

MINUTES OF THE KINGSPORT BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS (BZA)

February 6, Regular Meeting

Noon

Montgomery-Watterson Boardroom, City Hall

Members Present:

Bill Sumner

Wes Combs

Joe White

Tracey Cleek

Members Absent:

Calvin Clifton

Staff Present:

Lori Pyatte

Ken Weems

Jessica McMurray

Visitors:

Allison Winters

Denise Hensley

Brenda Morrell

Landon Martin

Chairman Bill Sumner called the meeting to order at 12:00pm.

Chairman Sumner explained the meeting procedures.

Ms. Lori Pyatte conducted the swearing in ceremony for those wishing to speak during the regular meeting. All visitors were sworn in.

Public Hearing:

Case: BZA25-0017 – The owner of property located at 2405 Memorial Blvd, Control Map 061E, Group H, Parcel 010.00 request a 278.43 square foot variance to Sec. 114-533(9)c to exceed the permitted wall sign allowance for the new Rural King retail space. The property is zoned B-4P, Planned Business District.

Ms. Denise Hensley introduced herself as the representative for the case and presented it to the board. She explained that her employer had been contracted to install signage for the new Rural King, which exceeds the allowed square footage per code prompting her request for a wall sign variance.

Staff noted that the wall sign allowance in a B-4P zone is 300 square feet, and the applicant has already reached this limit with a proposal requiring 578.43 square feet of wall signage. Chairman Sumner asked whether the proposal included the red background. In response, staff provided the board with a handout outlining the sign computation method per code.

Staff advised that the board must determine whether the proposal should be evaluated under Sec. 114-534(3)—where the sign surface area of wall signs consisting of individual letters attached directly to the façade is measured by the smallest rectangle enclosing all letters, with the total area being the sum of each word, logo, or emblem—or under Sec. 114-534(4), which includes the background, box, or outline in the total sign surface area.

Staff clarified that the proposal was submitted under Sec. 114-534(3) since it consists of individual letters attached to the wall. However, if the painted red background were considered part of the sign, it would fall under Sec. 114-534(4).

The board asked about the impact of this classification. Staff explained that if the red background were considered part of the sign, the variance request would increase significantly from 273.43 square feet to 1,463 square feet. Staff also noted that the property is not located in an overlay district, meaning there are no regulations governing how the building is painted.

Ms. Hensley reiterated that the letters would be mounted directly onto the wall and the background would be painted red.

One public comment was received from a neighboring resident, Ms. Brenda Morrell. Ms. Morrell attended the meeting to seek clarification on the request and to confirm that no signage would be placed on the fence behind the property. Ms. Hensley assured her that all signage would be located on the building itself and not on the fence, providing a picture of the design for reference. Ms. Morrell had no further questions or concerns.

Chairman Sumner, seeing no one wishing to speak further on the item, closed the public hearing.

The board noted that the meeting minutes were not included in the packet. Chairman Sumner suspended the business meeting until the minutes were made available.

Adjudication of Cases:

Case: BZA25-0017 – The owner of property located at 2405 Memorial Blvd, Control Map 061E, Group H, Parcel 010.00 request a 278.43 square foot variance to Sec. 114-533(9)c to exceed the permitted wall sign allowance for the new Rural King retail space. The property is zoned B-4P, Planned Business District.

After deliberation, the board confirmed that the initial variance request of 278.43 square feet was accurate, as it has never previously considered wall color as part of a wall sign. Since the letters will be mounted directly onto the wall, and the board does not regulate paint colors, no further adjustments were deemed necessary.

Chairman Sumner asked if there were any further comments or discussion. There were none.

MOTION: Made by Mr. Combs and seconded by Joe White to approve the request as presented.

VOTE: 4-0 to approve the request.

Chairman Sumner asked for any further public comments, there were none.

Staff distributed copies of the minutes, and the business meeting commenced.

BUSINESS:

MOTION: made by Mr. Combs, seconded by Ms. Cleek, to approve the Kingsport Board of Zoning Appeals minutes for December 5, 2024.

VOTE: 4-0 to approve the minutes.

Staff stated for record, the next application deadline is February 17, 2024 at noon, and meeting date Thursday, March 6, 2025.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:22pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessica McMurray

Jessica McMurray
Development Coordinator