

**City of Findlay**  
**Design Review Board**  
City Council Chambers, Municipal Building  
Wednesday September 22, 2021 – 6:00 p.m.

**Minutes**

**Members Present:**

Patrick Ball  
Hardy Hartzell  
Brian Hurt  
Tim Mayle  
Brad Wagner

**Members Absent**

Josette Brinkman  
Jeff Fort  
James Robertson

**Staff Attending**

Matt Cordonnier, HRPC Director  
Wesley Jefferies, HRPC Staff

**CALL TO ORDER**

**ROLL CALL**

The following members were present: Tim Mayle, Hardy Hartzell, Pat Ball, Brian Hurt, and Brad Wagner.

**NEW ITEMS**

Matt Cordonnier called meeting to order.

**1. Petition for Certificate of Appropriateness #CA-18-2021 filed to approve new sign on 515 S Main St.**

**General Information**

The application filed by Fast Signs, on behalf of Main Street Deli – Bar and Arcade, to install a sign above their new storefront. The 17’x4’ sign will be adorned by a black frame and feature the establishment’s name and logo, as seen in Figure 1.

**Parcel History**

The building, owned by Martin Meyer, is a commercial property that was built in 1891. The previous tenant was Awakening Minds Art, who vacated the property in 2018

**Staff Analysis**

The sign, as submitted, is inappropriately scaled for the pedestrian-oriented character of downtown. While the guidelines (section 2.03.04) do not dictate specific limits on the size of signs, the sign proposed nearly identically matches the example of an “Inappropriate” sign, as shown in Figure 3 (Figure 2.22 of the Guidelines). If this proposal were for a business in a car-oriented development, such as Tiffin Ave, the sign would be meant to be read by passersby 300 ft away and traveling at 35 mph and the large size would make sense, contextually. However, as the intended location is a traditional “Main Street-type” development, the audience is a much closer, slower pedestrian whose signage needs are

scaled down.

There is an argument to be made for the strong branding of the business and size of the sign matching that of the Main Street Deli & Bakery, to which this establishment is an extension. However, beyond the size of the sign and the white background, there is little context linking the two signs or the signs to the larger building. There is a departure in font, layout, and use of color between the two. With deference afforded to the long-established Main Street Deli & Bakery, their existing sign does not meet our design standards and would be subject to similar scrutiny if submitted today. It, along with a number of other older signs, are grandfathered in. The other neighboring businesses in the Blackford Building use smaller fonts and designs that effectively communicate at a pedestrian scale.

## **Discussion**

Matt Cordonnier notes that applicant is not in attendance. Tim Mayle asks if the Main Street Deli sign is lit. Matt responds no. Tim communicates the concern of lack continuity of the two buildings: between the Deli and Arcade side. They are very dissimilar but there is also a duplication of the “Main Street Deli” on both. It seems like it could be confusing. The size of the sign is also of concern. Matt notes that the size and scale of the sign is more suited to vehicular traffic. The guidelines recommend that Downtown Signage be more more pedestrian friendly. The Board could encourage the business owners to look into updating both signs at the same time, if possible. Tim adds that surrounding businesses have lighting as a component of their signs and he believes that would be very helpful for them.

Brian Hurt comments that the lack of consistency between signs is disappointing and that there seems to be little contextual relationship between the sign and the building as a hole. He comments that the coloration of the existing Deli sign utilizes the maroon and cream of the overall building. Tim adds that they would not need to use the same color, but the white sign on the cream building is contrasting. Brian clarifies that he would not want to restrict them to just two colors.

Matt discusses having the building owners paint the Deli/Bakery side to complete the color pattern of the lower floor being primarily black. He states that putting lettering on top of that would look nice. Brad states that the Bistro wanted to do their whole building black but did just the first floor at the boards recommendation and that it looks nice. He believes it accentuates the building’s architecture and highlights the business. He believes that would be beneficial to the both the Bakery and Arcade sides.

Tim Mayle made a motion that the Board deny the design as submitted and have them resubmit, based on our feedback.

Patrick Ball seconded.

In Favor: Tim Mayle, Hardy Hartzell, Pat Ball, Brian Hurt, and Brad Wagner.

Opposed: None

Abstain: None.

Motion Passed

## **OLD ITEMS**

None

## **ADJOURNMENT**