



City of Blaine Anoka County, Minnesota

Blaine City Hall
10801 Town Sq Dr NE
Blaine MN 55449

Legislation Text

File #: RES 13-193, Version: 2

ITEM: 11.4 DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS - *Bryan K. Schafer, Planning and Community Development Director*

GRANTING A VARIANCE TO SECTION 34.07(A)(2)(AA) OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE STANDARD OF 140 SQUARE FEET TO ALLOW FOR AN ADDITIONAL 55 SQUARE FEET OF ALLOWABLE SIGN SQUARE FOOTAGE AND TO THE 14 FOOT HEIGHT STANDARD AN ADDITIONAL 2.5 FEET OF HEIGHT FOR A NEW MONUMENT SIGN AT 9298 CENTRAL AVENUE NE. VILLAGE BANK/DON KVETON. (CASE FILE NO. 13-59/BKS)

Planning Commission (Public Hearing)	11/12/13
City Council (Variance)	12/05/13
Action Deadline	12/09/13

Village Bank (D&N Management) has made application to remove the site's existing monument sign and replace it with a larger and taller sign. The sign as proposed requires a variance relating to two established signage standards:

- **Sign area**- the maximum area allowed for an individual sign at this site is 140 square feet. The proposed sign contains 195 square feet for a variance request of 55 square feet (east elevation of 45 square feet and 10 additional square feet for the north/south facing LED panels).
- **Sign height**- the maximum height is 14-feet. The proposed sign is shown at 16.5 feet high which requires a variance of 2.5 feet.

This site, because it has over 400 feet of frontage on Highway 65 (an arterial roadway), would be allowed a second monument sign of 140 square feet. The applicant has indicated, as a primary reason for requesting the variance, that they feel one larger sign would be more attractive and less cluttered than two separate sign installations. The applicant has declined the second sign option and has suggested one larger sign would be less expensive to construct and maintain.

Most of the sign area variance is to allow the 3rd East facing LED panel. This 45 square foot digital reader board would be placed parallel to Highway 65 and because of that may not be as legible to motorists because of the limited side view. There is also some concern that this angle

may be an increased traffic safety concern as motorists may want to turn their view to the side to see the message. The placement of the east LED panel also would wrap three sides (north, east and south) with the digital signage which does not occur anywhere else in the city.

The sign height variance of 2.5 feet does not appear to be well supported as it appears to only allow one additional fixed panel on each side, which at the sizes shown would also be barely legible. It would seem the new north and south LED panels could meet that need.

The applicant has stated that the new larger sign would be less expensive than building a freestanding second sign which may or may not be true however, financial considerations cannot be a significant factor in considering a variance and when they are to be considered they have to be related to unusual costs associated with unique property, which is not the case in this instance.

Granting of variances must be based on unique property hardships and must also not provide opportunities to do something that other similar properties cannot. The site has very good visibility with no obstructions or elevation problems that diminish or block signage.

Lastly, with this site's ability to build a second monument sign, based on the greater road frontage, this site already has options that most other properties along the corridor do not have. Given that it appears the City's current code already provides ample signage opportunities for this site without the need to create a precedent on a long standing code element.

By motion, deny the variance request based on the following rationale:

- 1) The property has no identified or demonstrated hardship in term of visibility of signage.
- 2) The site is allowed additional signage, under current code, given its greater frontage that would provide similar or greater signage opportunities without the need for a variance.
- 3) The east facing LED panel (and therefore the packaging of three LED panels together) is an unnecessary distraction for motorists at a very significant intersection.

It is further recommended that if the variance is granted that a stipulation be included to preclude the site's second monument sign option in the future.

Attachments

Zoning and Location Map

Elevations

Narrative

WHEREAS, an application has been filed by Donald Kveton/Central Bank as variance

Case File No. 13-0059, and

WHEREAS, a public hearing has been held by the Blaine Planning Commission on November 12, 2013; and

WHEREAS, the Blaine Planning Commission recommends said variance be denied; and

WHEREAS, the Blaine City Council has reviewed said case on December 5, 2013.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Blaine that a variance is hereby approved per Section 34.07(a)(2)(aa) of the Zoning Ordinance with the following rationale:

(Rationale to be established by the Council if the variance is approved).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Blaine that a variance is hereby approved per Section 29.25 (j) and 27.05 of the Zoning Standard of 140 square feet to allow for an additional 55 square feet of allowable sign square footage and to the 14 foot height standard an additional 2.5 feet of height for a new monument sign at 9298 Central Avenue NE with the following stipulations:

1. The site will not be allowed a second monument sign option in the future.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Blaine this 5th day of December 2013.