

**North Little Rock Sign Board**  
**Minutes**  
**September 13, 2016**

---

The North Little Rock Building and Housing Board of Adjustment meeting was called to order by Basil Shoptaw at 9:35 am in the Community Planning and Permits Conference Room.

**Members Present**

Brad Hughes  
Basil Shoptaw  
Gladys Webb  
Jeremy White

**Members Absent**

Tommy Cupples

**Staff Present**

Shawn Spencer, Planning Director  
Jimmy Pritchett, City Planner  
Jenifer Holland, Secretary

**Others Present:**

Victoria Leigh  
Jean Martin

**Excuse Absent Member:**

Mr. Hughes formed a motion to excuse Tommy Cupples.

Mrs. Webb seconded the motion and there was no dissent.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Mrs. Webb formed a motion to approve minutes from the last meeting of this Board.

Mr. Hughes seconded the motion and there was no dissent.

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

1. BHBA Case #2016 - 3 – To install 2 monument signs, First sign – 9-foot-tall, Second sign 8-foot-tall with a rotating top at 2800 Percy Machin Drive.

Victoria Leigh stated that she and her mother, Jean Martin, have purchased the property at 2800 Percy Machin which sits at the corner of 29<sup>th</sup> Street and Percy Machin. The request that we made in our letter, we would like to put a 9-foot-tall sign here on Percy Machin for the tenants for the end of the building we will rent out to tenants, and also put a 8 foot tall sign on the North East end of the property.

Mrs. Leigh said that the neighboring business owners are copasetic with her sign requests. Her request falls under the code requirements for both sign requests.

Mr. Shoptaw asked if she was amending her request to a 6ft tall monument sign?

Mrs. Leigh said she wanted to see how the meeting went. She mostly wants the lion to rotate on top of the sign at the North East corner for her businesses, Leigh Law and the mediation office. She said she misspoke; at 9 feet they are within code.

Mrs. Webb said that allowed is 6 feet.

Mr. Spencer said that 6-foot-tall monument sign is within code.

Mr. Shoptaw said that staff has said that maximum allowed for that area is a 6-foot-tall monument sign, so we have a request for extra height.

Mrs. Leigh said that the sign request on the end, they would like to have a rotating lion on top. She showed a picture of the lion and that her request for this sign is because she is in competition with the moving trains on the other side of the street, and she wants a sign that will draw people's attention to her business.

Mr. Spencer asked what did she mean by competing? How does a sign compete with a train?

Mrs. Leigh said there are 4-5 trains every day, and she was hoping for people to look down 29<sup>th</sup> street.

Mr. Hughes said he didn't understand the movement of the lion.

Mrs. Leigh said that moving signs are innovative, entertaining, and companies the world over have used moving signs in their marketing, and from a marketing standpoint to gain attention and to be well recognized in the community. Area businesses have signs over 6 feet. She feels she is competing with local businesses that have very tall signs.

Mr. Spencer asked how does the print 4 less sign move?

Mrs. Martin said it twirls around.

Mr. Hughes said he had never noticed the Print 4 less sign moving.

Mr. Spencer said you are allowed to have a tall sign like that as a pole sign, but her requests are for monument signs, and the sign code only allows for monument signs to be 6 feet tall. If you want to do a tall sign, you can have a 25-foot-tall pole sign today.

Mrs. Leigh said yes but she is asking for a monument sign.

Mr. Spencer said you can't compare the 2. A pole sign is allowed to be 25-foot-tall, but a monument sign is only allowed to be 6 feet tall.

Mrs. Martin said when she first came in she asked for a tall pole sign and Mr. Pritchett told her she couldn't have a sign as tall as her request without going before the Sign Board.

Mr. Pritchett said when you first came into the office back in March, you asked for a tall pole sign because you wanted it to be seen from the interstate. He also said the picture you brought in was of a sign in Texas that was an extremely tall sign, and he also showed that request to Mr. Spencer.

Mr. Spencer said if you are proposing a tall sign to be seen from the interstate, that wouldn't be allowed. A 26-foot-tall sign would be allowed.

Mrs. Martin said she had agreed to purchase this sign from Texarkana.

Mrs. Leigh said she thought it was taller than the 25 feet allowed.

Mrs. Leigh said she thinks a monument sign is classier and prettier, and she doesn't understand why they couldn't get a variance for a taller monument sign. There is no residential in the area, it is all commercial and industrial.

Mr. Shoptaw asked if the Percy Machin sign would have 4 sides to it.

Mrs. Leigh said it would have 2 because you can only see 2.

Mr. Spencer said it would be a triangle instead of a square.

Mr. Shoptaw said it would have 2 faces.

