

Design Review Commission 10.9.2025

The Design Review Commission meeting on October 9, 2025, discussed the signage proposal for Diversified Accounting at 121 East Main Street, Ravenna, Ohio. Bob Finney presented the sign dimensions, noting it covers 44% of the window, exceeding the 20% code. Cliff Soudil and others debated the appropriateness, considering past precedents. The sign was measured to be 21% of the full window, still over the 20% limit. Despite concerns about setting a precedent, the motion to approve the sign passed with a tie-breaking vote. The commission also discussed future work on guidelines and the need for clarification on certain ordinance provisions.

Action Items

- Discuss and finalize the design review guidelines, including the "shall" and "should" language, at the next meeting.

Outline

Meeting Commencement and Attendance

- Lou Dudek calls the Design Review Commission meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. on October 9, 2025.
- Julianne Ring confirms the attendance of Lou Dudek, Angie Reedy, Patrick Madonio, Diana Kane, and Cliff Soudil.
- Lou Dudek motions to excuse Ted Manfrass and Eric Hummel, which is seconded by Cliff Soudil and approved by the commission.
- The minutes from the September 11th meeting are reviewed and approved with no additions or corrections.

Discussion on Diversified Accounting Signage

- Lou Dudek introduces new business regarding Diversified Accounting's signage at 121 East Main Street, Ravenna, Ohio 44266.
- Bob Finney explains the dimensions of the proposed sign and its compliance with the 20% code, noting it is 44% of the window size.
- Cliff Soudil and Bob Finney discuss the proportionality and visibility of the sign, with Bob suggesting the sign is not intrusive to the design code.
- Patrick Madonio and Bob Finney debate the appropriateness of the sign's dimensions, considering the visibility and consistency with past decisions.

Debate on Sign Dimensions and Precedents

- Cliff Soudil expresses concerns about setting a precedent by approving a sign that is over 100% larger than allowed.

- Bob Finney suggests measuring the full window to calculate the sign area, which would bring it within the 20% limit.
- The commission discusses past decisions and the impact of approving larger signs on future requests.
- Bob Finney offers to measure the window to provide a more accurate calculation, and the commission agrees to take a short recess.

Ordinance Interpretation and Measurement

- Julianne Ring reads the ordinance, stating the sign area should be calculated for each window.
- Cliff Soudil and Bob Finney debate the interpretation of the ordinance, considering whether to measure by pane or window opening.
- Bob Finney agrees to measure the full window to ensure compliance with the ordinance.
- The commission discusses the visibility and appropriateness of the sign, considering the business's needs and the impact on the community.

Motion and Vote on Sign Approval

- Cliff Soudil makes a motion to accept the sign as presented, emphasizing the need for consistency and fairness in future decisions.
- Bob Finney calculates the sign area, confirming it is within the 20% limit when measured across the full window.
- The motion is seconded by Patrick Madonio, and the commission votes on the motion.
- The motion passes with a tie-breaking vote from Bob Finney, who votes in favor of the sign.

Old Business and Future Agenda

- Bob Finney brings up the need to address the guidelines presented by Perspectus and the clarification of "shall" and "should" in the ordinance.
- Lou Dudek suggests scheduling a work session to discuss these issues and move them forward to City Council.
- The commission agrees to add this discussion to the agenda for the next month's meeting.
- Cliff Soudil raises concerns about reopening past issues and the potential for additional costs and delays.

Meeting Conclusion and Public Comment

- Lou Dudek opens the floor for public comment, but no one from the public wishes to speak.
- Lou Dudek motions to close the meeting, and the motion is seconded and approved by the commission.
- Lou Dudek thanks the commission members and concludes the meeting at 10:46 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Julianne Ring.