

**Zoning Board of Appeals
February 25, 2015 Regular Meeting**

STAFF REPORT

Subject: ZBA15-002, 2900 Jackson Avenue

Summary: Metro Detroit Signs is requesting a variance from Chapter 61, Signs and Outdoor Advertising, Section 5:502 (1) of approximately 306-square feet from the maximum allowable amount of sign area to replace the existing pylon sign cabinet with a new cabinet sign facing Jackson Avenue.

Background:

The petitioner, Metro Detroit Signs, is requesting a variance on behalf of Wyndham Hotels, from **Chapter 61, Section 5:502 (1)** for the expansion of a 2 two-sided cabinet style sign fronting Jackson Avenue. The variance includes an increase of sign area from the existing sign of 166-square feet and an overall variance of 306-square feet above the allowable 200-square feet allowed for this building.

The subject parcel is zoned R5 (Hotel-Motel District) and the building was constructed in 1962 and used as a hotel use since then. The petitioner has installed 179-square feet of wall signs on the existing hotel building and is seeking to add an additional 328-square feet of signage on the existing pylon sign.

Per City records, the existing 194-square foot pylon sign was approved in 1985. Additional wall signs for the hotel were submitted in 1987 and the application was denied. This site applied for a sign area variance of 451-square feet from the Sign Board of Appeals in 1998 for additional wall signs and was tabled. The petitioner did not return to the Board to be heard.

The sign application was originally submitted on December 1, 2014 and the Sign Plan Reviewer communicated with the petitioner they could have the pylon sign or the wall signs per sign code but not both. The petitioner resubmitted the sign application on December 3, 2014, to install the wall signs and was informed any additional sign area above 200-square feet needs approval from the ZBA to exceed this amount. These wall signs total 178.5-square feet and have been installed.

Chapter 61 addresses sign area in the following section:

5:502 Exterior Business Signs.

(1) Exterior Business Signs

Each ground floor business is permitted exterior on-premises signs having an area totaling 2 square feet per linear feet of ground floor frontage. The total area

of such signs may not exceed 200 square feet. Such signs may contain a total of 10 message units and shall meet the placement standards contained in this section.

Standards for Approval - Variance

The Zoning Board of Appeals has the power granted by State law and by **Section 5:517**, Application of the Variance Power from Chapter 61, the City of Ann Arbor Sign Ordinance. The following criteria shall apply (*petitioner's response in italics, staff's response in regular type*):

(a) That the alleged hardships or practical difficulties, or both, are peculiar to the property of the person requesting the variance and result from conditions which do not exist generally throughout the city.

The petitioner states this site as other hotels in the area have a pylon sign/monument sign. There was a name change for the hotel and they would like to use and expand the cabinet sign and recover the existing base of the pylon sign.

Staff discussed the sign alternatives with the petitioner on options for signs at this site. The petitioner decided to install the wall signs and seek an area variance from the ZBA for the pylon sign. The location of the pylon sign does not impede the flow of on-coming traffic nor create a dangerous viewing situation while either entering or exiting this site per the City Traffic Engineer. There is no effect on neighboring properties as the pylon sign does not block other structures in the area. From a safety perspective, this sign is the only sign perpendicular to Jackson Avenue at this site and would alert customers to the business entrance.

(b) That allowing the variance will result in substantial justice being done, considering the public benefits intended to be secured by this Chapter, the individual hardships that will be suffered by the failure of the Board to grant a variance and the rights of others whose property would be affected by the allowance of the variance.

This is an existing pylon sign and we are proposing to change out the cabinet sign.

Staff agrees that approval of the sign area variance would not negatively impact other property owners, and the proposal does not cause negative traffic impacts. The proposed monument sign is setback 50-feet from Jackson Avenue and meets the message unit, height and setback requirements of Chapter 61.

(c) Is the condition which prevents you from complying with the ordinance self-imposed? How did the condition come about?

The petitioner states the site was over the allowed square footage when they installed prior sign packages.

Staff research shows the 194-square foot pylon sign was installed and additional wall sign applications were denied afterwards. A variance was applied for and tabled to allow for additional signs on site. It should be noted directional, parking and traffic control signs under a certain size are permitted by sign code and not counted toward the overall allowable sign area on site.