Mrs. Leigh said yes, drivers would not be able to see the back side so that would just be a solid color.

Mr. Shoptaw asked if all the tenants would want to be on that sign? 16 spaces are a lot for one sign.

Mrs. Leigh said the sign for 29<sup>th</sup> Street would be for her businesses, Leigh Law, and Leigh Liaisons, with the lion on top. The other sign would have all the tenant names on it.

Mr. Shoptaw asked if the tenants would be all professional offices.

Mrs. Leigh said yes, she would be renting to quiet, accountants, tax preparers, other lawyers if they don't compete with her business, maybe bankruptcy lawyers.

Mrs. Webb asked about the 16 tenant spaces on the sign.

Mrs. Leigh said we have space for 16 but if a tenant wanted more than one space for their office space, then they would only have 1 sign space on the monument sign.

Mrs. Martin said someone suggested 8 sign spaces per side.

Mrs. Leigh said ideally she would like to have 16 per each side since the traffic flows from both East and West. An alternative would be to have 8 on 1 side and 8 on the other.

Mr. Shoptaw asked if there would also be wall signs.

Mrs. Leigh showed a picture of a directional sign.

Mr. Shoptaw asked only directional signs on the building.

Mrs. Leigh said the building is being remodeled to meet ADA standards. The East end of the building will have a wheel chair ramp into the building.

Mr. Shoptaw asked if there would be a plaque directing people to the various offices.

Mrs. Leigh said they might do that on the inside so as people walk into the lobby, people would know what suite.

Mrs. Martin said we are not allowing tenants to put their names on the outside of the building.

Mrs. Leigh said she is trying to become a part of the community, as she has lived in North Little Rock and running for office, and as soon as the remodel is done, she is going to move her business over to North Little Rock. She doesn't want to be tacky or having people make fun of them.

Mrs. Martin in regards to the sign on the 29<sup>th</sup> street entrance, there is no parking on that side, but there is a patio area and beside that door is the mediation room and conference room. Beside that would be a plaque with Leigh Liaison. Want to make this a nice area for people to take a breather, since sometimes, mediation can last for hours. Other than the height variance, the only other thing they are asking for is for the sign to move.

Mrs. Leigh clarified the sign won't move fast, more of a slow rotation.

Mrs. Martin asked if the Board had seen the Scotland Yard sign, it moves slowly, and it is a famous sign.

Mrs. Leigh asked if anyone had any questions.

Mrs. Shoptaw asked if the Board had any questions or any staff comments.

Mr. Shoptaw said he had been here a number of years, has the board ever approved an animated sign?

Mr. Spencer said no, they are strictly illegal, so as to not gather attention, and not to cause any traffic hazards.

Mr. Hughes said the old car lots along Broadway used to have moving signs.

Mr. Spencer said he would need to do some research, but an older sign may have been grandfathered in, but should the business move or change, the sign would no longer be allowed.

Mrs. Leigh said with respect to the traffic, 29<sup>th</sup> street is not a major thoroughfare, very few cars use that street, so I don't think that it would be a hazard.

Mr. Hughes told Mrs. Leigh that he understands the argument she is trying to make but they have never allowed an animated sign within the city, and I'm the most senior member on this commission.

Mrs. Leigh said there is a first time for everything. Other than not having done it in the past, what is stopping you from doing it now?

Mr. Shoptaw said everyone who has ever come before the board asking for an animated sign would come back asking about their denial.

Mrs. Webb asked Mr. Spencer if electronic changeable copy signs allowed in this area of the city?

Mr. Spencer said no, not in this area.

Mr. Shoptaw asked if the height request included the lion on top?

Mrs. Leigh said yes.

Mr. Pritchett said it would be 6ft without the lion.

Mrs. Leigh said considering the neighborhood, she thinks it would really help build up the community and increase business. No one objects and had verbally told Mrs. Leigh that they were fine with her sign requests.

Mr. Shoptaw said we have two choices, we can either hear a motion from the board, or hear an amended proposal from you?

---

Mr. White asked how tall is the Motel 6 sign?

Mrs. Leigh said the monument sign is 10ft by 8 ft monument sign but that does not include the base that it sits on.

Mr. Hughes said he is not ok with the movement of the lion. We can talk about the height. I think your sign looks good. With regards to past sign board cases and the number of times we have said no to animated signs. You're not in an area that LED lit signs are allowed.

Mr. Spencer said LED lit signs were banned throughout the city then a couple of areas adopted a sign overlay district.

Mrs. Leigh asked why she can't have an LED lit sign.

Mr. Spencer clarified you cannot have a LED lit changeable copy sign at this location. The type of sign that changes the screen every 30 seconds or so.

