


FROM	NAME & TITLE	THOMAS J. STOSUR, DIRECTOR <i>Stole for T.J.S.</i>	CITY of BALTIMORE  <b>MEMO</b>	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING 417 EAST FAYETTE STREET, 8 <sup>TH</sup> FLOOR		
	SUBJECT	BMZA / 4707-4711 Edmondson Avenue		

TO

Mr. David Tanner, Executive Director  
Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals  
417 East Fayette Street, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor

DATE: April 16, 2012

**REQUEST**

The Department of Planning has received Alan Nethen's Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals (BMZA) application, on behalf of Gable Signs and Graphics, to construct two free-standing directly illuminated signs, one each at the northwest and northeast corners of the property. We understand that this appeal is scheduled for hearing on April 17, 2012.

**SITE**

4707-4711 Edmondson Avenue is located on the south side of the street, approximately 200' east of the intersection with Nottingham Road. This property measures approximately 280' by 401'3" and is currently improved with two religious institutional buildings. This site is zoned R-1.

**ANALYSIS**

Use: In this zoning district, identification signs are a permitted accessory use, and so are allowed (§4-1102 and §11-319). These signs, if indirectly illuminated, are limited to 18 square feet in surface area, and if directly (internally) illuminated, to 12 square feet; to a height of 6 feet if free-standing; and may not project more than 8 inches across a street line if attached to a building (§11-319.b.). Only one sign is allowed per street frontage of the property. The design drawings furnished by the applicant propose a pair of directly illuminated free-standing monument-type signs with a height of approximately 5 feet and a surface area of approximately 32 square feet (approximately 8' wide by 4' high) mounted on a monument that would be over 6½ feet in height at its peak. While the upper one-third of each sign would be fixed copy, the lower two-thirds would be a full-color light-emitting diode (LED) screen with variable message capability.

The proposed digital sign would have a light-emitting diode (LED) light source that could be controlled by a remote computer-activated system that allows changes in message or copy (text, images, or both). Because of this capability of the system the LED portion of each sign could display several images or changes of copy within a relatively short period of time. For this reason, Board approval of a LED panel as part of each sign structure must be conditioned upon certain limitations intended to minimize distraction of passing motorists and protect any residences in the vicinity from excessive glare.

Title 15, Subtitle 2 of the Zoning Code authorizes variances of certain items in the Code, but does not authorize variances of surface areas for signs. A height variance applicable to the proposed sign design may be approved by the Board subject to its making certain findings in accordance with §15-219 of the Zoning Code.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Department of Planning recommends that, if this application is approved, approval be subject to these conditions, in addition to any conditions that the Board may impose:

- That each sign will be erected in the locations shown on the drawing of the site, as submitted with the application, at a location that provides adequate sight distance for motorists and pedestrians in the vicinity of each of the signs;
- That the performance of the digital screen portion of each sign conform to all of the requirements of §11-502 by having a minimum dwell time of ten seconds; that it will not be increased beyond or above the area approved by the Board, that it will not increase the degree of illumination, and that it will not have any flashing, blinking, fluctuating, or otherwise animated light;
- That the digital screen portion of each sign will not have animations, movie clips and/or sound elements;
- That the digital screen portion of each sign will default to black entirely in the event of a failure of the remote control system or an interruption of message or copy (text, images, or both).

TJS/wya/mf

cc: Alan Nethen, Appellant