

Montgomery City Council
AGENDA REPORT

Meeting Date: March 12, 2024	Budgeted Amount: N/A
Department: Admin	Prepared By: Dave McCorquodale

Subject

Consideration and possible action on a sign variance request for the Montgomery Bend development entry sign.

Recommendation

Staff has no objection to the proposed sign and recommends approval of the variance request.

Discussion

Issue:

The developer for the Montgomery Bend subdivision is proposing an entrance sign that does not conform to the city's sign regulations and is requesting a variance be considered by the city.

Regulations:

Chapter 66 of the Code of Ordinances regulates signs within the city. Applicable to this request are:

- Sec.66-53(a) *Calculation of area.*
 - (1) *Size.* The size of a sign is determined by its effective area. For freestanding signs, the effective area includes the entire structure on which all signs are placed or mounted.
 - (3) *Height.* The height of a sign is measured from the natural ground level at the base of the sign to the highest point of the sign.

- Sec. 66-53(e) *Design and materials for freestanding signs.* All freestanding signs must be designed and constructed to substantially appear as a solid mass, such as a cylinder, block, rectangle, or square, from ground level to the highest portion of the sign (commonly known or referred to as a monument type sign). All freestanding signs must be made of masonry, metal, routed wood planks or beams, or durable plastic.

- Sec. 66-53(m) *Permanent signs permitted and regulated in residential districts.*
 - (1) Residential subdivisions are allowed one permanent identification sign at each major entrance. The total surface area at each entrance shall not exceed 64 square feet. The height of such sign shall not exceed eight feet above the average finished grade.

- Sec. 66-53(q) *Variances.*
 - (1) A relaxation of the terms of this section may be permitted where such variance will not be contrary to the public interest and where, because of conditions peculiar to the property and as the result of the actions of the applicant, a literal enforcement of this section would result in unnecessary and undue hardship.
 - (2) A variance is authorized under this subsection (q) only for sign height and area.
 - (3) Any variance obtained under this section shall be granted by the city council.

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Analysis & Conclusion:

The city’s sign regulations allow for a residential subdivision to have one monument sign at each entrance that does not exceed 64 square feet or be more than 8-feet in height. The developer has proposed a sign that includes two stone towers with a metal-finish sign spanning the space between them as shown on the attached drawings. The letters are to be aluminum and are back-lit.

The proposed sign appears well designed and uses a good mix of materials. The sense of place expressed by the design of the sign is more than what is achievable within the parameters of the sign regulations. Many modern neighborhoods employ architectural elements with signage to bolster neighborhood identity instead of using a standard 2-dimensional sign.

For these reasons, staff supports granting the variance request.

Approved By		
Assistant City Administrator & Planning & Development Director	Dave McCorquodale	Date: 03/07/2024