

**APPROVED MINUTES OF THE
CITY OF ST. CLAIR SHORES
SIGN ARBITRATION**

Thursday, February 25, 2021

Meeting of the Sign Arbitration Board, held virtually via a Zoom video call.

PRESENT: Chairman Ketelhut, Saint Clair Shores, Michigan
City Manager Matt Coppler, Saint Clair Shores, Michigan
Councilman Frederick, Saint Clair Shores, Michigan
City Clerk Kotowski, Saint Clair Shores, Michigan
City Planner Liz Koto, Saint Clair Shores, Michigan
Veronica Black, Recording Secretary, Saint Clair Shores, Michigan

ALSO PRESENT: Roman Bonislowski, Ron and Roman, Royal Oak, Michigan
Nicole Adler, Ron and Roman, Birmingham, Michigan
Mario Santoro, Nino Salvaggio, Saint Clair Shores, MI
Frank Nicolella, Nino Salvaggio, Saint Clair Shores, MI
Annette Mordell, Michigan Institute of Urology, Saint Clair Shores, MI
Ken Slezak, Signs by Tomorrow, Clinton Township, MI

ABSENT:

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m.

2. Request from Ron and Roman, Inc. on behalf of Nino Salvaggio located at 27900 Harper, Sign #1a – banner (1 of 4), northwest elevation, denied. Multiple signs on same elevation, sign encroaches into right of way, signage on awning/ canopy other than on valance.

Roman Bonislowski and Nicole Adler from Ron and Roman; Mario Santoro and Frank Nicolella from Nino Salvaggio.

Items #2-5 for banner signs 1a, 1b, 1c, and 1d to be discussed and motioned together.

Bonislowski gave an overview of all proposed signage for the building. He explained that the intent of all proposed signage is to beautify city and accommodate business needs. The conditions of the building are unique with parking on both sides of building and a long store front.

The Harper Avenue façade currently has awnings along the windowing, which will be removed. It also has a large “Nino Salvaggio” sign that will remain. The proposed new signage of banners (items #2-5; banners 1a – 1d) and tag line of non-illuminated letters (item #6, sign 2) would clean up the elevation, enhance the façade, and represent the quality of the store. The canvas fabric banners traditionally represent markets. The banners are used on multiple Nino Salvaggio locations.

The North elevation currently lacks identification. Item #10, sign 6 would resolve this.

Items #7,8,9 for signs 3,4,5 are proposed on the South elevation of the building. The current look of the South elevation is a result of working with what was there, saving money. The current awnings have gone through their lifecycle. What is proposed will include a new hard roof over the glazed sunroom area, and a transparent canopy comprised of a polypropylene skylight material on extended framing. From the underside of the canopy, there will be triangular pieces of canvas and skylights displayed for a nice accent. These will be major improvements to their outdoor market.

The big change on the South elevation is rebuilding the air lock into a proposed greenhouse design over the door using the same polypropylene panels as the transparent canopy. Item #7 sign 3 is a blade sign

hanging at the very end of the greenhouse. Item #8 sign 4 is a neon strawberry sign that sits on the rear wall of the greenhouse design. The multi-layer material of the greenhouse will catch light uniquely and be a beautiful identifier.

Bonislowski described the approach as to provide regular bits of entertainment with scarce signage. The Ron and Roman firm designed the signage of Gaudinos across the street.

Ketelhut stated that the proposed signage makes the building look very nice.

Ron and Roman has done signage at different Nino Salvaggio stores in Michigan. Some components of the signage repeat, but each building is different architecturally.

Item #6 for sign 2 are small words going across whole Harper elevation. They are non-illuminated. This proposed sign, and the existing "Nino Salvaggio" sign, would need to be measured together. This makes the sign over in square footage. Koto explained that - based on way we currently determine signage – we draw a rectangle around the sign area. This is subject to change in upcoming ordinance edits.

The total rectangle of the existing Nino Salvaggio sign and Item #6 sign 2 totals 668 square feet. 322 square feet is what would be allowed under current ordinance. If they treat it as two separate signs, Item #6, sign 2 would be 40 square feet; the existing Nino Salvaggio sign is approximately 200 square feet. Canopy on Harper elevation is not considered a sign.

Koto stated that building is long. There is one address on the property. The way that Harper was platted some time ago was by bunches of 20-foot-wide parcels. The Nino Salvaggios plat has been under one owner for approximately 20 years.

Koto advised that the red awning on Harper elevation adjacent to the proposed item #6, sign 2 along with items #2-5, banners 1a-1d we will each need hold harmless agreements because they encroach on the right of way.

