

Meeting: Zoning Board of Adjustment

Date: November 10, 2021

- I. Meeting called to order
- II. Pledge of Allegiance
- III. Open Public Meeting Act

IV. Roll Call

Present

Absent

	Present	Absent
Ms. Laura Walthy	X	
Ms. Karen Radie	X	
Ms. Santori		X
Ms. Valentino	X	
Mr. Zahradnick	X	
Vice Chair Bimmer	X	
Chairman Gee	X	
Ms. Bebitch Alt #1		X
Ms. Mortimer Alt #2	X	
Mr. Taylor Alt # 3	X	
Mr. Zerega Alt # 4	X	

V. New Business:

- a. **716 E Main St-** Block 148, Lots 4 & 5: TND Home Renovations, LLC; Z-21-12
Zone: Residence District (R-2)
Existing Use: multi-family dwelling
Proposed Use: Triplex Dwelling
Application: d (3) conditional use variance or nonconforming use approval

Application was formally withdrawn on November 5, 2021 by Kristopher Berr, Esq.

- b. **593 Route 38 South** -Block 189, Lot 3; 593 (L) Maple Shade Holdings, LLC; Z-21-08
Existing Use: Public Storage
Proposed Use: To construct a forty (40) foot high, two-sided multiple messaging display Monument Sign at the south-estern corner of existing Public Storage Property.

Application: Various Bulk or “c” variances

Counsel for the Applicant: Edmund J. Campbell, Jr. Esquire

Witnesses:

Thaddesu Bartkowski CEO and Founder, Catalyst Experimental

Chirag V. Thakkar, P.E. LEED AP

David R. Shropshire, PE, PP

Paul N. Ricci, AICP, PP

Edmund Campbell, Attorney for the applicant presented the case.

The proposed monument sign is a unique and interesting concept in outdoor advertising. Built specifically with the Township of Maple Shade in mind.

In summary a second sign on one lot would require a use variance. A bulk variance required for a front yard set back and lastly a variance to increase the impervious coverage from 75% to 80%.

All witnesses were sworn in by Township Solicitor Kingsbury.

Chairman Gee welcomed the group and thanked Mr. Campbell for summarizing the overview of the application. He asked Mr. Campbell to please highlight the waivers needed and talk about why the site where a “use” variance would be required. I would like to hear why this would fit well in our town. He added that a site-plan waiver has been requested.

Mr. Campbell stated that according to Township Code 178-22 does not apply because the sign would not impact the existing site.

Mr. Campbell introduced Mr. Bartkowski.

Mr. Bartkowski testified that he is the CEO and founder of Catalyst Experimental. He will present a slide show describing the proposed sign and show examples of signs that Catalyst has built in other towns.

A description and examples of the building materials were displayed.

Mr. Bartkowski explained that these monument signs pose a unique feature for communication with motorists, and that everything is designed with the municipality in mind. The site is 5.49 acres in the BD Zone and a

true gateway into Maple Shade for motorists traveling westbound on Route 38.

The sign would be located in the stormwater basin of the Public Storage Facility and greatly improve the appearance of the existing site. The sign itself would be built of stack stone with the overall dimensions being 38-39 feet high. The display messaging board would be 23 feet high and 19 feet Wide. A total of 437 sq. feet of messaging board on each side. The Maple Shade logo would be a large silver Maple Leaf with along with Maple Shade est. in 1922.

The standard of viewability is to read and discern the advertisement in 10 seconds. The new technology provides a MDLS (multi directional light sensor) to adapt to weather conditions, and it does conform with Township lighting codes.

A Local message unique to Maple Shade would display once every 2 minutes for 10 seconds, ie: calendar of special events, road closures etc. The advertisers are a combination of Local, Regional and National Companies and organizations. Examples are Auto Dealers, HVAC, Dining, Hospitals, Independent Companies, Universities and Banks.

In 2020 we ran 400 different municipal messages which created 70 million impressions. Non-Profit and Emergency messaging is a key component as well.

As far as traffic safety goes, a study has shown no increase in accidents prior to and after the installation of a sign on a specific roadway site.

Zoning Officer Pradip Soni asked how does the sign benefit the town and is the site the best fit?

Mr. Bartkowski testified that this site has 445' of frontage with the proposed sign at the southwestern corner of the proposed site as motorists travel westbound. All displays are driven by math calculations to make the advertisement legible.

Board Solicitor Kingsbury asked if Political Signs were allowed or excluded by the Municipality?

Vice Chairman Bimmer stated that he drives past the neighboring Pennsauken sign that was developed by Catalyst and it is truly a great presentation for the town.

Solicitor Campbell introduced Mr. Thakkar. Mr. Thakkar testified that only a minimus increase in impervious coverage is being proposed. From 74.3% to 80.91%.

Chairman Gee asked how far the Curbline to the fence is now? Mr. Thakkar stated that 18' and 8' from the right of way.

The stormwater basin will be extended on the west end to accommodate the reduced area of the basin where the sign will be built.

