Ms. Slonski explained they have found the addition of the order confirmation screen has proven to speed up service and reduce errors.

Ms Slonski explained they would like to install an illuminated directional sign at the exit of the drive-thru. The sign would read "Exit Only" on one side and "Thank you" on the opposite side. Ch. Dunn noted the illumination portion of the directional sign needs to be reviewed by the Plan Commission and approved by the Village Board. The Deerfield Zoning Ordinance does not permit illumination for directional signs.

The Commissioners were okay with the proposed order confirmation screen. Ms. Delevitt asked if they still plan to replace the existing ramp and railing adjacent to the drive-thru. Ms. Slonski confirmed the ramp and railing was removed from the project with the new menu board location. Ms. Quigley confirmed the digital confirmation screen's illumination setting would be set to meet the Village's requirements.

The Commissioners discussed the proposed directional sign. Ch. Dunn noted the sign's square footage was reduced from the previous meeting and is within the Village Code. The Commissioners were in favor of the illuminated directional sign.

Mr. Moons moved to approve the digital menu board and exterior updates for Starbucks Coffee, pending Board approval for menu board and illuminated directional sign. Ms. Flores seconded the motion. The motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Flores, Golub, Mock, Moons, Dunn (5)

NAYS: None (0)

2. Ground Sign Depth (distance between sign faces) – Continued Discussion and Recommendation to Plan Commission

Ms. Delevitt explained the Deerfield Zoning Ordinance currently has a 12-inch depth restriction (distance between sign faces) for ground signs. The current depth restriction could create structural issues or uneven lighting (hot spots), resulting in sign companies seeking variances. The ARC considered changing this restriction several years ago, but the process was never completed. Ms. Delevitt noted, the ARC reopened the discussion in February, and since then she conducted a survey polling several sign companies about the optimal distance between sign faces. She shared an image of the interior components of a ground sign, which consists of a structural post, LED lights, sticks and the sign faces. The sign companies she spoke to indicated most ground signs could be manufactured with a 16 to 18-inch distance between sign faces without issues. She noted most nearby municipalities do not have this restriction in their Codes. Ms. Flores questioned whether petitioners would want a greater distance between faces so the sign is more visible. Ch. Dunn explained the ARC wishes to keep a maximum restriction in the Code to prevent signs that look like cubes or with additional sign faces. Ms. Delevitt explained the ARC can choose to be more restrictive if they believe a particular sign should be narrower. Mr.

Mock believes the Zoning Ordinance should allow the distance between sign faces to be appropriate so modifications do not need to be made in the future. Ch. Dunn noted in 2018, the Commission recommended up to 20 inches, but the Commission is now suggesting up to 18 inches. Based on a survey conducted by Ms. Delevitt, the sign companies were okay with a distance between faces up to 18 inches. Ms. Delevitt noted if a sign variation is approved, the excess depth would be considered part of the sign face square footage.

Mr. Golub moved to recommend to the Plan Commission a text amendment that amends section 9.01.B,9(b) of the Deerfield Zoning Ordinance to state, *“The maximum distance allowed between two parallel or nearly parallel sign faces shall not exceed eighteen (18) inches unless otherwise specifically provided for in this Ordinance. If the maximum distance is to exceed 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.”* Ms. Flores seconded the motion. The motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Flores, Golub, Mock, Moons, Dunn (5)

NAYS: None (0)

Items from Staff

Ms. Delevitt noted she met with Village Staff to discuss the Sweetgreen storage issue that is visible through their windows. She mentioned they do not have enough interior space to store items away from their windows. The opaque windows do not appear to be meeting their needs, and they may want to add opaque vinyl to more windows or clean up their boxes and janitorial supplies. Mr. Mock questioned whether the Village can make suggestions early on in the process if a space is not appropriate for a particular tenant. Ms. Delevitt explained the leasing of tenant spaces is between the tenant and landlord. The Village does not always know about it until after a space is leased. She called Sweetgreen to discuss the issue and is waiting for them to get back to her.

Ms. Delevitt noted Starbucks will fill in any open holes remaining from the railing enclosure removal. Rocket Testing has a banner in the window, and she asked them to comply with the Window Ordinance. She reached out to Aligned about the extra signage on the west side of their building. Ms. Delevitt noted there are a few businesses interested in the Business Facade Rebate Program. One of the businesses will be occupying the pair of small houses on Waukegan Road where Warwick House used to be.

Ms. Delevitt noted there is a new business looking to occupy the former T-Mobile space in Deepbrook Mall. There is also a restaurant coming to the former Roti location in Deerfield Square. Bed, Bath & Beyond may want to do some exterior improvements.

~~Ms. Schneider asked about the storage boxes inside the building that are visible through the windows. Mr. Collins explained they have addressed this issue at the store level.~~

~~Mr. Moons moved to approve the Starbucks outdoor patio furniture and lighting as presented with the electrical box concealed. Ms. Flores seconded the motion. The motion passed by the following vote:~~

~~AYES: Chaitman, Flores, Moons, Schneider, Dunn (5)~~

~~NAYS: None (0)~~

Items from Staff

Ground Sign Depth – preliminary discussion

Ms. Delevitt explained the existing Deerfield Zoning Ordinance restricts the sign depth for ground and monument signs to 12 inches. In 2018, the ARC had discussed increasing the sign depth maximum to 20 inches to accommodate the sign's structural elements and space out the LED fixtures to avoid hotspots. Several petitioners have come through requesting deeper signs. Changing the Code would require a text amendment to the Deerfield Zoning Ordinance. The ARC would come up with parameters and Ms. Delevitt would write a report for the Plan Commission to make a recommendation to the Village Board for approval. Mr. Moons noted sign companies have mentioned it is both a structural and hotspot issue. Ms. Delevitt explained many other municipalities do not limit sign depths. They only limit the number of signs and the size of the faces. Ms. Delevitt noted that the current Code has a condition that when a variation is approved to permit a greater sign depth, the area of the two (2) sides are also included in the gross surface area of the sign. This helps prevent the signs from getting too wide. Ms. Schneider asked if there have been specific requirements given by sign manufacturers for LED lights. Mr. Moons believes there should be a depth limit but wants to allow modern technology to dictate the maximum. Ms. Flores suggested allowing a maximum range that would not exceed 20 inches. Ch. Dunn noted Portillo's and Northwestern Medicine signs both have an 18-inch depth. Mr. Moons would like to change the depth to what the professionals state is the minimum necessary for ground signs. Ms. Schneider wants to ensure the sign does not inhibit visibility. Ms. Delevitt explained the Village has to maintain the clear sight triangle for safety reasons. Ch. Dunn would like additional information from lighting professionals. Ms. Delevitt will survey sign companies for guidance before continuing the discussion on ground sign depths.

Ms. Delevitt reported the animal hospital has removed their holiday lights. Sweetgreen installed their last window vinyl. She noted the rooftop screening is still in process. Dollar Tree will remove the excess paper on their windows. City Barbeque's trash doors are broken and she will address that with the Deerbrook Mall property manager. McDonald's and Portillo's had banners. Ms. Delevitt reached out to both businesses.