

# ST. JAMES PLANNING COMMISSION

**TO:** Planning Commission Members  
**FROM:** Brianna Sanders, Zoning Administrator  
**DATE:** March 31, 2025  
**RE:** Sign Permit – Railroad Depot Museum

## **Applicant**

ST. JAMES PARK BOARD  
ADDRESS – Railroad Depot Museum  
PID 207040060

## **Request**

The applicant is requesting a sign permit to erect one monument sign displaying “Railroad Dept Museum” with other descriptions and images.

## **Proposal**

Applicant desires to erect a monument or free-standing sign to display the museum name located north of 307 Tiell Dr. The total surface area of the lettering will be approximately 15 sqft with the sign being 3 ft x 5 ft.

The sign will be located south of the depot museum facing the roadway. The monument sign will be a one-sided sign on metal posts.

The property has a lot street frontage of approximately 85 ft. The maximum total sign surface area permitted would be 170 sq ft. The proposed sign is below this level.

## **Location**

The property has not been assigned a street address. The property is identified as Parcel ID 207040060 legally described as WILLOW VUE BLOCK-003 LOTS 7,8 to the City of Saint James, Watonwan County.

The building is on a city-owned lot. The surrounding zoning designations include R-1 (One and Two Family Residential) to the north and west, and city owned lots to the south (Railroad Club) and east (campground).

## **Existing Land Use**

The parcel is being used for a museum.

## **City Code**

Section 156.002 defines an on-premise sign, which is proposed, as a sign advertising a business, commodity, service, or entertainment, offered upon the same premises on which the sign is located.

## § 156.033 SIGNS.

(C) *Permit required for signs.* A permit shall be required to erect any sign in the city, unless exempted above. No sign shall be erected by any person until the plan for the proposed sign has been received by the Planning and Zoning Commission, and approved by the Council. Permit fees shall be determined by the Council.

(E) *Total sign surface area (on-premises signage).*

(1) *Total surface area; exceeding limitations.* Unless otherwise provided in this section, the total surface area devoted to all signs on any lot shall not exceed the limitations set forth in this section, and all signs, except temporary signs, shall be included in this calculation.

(2) *Maximum sign surface area; residential districts.* Unless otherwise provided in this section, the maximum sign surface area permitted on any lot in any residential district is four square feet.

(3) *Maximum sign surface area; business districts.* Subject to the other provisions of this section, the maximum on-premises sign surface area permitted on any lot in any business district shall be determined as follows:

(a) The total sign surface area allowed shall be two square feet per linear foot of lot street frontage, or 10% of the building frontage area, or 75 square feet in area, whichever is greater. Only one face of a double faced, or V-type, sign shall be considered in determining the display surface area;

(b) For uses on corner lots, the frontage measurement to be used in the signage area calculation shall be the smallest dimension. In this case, the business owner shall be permitted to have two equivalent signs, one facing each street, subject to other regulations contained herein; and

(c) The maximum on-premises sign surface area on any lot in any business district shall be 200 square feet, unless specified differently in other sections.

(4) *Maximum sign surface area; industrial districts.* Subject to other provisions of this section, the maximum sign surface area on any lot in any industrial district shall be determined by multiplying the number of linear feet of street frontage of the lot by three feet, or 20% of the building frontage, or 300 square feet, whichever is greater.

(5) *Sign surface area; wall of structure.* The sign surface area of any sign located on a wall of a structure may not exceed 50% of the total surface area of the wall on which the sign is located.

(J) *Sign illumination and signs containing lights.*

(1) *General.* Unless otherwise prohibited by this section, signs may be illuminated if the illumination is in accordance with this section.

(2) *Lighting.* Lighting directed toward a sign shall be shielded so that it illuminates only the face of the sign, and does not shine directly into a public right-of-way or residential premises.

(3) *Illuminated tubings, or strings of light.* Illuminated tubings, or strings of lights, that outline property lines, sales areas, roof lines, doors, windows, or similar areas are prohibited.