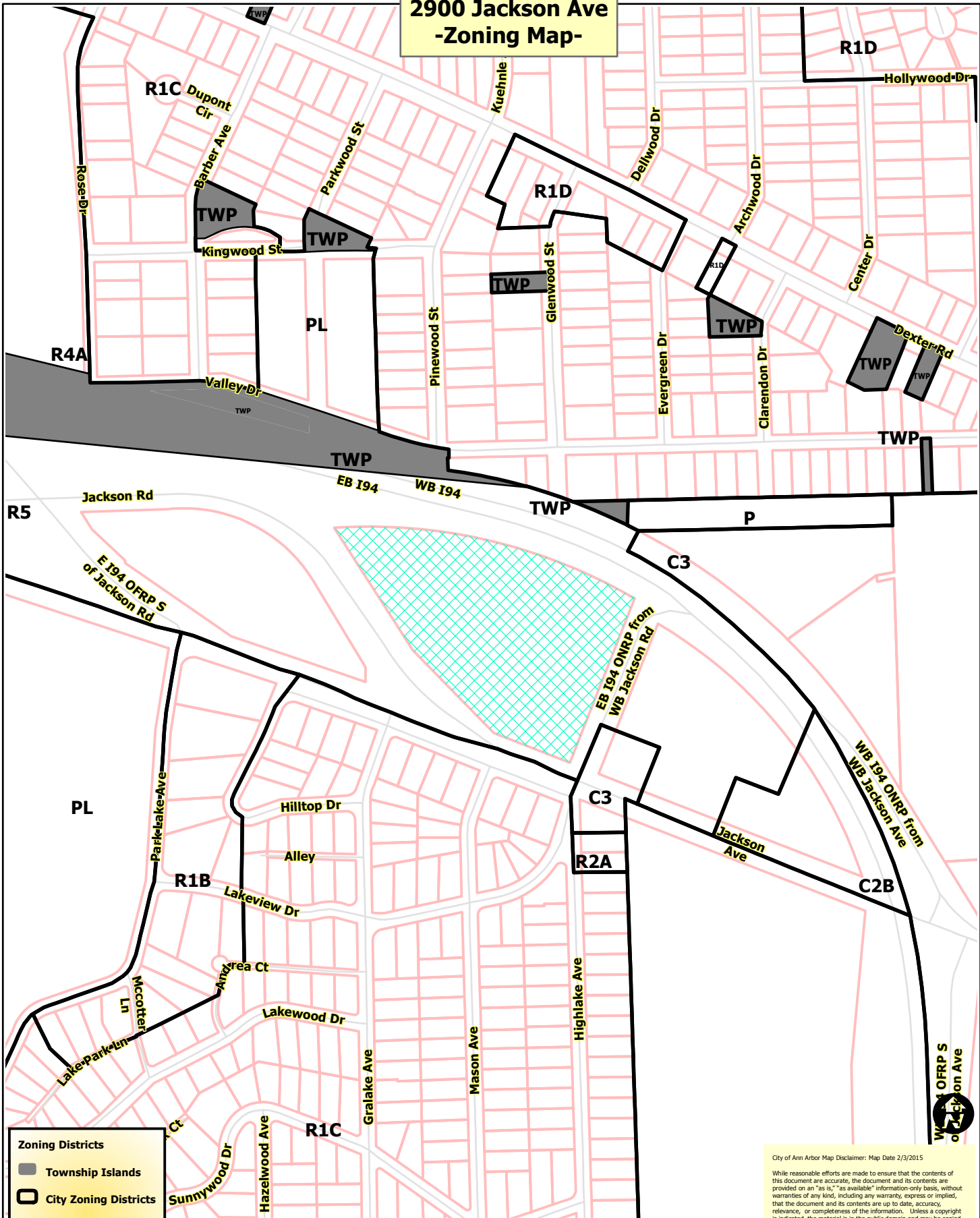
Staff recognizes the challenge by the petitioner to make improvements to their hotel while allowing the existing business to continue promoting their business; the petitioner was provided options on the sign area for this site and elected to install wall signs in lieu of re-facing the existing pylon sign. The proposed increase in the size of the cabinet portion of the pylon sign combined with existing wall signs exceeds the maximum amount of sign area on site by 306-square feet. The existing signs on site are close to the maximum allowed and should be sufficient to facilitate business identification and promotion.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Cheng

**Chris Cheng, AICP
City Planner**

2900 Jackson Ave -Zoning Map-



- Zoning Districts
- Township Islands
- City Zoning Districts
- Railroads
- Parcels
- Huron River

City of Ann Arbor Map Disclaimer: Map Date 2/3/2015

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2900 Jackson Ave -Aerial Map-



-  Railroads
-  Parcels
-  Huron River



City of Ann Arbor Map Disclaimer: Map Date 2/3/2015

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APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE OR ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL

SIGN BOARD OF APPEALS

Section 1: Applicant Information

Name of Applicant: METRO DETROIT SIGNS
Address of Applicant: 23544 HOOVER RD.
Daytime Phone: 586-759-2700
Fax: 586-759-2703
Email: Kdeters@metrodetroitsigns.com
Applicant's Relationship to Property: our customer

Section 2: Property Information

Address of Property: 2900 JACKSON AVE.
Zoning Classification: 201-Commercial
Tax ID# (if known): _____
*Name of Property Owner: ANTOINE ALTAWIL

**If different than applicant, a letter of authorization from the property owner must be provided.*

Section 3: Request Information

Variance

Chapter(s) and Section(s) from which a variance is requested:

CHAPTER 61

Required dimension:

PROPOSED dimension:

Example: Chapter 61, Section 5:26

Example: 40' Setback from Right of Way

Example: 36' Setback from Right of Way

Give a detailed description of the work you are proposing and why it will require a variance (attach additional sheets if necessary)

WE PREVIOUSLY INSTALLED A SIGN PACKAGE AT THIS SITE AND WERE OVER ON THE SQUARE FOOTAGE ALLOWED, SO WE ARE PROPOSING TO INSTALL pylons.

Section 4: VARIANCE REQUEST (If not applying for a variance, skip to section 5)

The City of Ann Arbor Sign Board of Appeals has the powers granted by City Code Chapter 61. A variance may be granted by the Sign Board of Appeals only in cases involving practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships when **ALL** of the following is found **TRUE**. Please provide a complete response to each item below. These responses will form the basis for evaluation of the request by staff and the Sign Board of Appeals. (continued...)

1. Are there hardships or practical difficulties to complying with the ordinance? Are these hardships or practical difficulties an exception or unique to the property compared to other properties in the City?

THIS SITE AS OTHER HOTELS HAVE A Pylon sign/Monument. THERE WAS A NAME CHANGE FOR THE HOTEL. AND WE WOULD LIKE TO COMPLETE THE MONUMENT SIGN.

2. Are the hardships or practical difficulties more than mere inconvenience, inability to obtain a higher financial return? (explain)

NO, THERE IS AN EXISTING MONUMENT SIGN AND WE ARE LOOKING TO CHANGE CABINET TO NEW NAME AND RECOVER EXISTING BASE OF Pylon

3. What effect will granting the variance have on the neighboring properties?

NONE, THERE IS ALREADY AN EXISTING SIGN THERE AND WE ARE JUST PROPOSING TO CHANGE OUT CABINET AND INSTALL SHROOD.

4. What physical characteristics of your property in terms of size, shape, location or topography prevent you from using it in a way that is consistent with the ordinance?

NONE, THERE IS ALREADY AN EXISTING Pylon SIGN.

5. Is the condition which prevents you from complying with the ordinance self-imposed? How did the condition come about?

WE WERE OVER THE ALLOWED SQUARE FOOTAGE WHEN WE INSTALLED PRIOR SIGN PACKAGE.

Section 5: Administrative Appeal (ONLY – DO NOT COMPLETE IF FILING FOR VARIANCE)

Current use of the property _____

Explain what you were denied and why you are requesting an Administrative Appeal:

Section 6: Required Materials

The following materials are required for all variance requests or administrative appeals. Failure to provide these materials will result in an incomplete application and will delay staff review and Sign Board of Appeals consideration of the request. The materials listed below must accompany the application and constitute an inseparable part of the application.

All materials must be provided on 8 1/2" by 11" sheets.

- Building showing frontage dimensions.
- Photographs of the property and any existing buildings involved in the request.
- Any other graphic or written materials that support the request.
- Property Site Plan showing setbacks, right of ways, etc.

Section 7: Acknowledgement

SIGNATURES MUST BE SIGNED IN PRESENCE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, the applicant, request a variance from the above named Chapter(s) and Section(s) of the Ann Arbor City Code for the stated reasons, in accordance with the materials attached hereto.

586-759-2700

Phone Number

Kevin Detens

Signature

kdeters@metrodetroit
signs.com

Email Address

KEVIN DETENS

Print Name

I, the applicant, hereby depose and say that all of the aforementioned statements, and the statements contained in the materials submitted herewith, are true and correct. I acknowledge that I've received all instructions, time, date and place of meeting and will be present to present the appeal. Staff will not send additional notification of meeting times.

Kevin Detens

Signature

Further, I hereby give City of Ann Arbor Planning & Development Services unit staff and members of the Sign Board of Appeals permission to access the subject property for the purpose of reviewing my variance request.