Mr. Spencer told Mrs. Leigh that the board has given her some ideas on how they would vote.

Mrs. Martin asked if it had to be a majority vote.

Mr. Spencer said yes.

Mr. Hughes said you don't have any votes for the rotating sign.

Mrs. Martin asked if it would help to have documentation stating that animated signs don't cause traffic accidents.

Mr. Hughes said no.

Mrs. Leigh said forget the moving sign.

Mrs. Martin said ok forget the moving sign, what about the height?

Mr. Spencer said he suggested the Board look at each sign as a separate variance request. In regards to the 29<sup>th</sup> Street sign, how tall are you requesting with the lion?

Mrs. Leigh said 10 feet.

Mr. Spencer said we can't allow bigger than what was advertised. We advertised an 8-foot-tall sign with a rotating sign.

Mrs. Martin said we requested an 8 foot by 10-foot monument sign.

Mr. Spencer said your letter said an 8foot by 10-foot request, so we took that to mean an 8-foot-tall sign by 10 foot wide.

Mrs. Martin said no, it has to be 8-foot-wide by 10-foot-tall.

Mr. Spencer said you want the taller sign on the side of the business that has less traffic? Or do you want the other sign to be taller?

Mrs. Leigh said they asked for that sign to be 10-foot wide by 12 foot tall.

Mr. Hughes asked how many square feet would that make the sign.

Mr. Spencer said we are going by the drawing submitted. A 9-foot-tall sign submitted, and the sign with the lion was submitted to be 8 feet tall.

Mr. Hughes asked how wide the sign would be.

Mr. Spencer said width is not an issue, height is the issue. They can do 120 square feet of sign.

Mrs. Leigh asked what is the tallest you will let us have.

Mr. Shoptaw said 8 feet is plenty tall.

Mrs. Leigh asked including the lion?

Mr. Shoptaw said no, that sign would be 6 feet plus the lion. The reason I think that would be ok is your building is for professional businesses. People don't really drive down the street and see a sign and decide to go there, they go there from home. Advertising is good.

Mrs. Leigh said so it is kind of like a billboard. No one sees a billboard and decides to go there. I think the monument sign looks better and is classier than a pole sign. Talking about the Percy Machin sign, can we get that 10 feet?

Mr. Spencer said we advertised in the paper for a 9-foot-tall sign. We can postpone until next month and re-advertise for the dimensions you are asking for.

Mrs. Leigh said she saw the mistake she made in the letter but if she postponed the case she would pay to have it re-advertised.

Mr. Spencer said that may not work in her favor since we could have all board members present at the next meeting and could turn the vote.

Mr. Hughes said he would be ok with the height in the packet, and ok with the lion on top but not rotating and I think Mr. White would be ok to vote for it so you would need one more vote.

Mrs. Leigh said she was a little bit confused, the one on the main thoroughfare how tall can I get that sign?

Mrs. Martin said we can have what we presented.

Mr. Hughes said you can have a lion that can change colors if you wanted.

Mr. Shoptaw said not flashing.

Mrs. Leigh said so it could change colors slowly. We are not a disco.

Mrs. Webb asked if they could come back later and ask for a pole sign.

Mr. Spencer said they are allowed 2 signs, so they could take a sign down and get a pole sign and that would be at the staff level of approval.

Mrs. Leigh said she doesn't want pole signs, they are not planning to flip this building, it will be her work space and leased to tenants, and she thinks monument signs are classier.

Mr. Shoptaw asked if the sign clears the 5 foot right of way.

Mr. Spencer said they will have to provide a site plan of the property showing adequate property lines to determine the right of way clearance.

Mr. Hughes said you are going to have to get an engineer to draw the property.

Mr. Hughes made a motion to approve with the height and width as presented.

Mr. Shoptaw said so we have a motion to approve a 108 inch sign on Percy Machin and a 72 inch plus the height of the lion logo on the 29<sup>th</sup> street.

Mr. White seconded the motion.

Mrs. Webb asked about the tree line and if the sign would be in front of the trees.

Mr. Spencer said they are the owners of the trees. But we have to determine the property line once we receive a survey.

Mrs. Leigh said thank you.

Mr. Hughes said no, it hasn't passed.

Mr. Shoptaw asked for the roll to be called and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Spencer told the applicants next they hire a sign contractor to obtain the permit for the signs.

Mr. Shoptaw asked if there was a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Cupples made a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Hughes seconded the motion.

---

**Administrative:**

**Public Comment/Adjournment**

Mr. Shoptaw adjourned the meeting at 10:26am.

Passed: 11/8/16 RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Basil Shoptaw