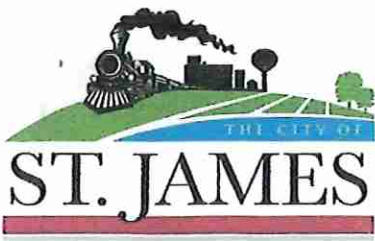
(4) *Flashing lights.* No sign may contain, or be illuminated, by flashing or intermittent lights, or lights of changing degrees of intensity, except signs indicating the time, date, or weather conditions.

### **Recommendations**

Staff recommendation is approval

### **Exhibits**

Exhibit 10 - Sign Permit Application



# CITY OF ST. JAMES

## APPLICATION FOR A SIGN PERMIT

Name of Applicant: Maggie MaireAddress: 907 Elton AvenueCity/State/Zip: St. James, Mn. 56081Phone Number: 507 381-6559Address of Sign (if different from above): (NA) Railroad Depot Museum-St. James

- ☐ Wall sign
- ☐ Wall sign with illumination (lights)
- ☒ Free-standing or monument sign
- ☐ Free-standing or monument sign with illumination (lights)

Application Permit Fee (\$50.00): ☐ PAID BMS Initial by City StaffThe information below can be found on <https://beacon.schneidercorp.com>Legal Description of Property: Willow Me Block 3 Lots 7,8Parcel ID 207040060Evidence of ownership or enforceable option: ☐ submitted ☐ not submittedCurrent Zoning District of Property: St. James Commercial

Provide a brief narrative description of the existing signage on-site and of the signage improvements proposed in this application (use a separate sheet of paper if needed):

Original signage destroyed; replace itApplicant has provided a photo or drawing of sign. ☐ complete ☐ incompleteSketch Plan Submitted on: / / Value of proposed work: \_\_\_\_\_

Dimensions of Sign: \_\_\_\_\_

Sketch Plan information to be provided:

1. North arrow and parcel boundaries drawn to scale (preferably 1"=100')
2. Location of existing buildings, their size, use, and setbacks from parcel boundary lines, existing signage on site, existing driveway locations, existing streets/roads on or immediately adjacent to the parcel, existing easements, power utility poles/underground utility lines on or serving the parcel, and existing parcel areas
3. Location of proposed signage, the type of signage carrier (freestanding, attached to building), the message display area, a description of any proposed lighting if external lighting sources are to be used, the location of the lighting source, and distances of all signage elements from parcel boundary lines;
4. A line drawing of the new sign, message display area, with dimensions
5. Identification of adjacent landowners

