

Board of Adjustment / Municipal Sign Review Board

The Board of Adjustment/Municipal Sign Review Board met Wednesday, February 6, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 1311 Chestnut Street, Bastrop, Texas.

1. Call to Order.

Blas Coy called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Roll call and confirmation of a quorum of Board members.

Blas Coy	- present
Michael Gibbons	- present
Dan Hays-Clark	- absent (prior notice was given)
Debra Thorne-Francis	- present
Clifford Wright	- present
Drew Pickle	- present
Herb Goldsmith	- present

3. Citizen's comments.

There were no citizen's comments.

4. Consideration and approval of the November 7, 2012, Board of Adjustment meeting minutes.

Blas Coy noted three corrections needed to be made on pages 2, 4 and the last page of the meeting minutes.

Clifford Wright made a motion to approve the meeting minutes with the above mentioned corrections. Seconded by Debra Thorne-Francis and the motion passed unanimously.

5. The Board of Adjustment adjourned from its regular session and convened as the Municipal Sign Review Board.

6. Public Hearing: The Municipal Sign Review Board will Convene a Public Hearing on Sign Variance Request, MSRBV 13:01 as follows:

Variance to Sign Ordinance Section 3.20.011.3.A – Sign illumination in the central sign category, neon or phosphorescent lighting shall not exceed ten (10) percent of the total signage allowed and may only be located in a window. Proposed sign location is located in the Central Business District at 905 Main Street.

Blas Coy opened the public hearing.

Melissa McCollum addressed the Board members stating she believes this may be the first sign variance request she has been involved in with this Board. Melissa gave some background information on Maxine's, located at 905 Main Street, stating it was designated as a Historic Landmark on September 23, 2008. Melissa stated signs located on a Historic Landmark structure must receive a Certificate of Appropriateness and the applicant applied for a

Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Landmark Commission (HLC) at their November 20, 2012 meeting. The owner did receive approval of the proposed wall and canopy/awning signage provided that the sign met all City Code and Ordinances. Melissa stated the canopy/awning sign, although the size is appropriate, it does not meet the ordinance requirements because contains exposed neon. The HLC reviewed the color cut sheets but did not see the lighted photo picture of the proposed sign. She stated the applicant would like to receive a variance to the proposed allowance of the neon signage.

Melissa stated notifications of the requested variance were re-mailed to the 27 adjacent property owners, who reside within 200 feet of the affected property, on January 16, 2013 for the February 6, 2013 Municipal Sign Review Board meeting. Since that time, three (3) additional comments were received in addition to the previous five (5) comments from citizens making the totals now, six (6) in favor and two (2) opposed to the variance.

Discussions were held between Board members and Melissa regarding HLC approval, the allowance of neon signage in the Central Business District (CBD) and illumination standards. It was confirmed also that this variance request is about the exposed neon only. There were discussions regarding other businesses and their signage within the Central Business District (CBD).

David Sartain, owner of Maxine's on Main, addressed the board stating in just the last few years, Maxine's has gone from a struggling restaurant to an iconic destination that is not just for Bastropians, but for travelers throughout Central Texas. Mr. Sartain stated this was due to many factors including great food and service but also advertising throughout the area. He stated to further advance their establishment and expand their evening hours; they developed a sign with a new brand and retro design characteristic of an old-time café. They are now known as Maxine's Café and this new neon sign would be placed at the entryway of the café as a beacon for nighttime diners. Mr. Sartain hopes this will draw a new segment of evening diners and enable them to add weekday dinner service.

Lynn Williams with Sign Builders of America, addressed the Board regarding the sign illumination stating this particular sign is not actually neon but a gas; it does not get brighter or dimmer with night or daytime hours. He stated the illumination will be at 6500 which is standard for this type of sign and to make it lower in wattage, about 4500, he would have to completely re-make the sign.

Melissa stated if this variance is approved it will run with the property and not the owner.

Blas Coy closed the public hearing.

Debra Thorne-Francis made a motion to approve the variance request. Michael Gibbons seconded the motion. The vote went as follows:

Blas Coy	- approve
Drew Pickle	- approve
Debra Thorne-Francis	- approve
Michael Gibbons	- approve
Clifford Wright	- opposed to approval

The variance request was approved with a vote of 4 to 1 in favor of approving the variance.

7. The Municipal Sign Review Board adjourned the Municipal Sign Review Board session and reconvened into regular Board of Adjustment session.

8. Director's Report.

Melissa gave a brief update on the Smart Code – Form-Based Codes up to the present date. Melissa also stated there will be a March meeting for this Board to be held on March 6th.

9. Adjourn.

Clifford Wright made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Drew Pickle and the meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.



Blas Coy, Vice Chair