



**STAFF REPORT
WEST ALLIS PLAN COMMISSION
Wednesday, January 23, 2019
6:00 pm**

City Hall – Room 128– 7525 W. GREENFIELD AVE.

11. Sign Plan Appeal to modify an existing freestanding sign for MAAS, an existing gas station, located at 5930 W Greenfield Ave. submitted by Drew Jenson of Poblocki Sign Company on behalf of Jeff Maas, property owner (Tax Key No. 438-0397-001)

When a permit is required for new or altered signage, the City requires that signage be brought into conformance with the signage ordinance. This typically means removal of non-conforming signage as part of the proposed updates.

The property owner (Jeff Maas) is proposing to make alterations to the existing pole sign at 60th and W. Greenfield Ave. which has been in place since 1986 (pre-dates the current sign ordinance). The proposal is to alter the existing pole sign cabinet by adding electronic messaging. In review of the application and sign plans to alter the existing sign, Planning staff met with Mr. Maas at the property to discuss the signage proposal and the sign ordinance requirements.

Existing Pole sign at SW corner of property = 80-sf and 24-ft tall
Existing Wall signage on canopy and building = 4 signs

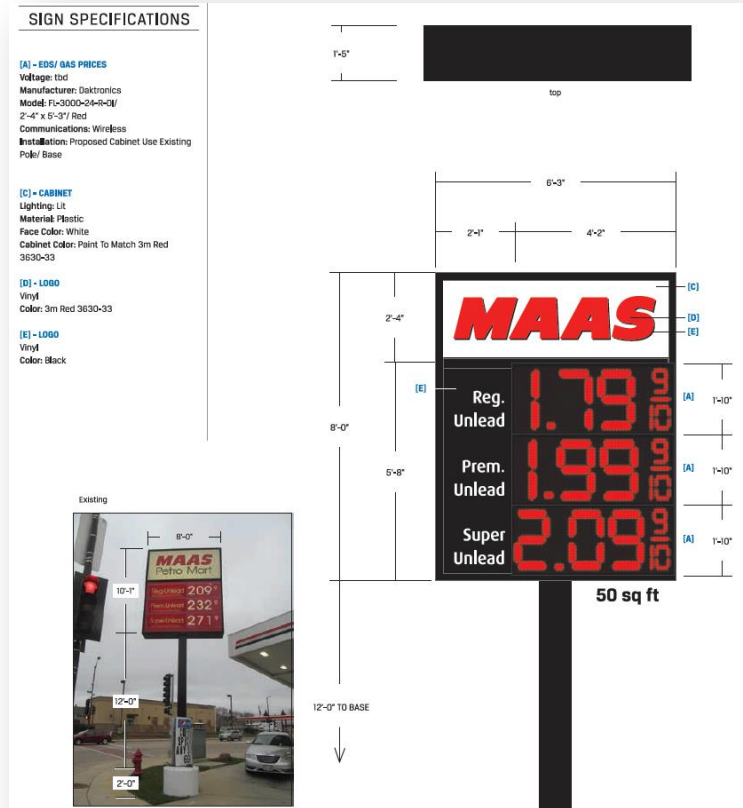


The sign ordinance allows up to 50-sf of freestanding signage and up to 2 wall signs. Freestanding signage not to exceed 10-ft in height.

Option 2 – Reduce the area of the existing pole sign and eliminate 2 of 4 wall signs on site. The reduction in area of the new sign would effectively also reduce the overall height of the pole sign by 2-ft (from 24-ft to 22-ft).

Option 3 – Maintain existing 80-sf and 24-ft tall pole sign and 4 wall signs. Property owner withdraws proposal and carries on.

Staff routinely seeks to uphold the sign ordinance, but in this case feels that the existing site is problematic for installing a monument sign. Doing so would mean the new sign would encroach into public right of way and would be located very near a traffic control cabinet and fire hydrant. Vision angle concerns would also need to be further evaluated. Other locations on site for a possible monument sign were explored, but would present site difficulties of their own given the compact site and conflicts with available access points to and from the property.



The property owner does have the option to scrap his proposal and maintain the current pole sign as is without any alteration, but is willing to minimize the variance in exchange for an allowance on the height of the sign (option 2). The existing pole and wall signage inventory on site exceeds the sign ordinance allowances in area and number of signs. Staff is recommending that the Plan Commission consider the grant of a variance given existing site difficulties and offer to bring signage on site into closer alignment with the sign ordinance. If granted a variance, the height of the freestanding sign would be the only signage non-conformity.

Section 13.21 (9) of the signage ordinance offers the following criteria for the Plan Commission when reviewing such requests for variances:

- a. The sign as proposed will not result in an undue concentration of signage, which renders it difficult or confusing to read existing signs.
- b. The proposed sign is unique and of exceptional design or style so as to enhance the area.

[c.](#) Site difficulties: unusual site factors preclude the construction of a sign in accordance with this section, which would be visible to the roadway adjacent to the site frontage.

Recommendation: Approval of the signage plan appeal to modify an existing freestanding sign for MAAS, an existing gas station, located at 5930 W Greenfield Ave. submitted by Drew Jenson of Poblocki Sign Company on behalf of Jeff Maas, property owner (Tax Key No. 438-0397-001), subject to the following conditions:

1. Revised signage plan being submitted to and approved by the Department of Development to show the following: (a) reduce freestanding sign cabinet to 50-sf and sign faces to feature an opaque background; (b) remove 2 of the 4 existing wall signs (canopy or main building); updated site plan showing vision angle requirements; (c) enhance sign design to meet the criteria of the sign ordinance. Contact Steve Schaer at 414-302-8460 with further questions.