Previous state of the Harper elevation of the building included international flags, which were granted a Sign Arbitration variance at a previous meeting. The new motion to should be to remove international flags with placement of banners.

Motion by Kotowski, seconded by Ketelhut to approve the request consistent with rescinding former international flag variance and with the requirement of a hold harmless agreement needed for the awning and banners on Harper elevation (for items #2-5 signs 1a-1d).

There shall be no other changes allowed to the existing signs, unless a formal request is submitted to the Community Development Department. Failure to comply with Sign Arbitration ruling shall result in the revocation of this variance.

**Ayes: 3 – All
Motion: Carried.**

3. Request from Ron and Roman, Inc. on behalf of Nino Salvaggio located at 27900 Harper, Sign #1b – banner (2 of 4), northwest elevation, denied. Multiple signs on same elevation, sign encroaches into right of way, signage on awning/ canopy other than on valance

See discussion on #2 above

Motion by Kotowski, seconded by Ketelhut to approve the request consistent with rescinding former international flag variance and with the requirement of a hold harmless agreement needed for the awning and banners on Harper elevation (for items #2-5 signs 1a-1d).

There shall be no other changes allowed to the existing signs, unless a formal request is submitted to the Community Development Department. Failure to comply with Sign Arbitration ruling shall result in the revocation of this variance.

Ayes: 3 – All

Motion: Carried.

4. Request from Ron and Roman, Inc. on behalf of Nino Salvaggio located at 27900 Harper, Sign #1c – banner (3 of 4), northwest elevation, denied. Multiple signs on same elevation, sign encroaches into right of way, signage on awning/ canopy other than on valance.

See discussion on #2 above

Motion by Kotowski, seconded by Ketelhut to approve the request consistent with rescinding former international flag variance and with the requirement of a hold harmless agreement needed for the awning and banners on Harper elevation (for items #2-5 signs 1a -1d).

There shall be no other changes allowed to the existing signs, unless a formal request is submitted to the Community Development Department. Failure to comply with Sign Arbitration ruling shall result in the revocation of this variance.

Ayes: 3 – All

Motion: Carried.

5. Request from Ron and Roman, Inc. on behalf of Nino Salvaggio located at 27900 Harper, Sign #1d – banner (4 of 4), northwest elevation, denied. Multiple signs on same elevation, sign encroaches into right of way, signage on awning/ canopy other than on valance.

See discussion on #2 above

Motion by Kotowski, seconded by Ketelhut to approve the request consistent with rescinding former international flag variance and with the requirement of a hold harmless agreement needed for the awning and banners on Harper elevation (for items #2-5 signs 1a -1d).

There shall be no other changes allowed to the existing signs, unless a formal request is submitted to the Community Development Department. Failure to comply with Sign Arbitration ruling shall result in the revocation of this variance.

Ayes: 3 – All

Motion: Carried.

6. Request from Ron and Roman, Inc. on behalf of Nino Salvaggio located at 27900 Harper, Sign #2 – wall sign (tag line of non-illuminated flat cut letters), west elevation, denied. Sign exceeds allowable square footage and multiple signs on elevation.

See discussion on #2 above

Motion by Coppler, seconded by Kotowski, to approve the request.

There shall be no other changes allowed to the existing signs, unless a formal request is submitted to the Community Development Department. Failure to comply with Sign Arbitration ruling shall result in the revocation of this variance.

Ayes: 3 – All

Motion: Carried.

7. Request from Ron and Roman, Inc. on behalf of Nino Salvaggio located at 27900 Harper, Sign #3 - wall sign (strawberry icon), south elevation denied. Multiple signs on same elevation. Wall Sign cannot protrude from the wall.

See discussion on #2 above. Additional discussion:

Sign is protruding from a wall slightly and does not abut a road. The proposed non-illuminated strawberry icon blade sign will hang within the ridge line of the greenhouse. Stainless steel cables will secure it from the wind.

Koto explained that the load and attachment requirements reviewed as part of the permit review.

The sign technically does face Harper.

Koto explained that we cannot regulate signs based on content. We cannot say it is directional.

Motion by Ketelhut, seconded by Coppler, to approve the request with a hold harmless agreement.

There shall be no other changes allowed to the existing signs, unless a formal request is submitted to the Community Development Department. Failure to comply with Sign Arbitration ruling shall result in the revocation of this variance.

Ayes: 3 – All

Motion: Carried.

8. Request from Ron and Roman, Inc. on behalf of Nino Salvaggio located at 27900 Harper, Sign #4 – wall sign (neon strawberry), south elevation denied. Sign does not abut a road.