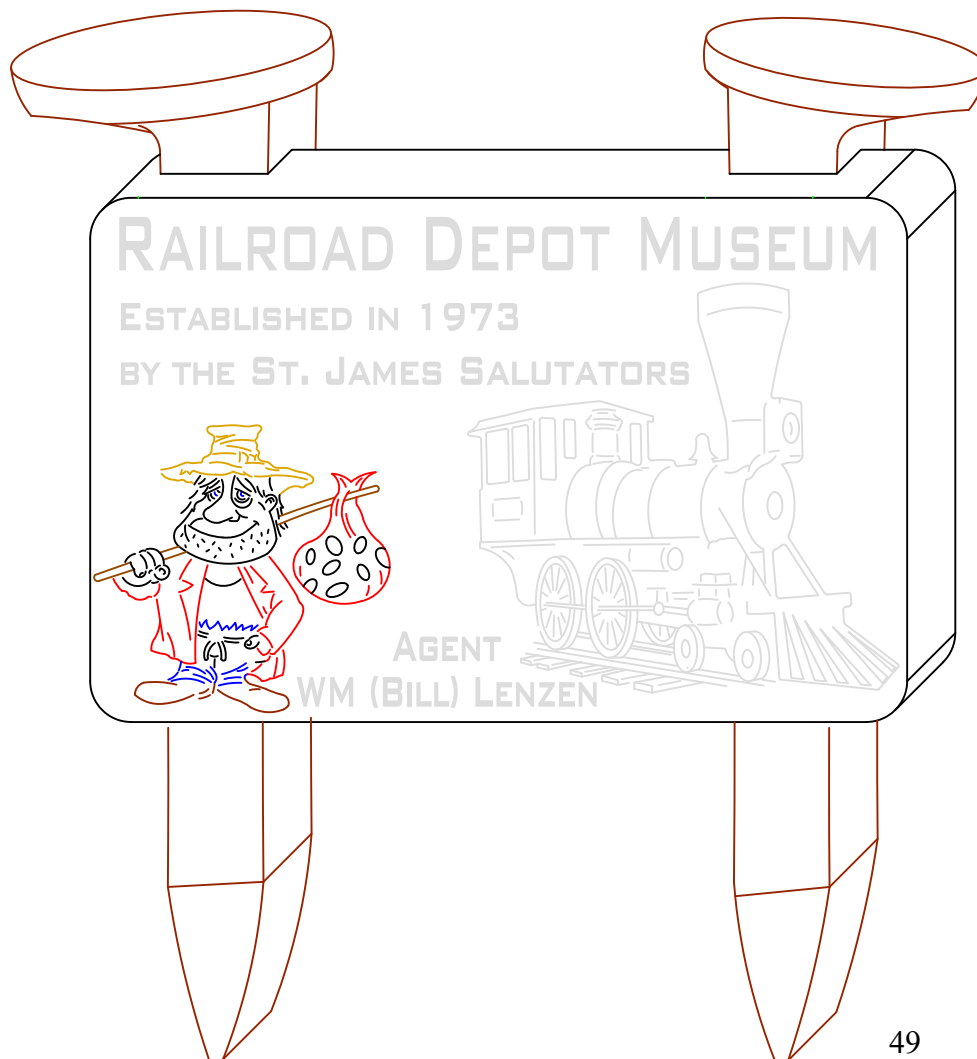
Information supplied was: ☐ complete ☐ incomplete \_\_\_\_\_ initialed by City Staff

The above information and attached drawing of request are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

March 24, 2025  
Date

Margaret Maile  
Signature of Person Filing Application

Last revised 2/13/2023



Powdercoated Metal Sign app. 3' x 5' x 5"  
mounted on "Railroad Spikes" anchored  
to ground.

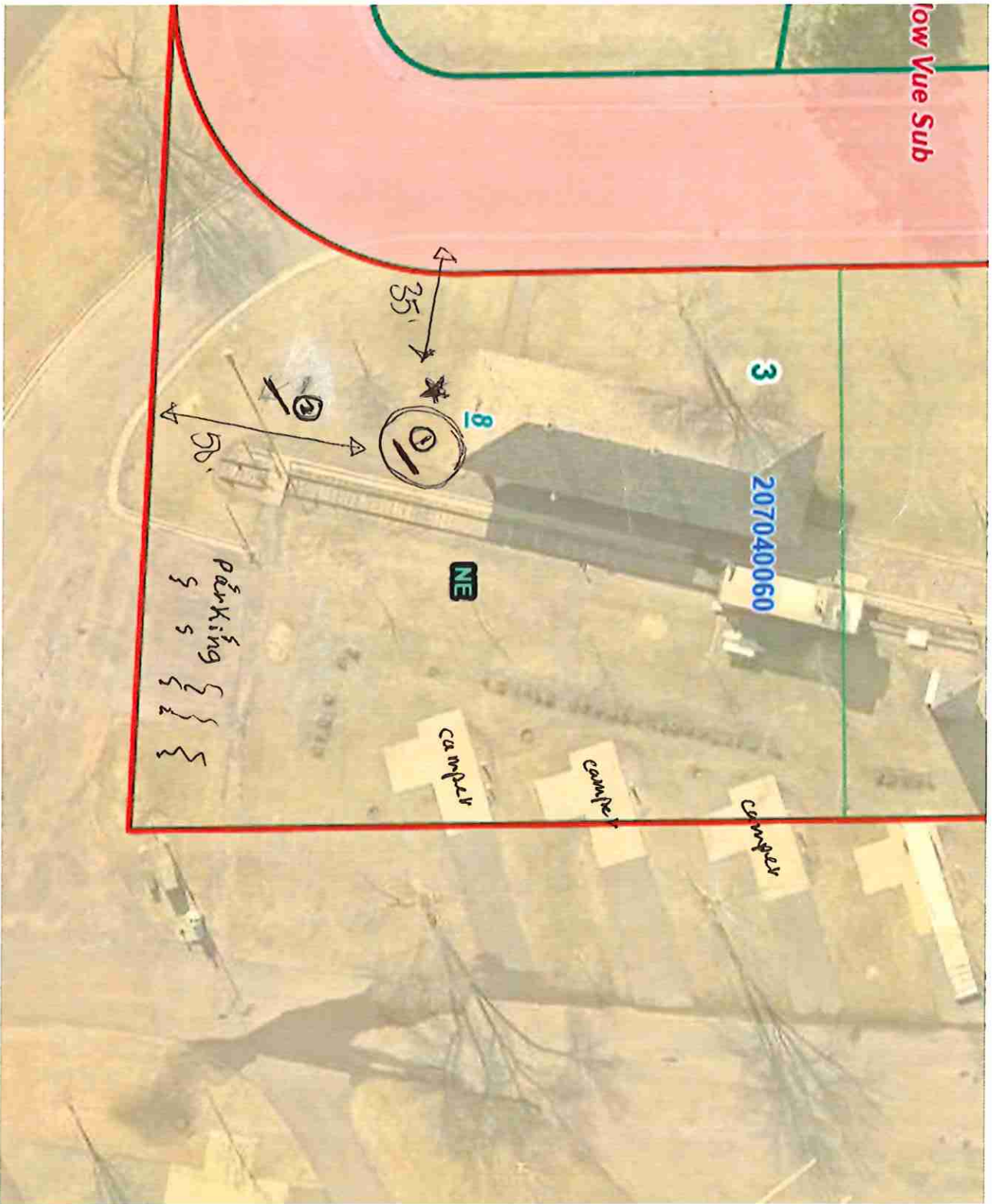
Stainless Steel Train Silhouette  
Stainless Steel Hobo Silhouette