Kevin Detens

Signature

On this 8TH day of JANUARY, 2015, before me personally appeared the above named applicant and made oath that he/she has read the foregoing application by him/her subscribed and knows the contents thereof, and that the same is true as to his/her own knowledge except as to those matters therein stated to be upon his information and belief as to those matters, he/she believes them to be true.

Denise A Sarkisian

Notary Public Signature

Denise A Sarkisian

Notary Public-State of Michigan

County of Oakland Print Name

My Commission Expires: 3/24/2021

Acting in the County of MADONIA

3/24/2021

Notary Commission Expiration Date

Staff Use Only

Date Submitted: _____

Fee Paid: _____

File No.: ZBA 15-002

Date of Public Hearing 2/25-15

Pre-filing Staff Reviewer & Date _____

SBA Action: _____

Pre-Filing Review: _____

Staff Reviewer & Date: _____



DATE: 1/9/2015

TO: City of Ann Arbor
Sign Board of Appeals

FROM: Denise Sarkisian
Metro Detroit Signs

RE: Variance for Wyndham Garden Hotel
2900 Jackson Ave.

We are applying for a variance for the above site. We have completed a sign package at this site but we were over the allowed square footage. Wyndham Garden Hotel was originally Clarion Inn and has changed their signage accordingly. We are asking to replace the existing cabinet with new cabinet and new shroud to cover base. Enclosed is our variance application, letter of authorization, copy of our current licenses, drawing details and the required fee.

Please feel free to contact me at (586)759-2700 if there are any questions. Thank you for your assistance.



**WYNDHAM
GARDEN HOTELS**

January 9, 2014

To whom it may concern,

The Wyndham Garden Ann Arbor authorizes Metro Detroit Sign Company to proceed with applying for a variance clearance for an outdoor sign at 2900 Jackson Ave.

