

VILLAGE OF COLONIE



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SIGN REVIEW BOARD

Jim Rubino
Chairman
Alexandra Hart
Coordinator

VIA ZOOM & LIVESTREAMED ON THE VILLAGE OF COLONIE YOUTUBE PAGE

There was a meeting held by the Village of Colonie Sign Review Board on May 28, 2020 at Village Hall, 2 Thunder Road, Albany, NY 12205. The meeting started at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order with a salute to the flag.

Roll Call:

Chairman Rubino	Present
Mr. Levy	Present
Mr. Michalski	Present
Ms. Trifiletti	Present
Ms. Pochily	Absent
Ms. Dickinson	Present
Attorney Caponera	Present
Code Officer Cerone	Present
Coordinator Hart	Present
Trustee Murphy	Absent

Minutes from the January 23, 2020 meeting were reviewed by the present members of the board. Mr. Rubino made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Dickinson seconded the motion. Unanimous vote in favor to approve the minutes as amended from the January 23, 2020 meeting.

APPLICANT:

**1761 CENTRAL AVE
GEICO INSURANCE
(MONUMENT SIGN)**

Mr. Rick Schrade appeared before the Sign Review Board via Zoom teleconference to seek a variance for a monument sign at 1761 Central Ave. Chairman Rubino stated that this applicant was conditionally approved on January 23, 2020 for a monument sign on the condition that the sign location be first approved by the Village Board as the proposed freestanding monument sign would be located within a filed Village sewer easement. Code Enforcement Officer Cerone stated that on March 6, 2020 the applicant was issued sign permits for 2 wall signs, (one facing Central Avenue and one facing Pine Street) both internally lit and under the 32 square foot

maximum size. Mr. Cerone explained that after the Mayor, Board of Trustees, Village Engineer and the Department of Public Works reviewed the placement of the monument sign, it was decided that any sign on this property could not be located directly on or adjacent to the utility easement. Chairman Rubino stated that the applicant is now seeking a third sign.

Mr. Schrade stated that he purchased the building in January 2020 and previously was before the Sign Review Board for the previously mentioned wall and monument signs. Mr. Schrade explained that he was told by the Village that he needed to relocate the monument sign due to the easement. In between the decision of the Village Board, he applied for a sign permit for a second wall sign, which was approved through the building department. The wall signs are located facing Central Ave and Poplar Street. Mr. Schrade stated that he was unaware of the hardship he created with the allowable number of signs. Mr. Schrade explained his need for the monument citing that the building is not visible until drivers are passing the building due to the trees in front of the building. Ms. Trifiletti asked if the tree could be removed. Mr. Schrade stated that the trees are calculated in the green space requirement set by the Planning Commission and therefore could not be removed or would require a site plan amendment and approval. Mr. Michalski stated that the wall sign facing Central Ave is considered useless however creates a nice visual for the building.

Chairman Rubino stated that at the last meeting it was agreed upon that Mr. Schrade be granted two signs and said that if he wants the monument sign then Mr. Schrade should take down one wall sign. Chairman Rubino stated that since this building is erected on a corner lot, the code allows for two signs. Mr. Schrade stated that there are several businesses adjacent to him that have multiple signs; AT&T, Best Fire, Subway, Hoffman's Car Wash and Goldstein Subaru and stated that it would only be fair to have the same ability for a third sign. Mr. Schrade also stated that Pioneer Bank was recently granted generous variances for their new building which is located very close to Central Ave. Attorney Caponera explained that some of these other businesses were considered to be pre-existing, non-conforming when the sign code was updated. Attorney Caponera stated that Goldstein used to have 30 foot (plus or minus) tall monument signs which were removed as part of the Sign Board's decision to bring the site into closer conformance.

Mr. Schrade stated that he recently modified the site plan with the Planning Commission to accommodate the requested monument sign to ensure he conformed with the 25 foot setback and away from the easement. Mr. Schrade stated that he is only seeking the variance for the number of allowable signs. Attorney Caponera stated that Pioneer Bank proposed a total of 5 signs and was granted variances for three and explained that the Sign Board continually tries to make sure each business is conforming to the sign code. Mr. Schrade stated that he would not be seeking this variance if he did not feel the sign was necessary. Mr. Schrade explained that these signs are an investment into his business and is spending upwards of \$25,000.

Chairman Rubino stated that he feels like the applicant should still comply with the two sign limit. Ms. Trifiletti stated she agreed that the applicant should stay in compliance with the sign code. Mr. Levy stated that he has no problem with the third sign. Attorney Caponera asked if

the proposed wall sign moves or is considered an electronic messaging center (EMC). Mr. Schrade stated no and the Geico does not allow those types of signs. The sign will be internally lit. Ms. Dickinson stated that she was also ok with the applicant having a third sign. Mr. Michalski stated that he believes the applicant should only have two signs and added that the Board made McDonald's cut back the number of signs and didn't want them to have the signature golden arches.

Chairman Rubino asked if there will be any directional signs. Mr. Schrade stated no. Mr. Schrade stated that over one million dollars has been invested in this property and is asking for one additional sign to help drive in business and help employ 15 people. Mr. Schrade explained that he is here in the Village for the long term wishes to run a successful business and feels like asking for a third sign is not a big ask. Attorney Caponera stated that this applicant has shown that he is willing to comply and has adhered to the size and setback requirements in addition to fulfilling the Planning Commission's site plan requirements.

Mr. Levy made a motion to approve the monument sign as proposed. Mr. Michalski seconded the motion.

VOTE:

Chairman Rubino	Yes
Mr. Levy	Yes
Mr. Michalski	Yes
Ms. Trifiletti	Yes
Ms. Dickinson	Yes

All in favor to approve the application as presented.

Attorney Caponera asked if the building has blue LED type lighting under the eaves of the building. Mr. Schrade stated yes and that it is only lit at night and creates a nice halo around the front of the building. Attorney Caponera explained that the light is considered a sign under Village Code and other business have had to obtain variances for them. Mr. Schrade showed the Board what the building looks like with the light on. Mr. Schrade asked if he could run the lights during the holidays. Attorney Caponera stated no.

Mr. Levy made a motion to rescind his previous motion granting the monument sign. Ms. Dickinson seconded the motion.

VOTE:

Chairman Rubino	Yes
Mr. Levy	Yes
Mr. Michalski	Yes
Ms. Trifiletti	Yes
Ms. Dickinson	Yes

Unanimous to rescind the motion to approve.

Chairman Rubino made a motion to approve the monument sign as proposed with the condition that the blue underlighting not be turned on. Mr. Levy seconded the motion.
VOTE: All in favor to approve the monument sign as proposed.

Mr. Michalski asked about the status of the Prime Storage sign. Coordinator Hart stated that right before the Covid- 19 shutdown the company was getting ready to install the new sign. Coordinator Hart stated she will check in with the sign company and get a status update.

Mr. Levy made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Trifiletti seconded the motion.

VOTE:	Chairman Rubino	Yes
	Mr. Levy	Yes
	Mr. Michalski	Yes
	Ms. Trifiletti	Yes
	Ms. Dickinson	Yes

Unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alexandra M. Hart
Sign Review Coordinator
Village of Colonie