Colors yet to be determined



North

low Yue Sub



South



City of St. James

1205 6<sup>th</sup> Ave S. | PO Box 70 | St. James, MN 56081

P. 507 -375 -3241 | F. 507 -375 -4376 | [www.ci.stjames.mn.us](http://www.ci.stjames.mn.us)

March 26, 2025

St. James Planning and Zoning Commission  
1205 6<sup>th</sup> Ave S  
St. James, MN 56081

RE: Letter of Support for Sign Permit

Dear Commissioners,

On behalf of the St. James Park Board, we are writing to express our support for the approval of the sign permit application for the installation of a sign honoring the history of the Railroad Depot Museum. Our support is contingent upon the sign meeting all approved requirements set forth by the Park Board.

The Railroad Depot Museum is a vital historical landmark in our community, and this sign will serve to honor the St. James Salutators, the organization that founded the museum. We believe this project aligns with our shared commitment to preserving local history while ensuring clarity in its representation.

The Railroad Depot Museum was donated to the City of St. James by the St. James Salutators, and the city has owned and maintained the museum for over twenty years. While the Park Board strongly values historical preservation, it is also important that any signage does not create confusion among residents and visitors. As the museum is not open to the public on a regular basis, and the St. James Salutators now operates under the St. James Chamber of Commerce, the Park Board carefully reviewed the proposed signage to ensure historical accuracy and clarity. The approved verbiage and placement of text on the sign appropriately acknowledge the founding organization while clearly communicating that the museum is not currently owned by the St. James Salutators.

The Park Board reviewed the proposed sign and provided the following feedback to the applicant:

- The sign should be rectangular in shape with minimal to no protruding elements.
- The "Railroad Depot Museum" text should be prominently displayed in a large font.
- The sign needs to be anchored to a cement slab.
- The approved verbiage for the sign is as follows:

RAILROAD DEPOT MUSEUM

EST. 1973

ST. JAMES SALUTATORS

We appreciate the Planning and Zoning Commission's commitment to upholding city ordinances and ensuring that all developments adhere to established guidelines. The Park Board is confident that the applicant will comply with all necessary specifications, including size, placement, and design, as required.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Amanda Knoll  
City Manager  
City of St. James