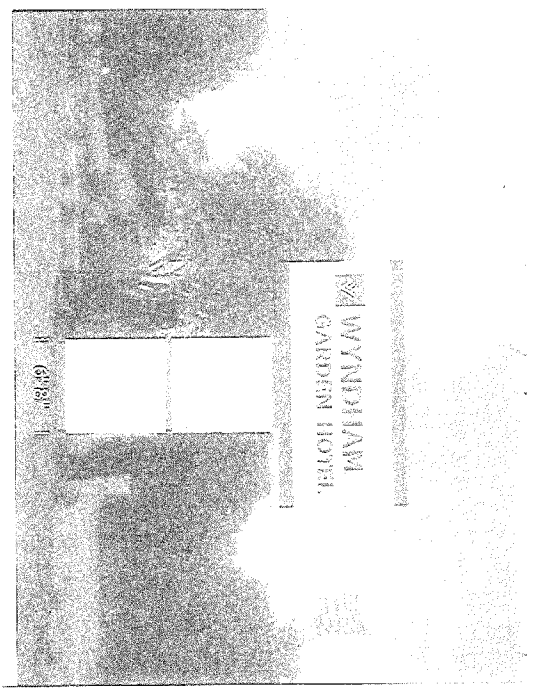
Wyndham Garden

Antoine Altawil

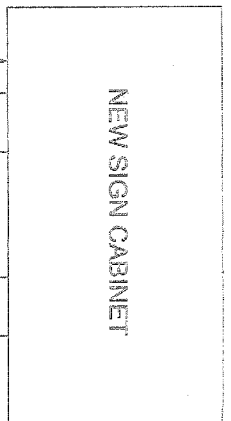
EXISTING



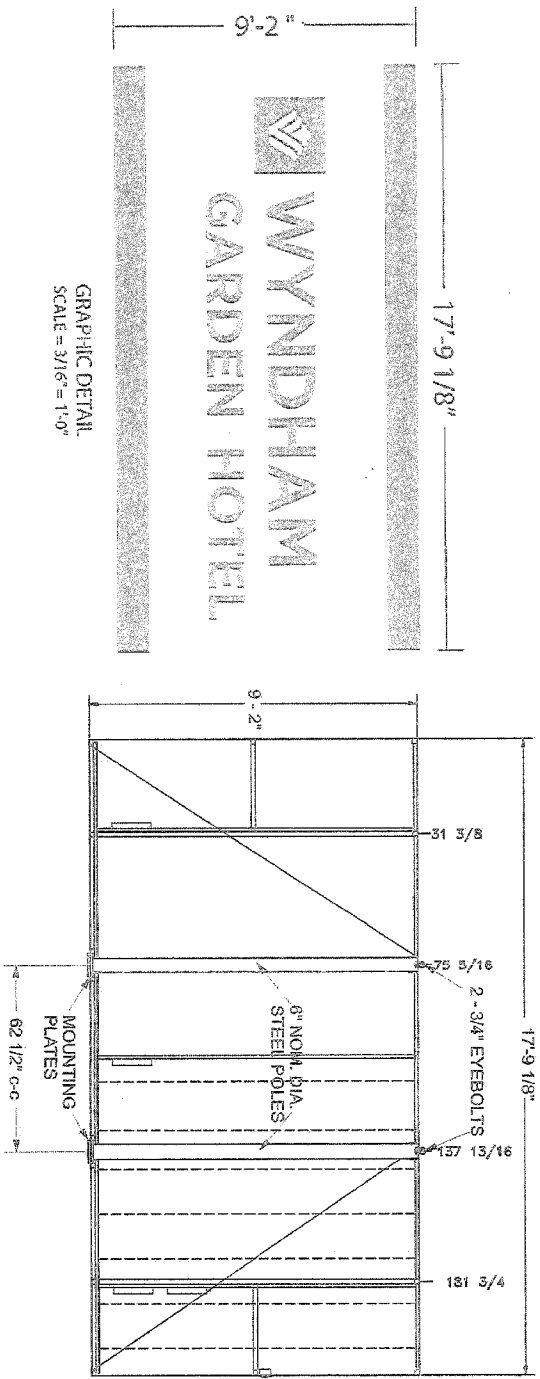
PROPOSED: NEW CABINET & POLE COVER ON EXISTING POLES & FOOTINGS



NTS



NOTES:
THE EXISTING SIGN SUPPORT & FOOTING ARE CHECKED FOR 90 MPH, 3 SEC. GUST WIND LOADS AS PER 2008-IBC.
MOUNTING HARDWARE TO BE NON-CORROSIVE.
STRUCTURAL BOLTS TO BE ASTM A325 HS.
WELDING SHOULD BE DONE USING E70 ELECTRODES.



GRAPHIC DETAIL
SCALE = 3/16" = 1'-0"

Customer: WYNDHAM GARDEN HOTEL	Date: 8-26-14	Prepared By: MRR/MCM	Notes: Check all dimensions and details before construction. All dimensions are in feet and inches unless otherwise specified. Use standard units of measurement. Do not scale drawings.
Location: ANN ARBOR, MI	File Name: 130730 - R4 - ANN ARBOR, MI	Page: 1	

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11/18/14

Dear Ms. Gale,

My family lives on Hilltop Drive in the Sister Lakes (Lakewood) neighborhood. Our home faces Jackson Road. We are aware of the public hearing on February 25 which will discuss the request to enlarge the signage at 2900 Jackson Rd., which is right across the street from us.

We cannot attend the hearing, unfortunately.

We are extremely opposed to this request.

Ann Arbor's sign ordinance is a good one, for many reasons. Huge lighted signs would add a look of commercialized ugliness to our Tree City. For many, entrance/exit ramp 172 (Jackson Rd.) is their first glimpse of Ann Arbor. An over-large sign greeting them would be extremely unattractive. It would be impossible for travelers to miss the hotel, anyway. It sits on a large, open site, visible from Jackson road as well as I-94. A regulation sized sign is ample advertisement.

Ms. Gale, please consider the homeowners in the Sister Lakes (Lakewood) neighborhood, as well as all Ann Arborites and our visitors, and deny this request.

Thank you,

Tom and Ann Lamkin-Ferranti
3055 Hilltop Drive

ZBA15-002:
2900 Jackson Avenue
I.D. 0908-25-100-003

My home is located on Hilltop Drive, parallel to Jackson Avenue, directly across from the site proposed for the change in signage. I look out onto Jackson Avenue and the property beyond and strongly **oppose** the requested variance .

I believe the current signage of 200 square feet is quite adequate, fits in with the other signage in the area and is sufficient to inform potential customers of their existence.

I see no need to increase the square footage from 200 to 504, a tremendous increase and, I would think an probable eyesore.

Please consider what this extremely large signage will mean to the neighborhood and residents of Lakewood as the area on Jackson is developed, which is inevitable in the future.

I oppose the variance and hope the request does not pass.

Marie Lane
2969 Hilltop Dr.
Ann Arbor, Mi. 48103-2028
734 665-0241

To: AA Zoning Board of Appeals, c/o Mia Gale

Hello,

I cannot attend the Wednesday hearing, but I greatly oppose any more light pollution from increased signage. I don't see how it is necessary and will be an additional eyesore on Jackson Rd.

The City has shown responsibility with regard to reducing unnecessary light pollution. Please help keep our city environmentally responsible.

Sincerely,

Diane Scarpace

Lakewood Subdivision