Mr. Campbell asked Mr. Thakkar to explain the new fence. He stated that the new fence will be white vinyl along the Route 38 side of the basin for safety and beautification. The proposed fence will be in the exact spot and will greatly improve the look along Route 38.

Chairman Gee asked Mr. Thakkar to explain the landscape proposal. Mr. Thakkar stated the proposed shrubbery will be evergreens in nature on each end and will have seasonal plantings in the middle. These will be maintained by the Sign Company.

Board Member Zerega asked if the sign would withstand a vehicle jumping the curb and smashing into it? Mr. Campbell suggested that be answered by the traffic engineer.

Mr. Shropshire was introduced by Mr. Campbell.

He testified that in order to receive a NJDOT permit, safety standards and criteria are required. NJDOT has given a letter of intent to issue a permit since all safety requirements are being met.

Mr. Shropshire further testified that a safety study has been done by Virginia Tech and has quantified that no driver behavior has changed due to the installation of digital signs. The Route 38 Roadway has 54,000 daily trips and is very suitable for this sign.

Chairman Gee is concerned that motorists will be looking at the sign and forget to obey the changing traffic signals.

Mr. Shropshire stated that there are three components for safety.

- a. Road design
- b. Sign design
- c. Driver behavior

He feels this sign is more balanced because the square foot on each side is only 497 sq. ft., where the NJDOT will allow 1000 sq. ft.

Mr. Bartkowski added that the sign will be built with reinforced steel and is engineered to withstand the impact of a vehicle. He also added that if the Board deemed it necessary to add a guard rail, they would do so for additional assurance.

Mr. Campbell introduced Mr. Paul Ricci, Licensed Professional Planner. Mr. Ricci testified that the positive criteria will promote effective advertising and a public service benefit due to real time messaging by the Municipality. He added that digital signs are a permitted use in this zone, and it would promote economic development. This fits in with the Master Plan of Intended growth area.

Chairman Gee asked if the sign increases the value of the property?
Can it be considered as a ratable?

Board Solicitor Kingsbury stated that the sign would increase the value of the property and places no additional burden on the Township because of the passive nature of the sign.

Ms. Valentino asked if the space was being rented from Public Storage?
Mr. Bartkowski stated that yes, Catalyst has a long-term lease with Public Storage.

Ms. Radie asked why Catalyst chose Maple Shade?

Mr. Bartkowski stated that they have studied the area for the last 24 months and have been approved in 11 locations. Business density is a prime factor in considering a site. Other factors include, gateway's, number of daily travelers,

Frontage and being a high- density commercial corridor.

Ms. Valentino asked if only Maple Shade Business's would be able to advertise?

Mr. Bartkowski stated that no, approximately 18% are National advertisers.

The rest are local and regional companies usually within 5 miles.

Mr. Ricci stated that this is a unique opportunity to "Brand" Maple Shade.

He addressed the negative criteria by stating,

- a. Proposed sign is not in a residential area.
- b. No reason to anticipate a burden on the police or school system.
- c. A sign is the most benign land use.
- d. Environmentally, this sign uses less energy than flood lights.

Mr. Ricci feels that this sign fits well with Maple Shade's master plan to advance Business growth and the modernization of Route 38 and 73.

Chairman Gee asked Board Engineer Mr. McNulty to address the Review Letter.

Mr. McNulty stated that most everything has been addressed.

Chairman Gee opened the meeting to the General Public. None

Chairman Gee closed the Public Portion.

Chairman Gee asked Mr. Kingsbury if a minor site plan is part of the motion.

Mr. Kingsbury said that first motion should be for a use variance for the second sign on an existing lot. It would require 5 yes votes.

Ms. Radie made a motion to accept, second by Mr. Zahradnick, All Approve.

The second motion is for a Bulk Variance for expansion of impervious coverage

A Motion to accept was made by Vice Chairman Bimmer, second by Ms. Radie, All Approve

The third Motion for a site plan waiver was made by Mr. Zahradnick, second by Vice chairman Bimmer, All Approve.

VI. Old Business: Fox Meadow interpretation of a Cabana vs. a Pool House.

Mr. Chuck Petrone introduced Mr. William Feinberg, AIA. He testified that a cabana is a fancier name for a pool house. The structure will be enclosed by a fence, and will include 2 bathrooms with exterior doors. There will also be an outside shower.

The interior will be used by lifeguards for testing equipment, records and supplies.

Chairman Gee opened the meeting to the General Public. None
Chairman Gee closed the Public Portion.

Chairman Gee asked for Board Questions.

Ms. Valentino asked if the outside shower is required by the Board of Health.

Mr. Feinberg stated yes.

Vice Chairman Bimmer asked if there was a "Pool House" there before.

Mr. Feinberg stated yes.

A Motion to Approve was made by Vice Chairman Bimmer, second by Mr. Zahradnick, All Approve.

VII. Minutes: October Zoning Board Meeting

A Motion to Approve was made by Ms. Radie, second by Ms. Valentino,
All Approve

VIII. Adjourn:

A Motion to adjourn was made by Chairman Gee, second by Ms. Radie, All Approve

