

SUMMARY DATE: January 25, 2024

TOWN PLANNING STAFF SUMMARY SHEET FROM: Michael J. Murphy, AICP, 860-885-8697/mmurphy@seccog.org

APPLICATION / PROJECT NAME	APPLICANT/PROPERTY OWNER
River Road I, LLC	Nicholas Alletto, River Road I, LLC
PUBLIC HEARING/ DECISION TIMEFRAMES	PROPERTY ADDRESS/LOCATION INFORMATION
65 days from close of public hearing	N/A

BRIEF SUMMARY OF REQUEST The focus of the regulation amendment is section 15.8.2. This request involves a proposed change of zone regulations to include provisions for monument style signage at <i>multi-use commercial developments</i> in the BV zones. WAIVER REQUESTS: Not applicable	TEXT AMENDMENT FOR MONUMENT STYLE SIGNAGE IN THE BV ZONES AT MULTI-USE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS
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EXISTING ZONING	EXISTING LAND USE	SURROUNDING ZONING & LANDUSE	SITE IMPROVEMENTS	SIZE OF PROPERTY
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A.	N/A

PLANNING STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

COMPATIBILITY / COMPLIANCE with the POCD-2016 and other appropriate plans, policies or studies: The 2016 POCD focuses on evaluation of the BV zoning standards to improve development in these commercial areas. It calls for the regulations for parking, access and <u>other standards</u> to be reconsidered to promote appropriate development. This report provides more discussion to assist the commission in considering the proposal's consistence with these objectives later in this report.	PROJECT HISTORY AND BACKGROUND: The applicant is currently constructing a <i>multi-use commercial development</i> that is expected to include a restaurant, a retail store, a medical office and a communications service operation . He has approached the Town about his concerns that the regulations only permit individual freestanding signs of no more than 16 square feet in size at 6' maximum height, focused on single use development. Nearby large-scale retail permits internally illuminated pylon signs as tall as 19' with a maximum face of 140 square feet of sign area per side. He has made application and proposes an alternative to address commercial sites with 3 or more different businesses. The amendment would be included in the freestanding sign section.
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LAND USE/ DEVELOPMENT COMPATIBILITY with APPLICABLE REGULATIONS AND/OR DESIGN STANDARDS:

Administrative: The legal ad was noticed in accordance with law. There was a courtesy referral of this application to the councils of government, although this is not an application made by the commission, since BV zones are located within 500' of northern, southern and eastern municipal boundaries.

Land Use Policy Analysis: The 2016 POCD recommends that the commission "**Consider revisions to Business Village regulations to address parking, access, and other standards to encourage mixed-use, pedestrian friendly development and discourage strip developments**".

Besides the standard provisions for **externally illuminated** free standing signage for small scale retail development (16 sf of sign face, 6' high and 6' wide), section 15.8.2 currently includes additional free standing **illuminated sign allowances** for the following:

Large Retail Stores – 140 sq ft of internally illuminated sign face, 19' high and 12' wide

Movie Theatres - 80 sq ft of internally illuminated sign face, 16' high and 15' wide

The application proposes a text change to add subsection *f* to the standards for freestanding signs in section 15.8.2. The applicant proposes to add the new subsection for multi-use commercial developments 10,000 square feet or more after the pylon signage provisions and allow a monument type sign as follows:

Multi-use Commercial Developments: 96 sf ft of internally illuminated sign face, 14' wide and 10' wide

Multi-use commercial developments in today's market might be 3, 4, 5 or possibly 6 storefronts. It is not uncommon for spaces to be further demised and spaces reduced in the future based on market demands. Reducing and dividing the spaces at *Lisbon Landing* and the *Crossing at Lisbon* are examples, adding pressure for free standing and wall signage. Analytical points to consider are whether the request for 96 sf of sign area is too much area for panels to accommodate 4, to maybe 6, commercial spaces in the short and the long term. In addition, while the commission has focused on requiring external lighting of signs for small individual developments, it has allowed internally illuminated signage for larger developments and on larger buildings. Finally, the commission should consider whether it considers sign standards in the purview of the BV policies that are recommended for reconsideration in the POCD's recommendations.

Legal Tests to Consider: A zoning commission performs a quasi-legislative function when it processes an amendment application either from an applicant or when it proposes its own amendments to text or the map. So, the commission has broad discretion whether to make a change in zoning text language or if determining if there is a need to make such a change. But there are certain rational criteria that this planner recommends the commission consider when reviewing this text amendment proposal:

- a) Is the text amendment consistent with the policies in the Plan of Conservation and Development and other appropriate planning related policies?
- b) Were the BV standards for signage appropriate to begin with, and if not, have conditions changed and are changes to the text warranted?
- c) Is the request harmonious with the Town's comprehensive plan of zoning or structure of the regulations?

Summary and Conclusions: In summary, the commission should view a zoning text change request with an eye that if the amendment is granted, the commission feels comfortable that future signage with projects in the BV zones can still be compatible and beneficial to the Town of Lisbon.

This planner does believe the current regulations allowing only 16 sf (6' high and only 6' wide) per sign for development that could have 3-6 storefront operations within it could be considered somewhat restrictive and counterproductive to multiple use development on sites, possibly requiring smaller print and/or signage that may not be as visible or in scale with the architecture or development on a particular site. The matter of lighting the sign externally or internally is a subjective matter for the commission to sort through, especially given its allowance for each in the regulations at different scale developments.

Ultimately, the commission can approve, deny or modify the amendment to reduce the sign dimensions proposed. It can also modify the internal illumination provision and require external illumination, for example, if it feels strongly about this issue, or if it feels the applicant's request is out of character with the standards for commercial signage and would adversely impact BV zones.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS, INCLUDING ANY MODIFICATIONS, CONDITIONS, REASONS FOR APPROVAL OR DENIAL, ETC.:

Staff will be prepared to recommend action at the meeting.

ATTACHMENTS (CIRCLE):

SUBMITTED PLANS

APPLICATION FORM(S)

LEGAL NOTICE

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

PUBLIC COMMENT(S)

AGENCY COMMENTS

APPLICANT RESPONSE

STUDY EXCERPTS

OTHER (DESCRIBE):