See discussion on #2 above. Additional discussion:

The neon strawberry sign does not abut a road but it is visible from the public right of way. If it were not visible from the public right of way, then it is not considered a sign.

Everything on south elevation does not abut a road. If they did abut a road, we need to draw the rectangle around entire elevation and it would be over on square footage.

Koto advised that the current sign ordinance does not prohibit neon as part of sign.

Measured independently, the neon strawberry sign is 6' 10" x 5' 8"; approximately 40 square feet.

Building length is 100 feet on South elevation allowing for 150 square feet of signage allowed.

Motion by Coppler, seconded by Ketelhut, to approve the request.

There shall be no other changes allowed to the existing signs, unless a formal request is submitted to the Community Development Department. Failure to comply with Sign Arbitration ruling shall result in the revocation of this variance.

Ayes: 3 – All

Motion: Carried.

9. Request from Ron and Roman, Inc. on behalf of Nino Salvaggio located at 27900 Harper, Sign #5 – roof sign, south elevation, roof sign prohibited.

See discussion on #2 above. Additional discussion:

The sign is not illuminated. It's a sign box construction mounted on new overhang. Two tag lines on this sign are cut into face of box and back lit. The sign would have three neon borders. Current sign is externally lit.

If sign was measured independently, this sign would be 66.5 square feet.

Motion by Kotowski, seconded by Ketelhut, to approve the request.

There shall be no other changes allowed to the existing signs, unless a formal request is submitted to the Community Development Department. Failure to comply with Sign Arbitration ruling shall result in the revocation of this variance.

Ayes: 3 – All
Motion: Carried.

10. Request from Ron and Roman, Inc. on behalf of Nino Salvaggio located at 27900 Harper, Sign #6 – wall sign (Nino Salvaggio), north elevation, denied. Sign does not abut a road.

See discussion on #2 above. Additional discussion:

Denied only because it does not abut a road.

The North elevation is 100 feet long and there is an allowance of 150 square feet of signage. This sign is proposed 75 – 80 square feet

Motion by Ketelhut, seconded by Kotowski, to approve the request.
There shall be no other changes allowed to the existing signs, unless a formal request is submitted to the Community Development Department. Failure to comply with Sign Arbitration ruling shall result in the revocation of this variance.

Ayes: 3 – All
Motion: Carried.

11. Request from Signs by Tomorrow on behalf of Michigan Institute of Urology located at 20952 12 Mile Rd, Suite 200 – wall sign, north elevation, does not abut a road. Sign abuts vacant parcel.

Annette Mordell from the Michigan Institute of Urology; Ken Slezak from Signs by Tomorrow.

Mordell explained that they were struggling with elderly patients finding the building. Michigan Institute of Urology is the largest client in building; they take up entire 2nd floor and a section of the 1st floor. The landlord has permitted their name on building. They used their branding colors. The signage would help patients find the building. They see 5,000 or so patients at this time. In urology, many patients must come into the office rather than be seen via telehealth.

The building is accessible from a common driveway. The monument sign at the mouth of the shared driveway was recently made smaller. It is a very large building, and the proposed signage would allow people to see it from 12 Mile Road. Koto advised it is a landlocked building with a very odd layout.

Coppler advised that if any other building tenants wanted signage on building, they would have to come before Sign Arbitration.

Currently, the only sign on the building is for “Shores Professional Building” and faces the parking lot.

The proposed sign does not come close to exceeding allowable square footage. The maximum allowed is 240 square feet and this sign is 104 square feet. There would still be square footage available for other tenants.

Ketelhut shared that this building was once an elementary school. Michigan Urology was the first tenant in the building.

The parcel of land to the north of building is owned by separate group and has been vacant for some time.

Motion by Coppler, seconded by Kotowski, to approve the request.
There shall be no other changes allowed to the existing signs, unless a formal request is submitted to the Community Development Department. Failure to comply with Sign Arbitration ruling shall result in the revocation of this variance.

Ayes: 3 – All
Motion: Carried.

12. Approval of Minutes for the meeting of January 28, 2021 (emailed)

Motion by Kotowski, seconded by Coppler, to approve the minutes of January 28, 2021 as submitted.

**Ayes: All – 3
Motion carried.**

13. Audience Participation

14. Adjournment

Motion by Ketelhut, seconded by Kotowski, to adjourn the meeting at 9:58 a.m.

**Ayes: All – 3
Motion carried.**

THE PRECEDING MINUTES ARE A SYNOPSIS OF THE SIGN ARBITRATION MEETING AND DO NOT REPRESENT A VERBATIM RECORD