



Community Development Department
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September 10, 2024

Planning Report

Applicant: Hancock Kitchen Designs, LLC

Location: 251 West Memorial Drive, Dallas, GA 30132

Zone: C-2 Commercial (Corridor Overlay Zone)

Variance Request: To allow three wall signs where only one is permitted.

Background:

Hancock Kitchen Designs, LLC is located within the C-2 Commercial zoning district, which is also subject to the Corridor Overlay Zone's regulations. The property owner is requesting a variance to install three wall signs on the building façade, exceeding the one sign permitted by the current ordinance. The applicant applied for, and was granted, Certificate of Appropriateness approval by the Historic Preservation Commission on August 27th, 2024.

Per Dallas zoning ordinance (Chapter 44, Article 11):

- Section 44-582 permits only **one wall sign** per building or tenant space in the C-2 district.
- The Corridor Overlay Zone imposes additional design and aesthetic requirements along significant corridors.

Variance Justification:

In the applicant's letter, the following reasons are cited for requesting the variance:

- **Construction of New Façade Tower:** The business is constructing a new tower projection from the facade at the front of the building to provide access to the basement and improve visibility. The tower offers prominent spots for signs on all three sides that face the road.
- **Visibility from All Directions:** Due to the building's location, the applicant wishes to ensure visibility from all directions for approaching traffic. The signs would allow motorists traveling in various directions to see the restaurant clearly.
- **Business Investment:** The restaurant represents a significant financial investment for the applicant's family. Ensuring maximum visibility is crucial to attracting customers and ensuring the businesses remain viable.
- **Precedent:** The current business, Downtown Axe, has prior variance approval for three signs. Based on this, the applicant proceeded to order signs, expecting similar approval.

Staff Analysis:

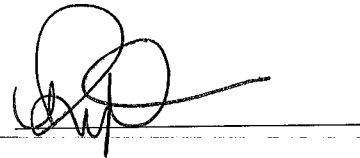
The request was evaluated considering the following:

- **Zoning Intent:** The ordinance's intent to limit signage is aimed at reducing visual clutter. However, the applicant's proposed signs are strategically placed and tied to new construction that enhances the building's presence.
- **Precedent:** While the applicant referenced another business with multiple signs, each variance must be evaluated on its own merits. The Corridor Overlay standards, however, provide flexibility to allow signage that aligns with higher design standards.
- **Impact on the Surrounding Area:** If designed appropriately, the additional signs are unlikely to negatively impact the surrounding area, especially if they follow the aesthetic guidelines of the Corridor Overlay Zone.

Recommendations:

Staff recommends **approval with conditions** for the variance request, with the following considerations:

- Signs must meet the design and aesthetic standards of the Corridor Overlay Zone.
- The sign shall meet all requirements of the Historic Preservation Commission's Certificate of Appropriateness approval dated August 27th, 2024.
- The applicant must submit a finalized signage plan that integrates the three signs harmoniously into the building's overall architecture and the surrounding area.



Ronald Johnson, AICP
Community Development Director