



AGENDA MEMO

5/18/2021 Agenda

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Patrick Baugh, Community Development Director

SUBJECT: Consider an Ordinance creating a Special Sign district for 4015 Normandy – the First Unitarian Church

BACKGROUND:

The First Unitarian Church is undergoing construction to expand and update campus facilities. To direct the congregate to the new entrances and facilities, building identification and directional signage is necessary in a quantity that exceeds the allowable limits in the City's Sign Ordinance.

The First Unitarian Church is zoned Planned Development District Number 24 (PD-24). Like most churches in the City of University Park, the PD-24 regulations allow for certain building and land use parameters, but they do not regulate sign provisions. The proposed Special Sign District assures a coordinated and compatible graphics package that addresses on-site needs and the aesthetics considerations of adjacent properties.

The Zoning and Development Advisory Committee deliberated the proposed Regulations during their April meeting and recommended approval.

Overall, the majority of signs added are small way-finding signs to direct parking and foot traffic to the various buildings. Entry signs complete the task of directing the members and visitors to the designated locations. The 14 new signs have a total area of 291 square feet. With ordinance adoption, factoring in the 14 signs that already exist (approximately 288 square feet of area), the total area of all signs on campus would be 579 square feet. The attached application schedules, pictures and renderings provide details on all signs. Without the creation of a Special Sign District, the campus would be subject to the area and height limitations listed below:

Sec. 3.09.112 Institutional signs; scoreboards

Signs relating to schools, churches, hospitals, universities or similar institutions (and individual buildings comprising these institutions) may be (i) wall signs limited to twenty (20) square feet in area, or (ii) ground signs limited to fifty (50) square feet in area and four (4) feet in height.

RECOMMENDATION:

Noting that other churches in the City have sought and received Special Sign District designation after presenting similar needs, staff concurs with the Zoning and Development Advisory Committee and recommends approval of an Ordinance to create this special Sign district for 4015 Normandy – First Unitarian Church.

ATTACHMENTS:

ZADAC Draft Minutes excerpt
SSD Proposed Graphics Package Application

ATTACHMENT

3. 4015 Normandy (First Unitarian Church)

- Presentation
 - Jordan Kepsel, Gensler Architects, presented this item via PowerPoint. Mr. Kepsel explained and displayed a site plan of the existing/proposed signage, sign message schedule, photo renderings, proposed digital sign details and proposed sign monument details.
- Discussion
 - Committee Member Graves asked for clarification that the proposed digital sign would not consist of flashing lights or moving images. Mr. Kepsel confirmed and stated the intent is to have a singular color message that will be rotated once every twenty-four (24) hours.
 - Committee Member Brunz questioned how this case compares to the previous case at Highland Park Presbyterian Church. Mrs. Rees stated it is common for churches with multiple buildings and frontages to create special sign districts because of the limited sign ordinance. She also stated this item is similar to previous cases received.
 - Committee Member Brunz expressed the proposed signs look appropriate for the size of this church facility. Mrs. Rees agreed.
 - Ms. Palomino relayed Acting Chairman Carter's comments that he has no issues with this proposal.
 - Committee Member Sower questioned if the handicap signage is included in the total square footage allowance. Mrs. Rees answered this is not included, along with parking signage.
 - Committee Member Sower asked for clarification on the allowed signage calculation. Mrs. Rees stated churches are their own category and the allowed calculation is twenty square feet (20 sq. ft.).
 - Committee Member Lee stated she is comfortable with this proposal; it seems in good taste and beneficial to their congregant.
 - Committee Member Sower wanted to confirm there is language regarding the frequency change for the digital sign. Mr. Kepsel confirmed it is stated on page AL.1 on the provided plans.
- Action
 - Committee Member Lee moved to approve, seconded by Committee Member Sower. The motion carried by a unanimous vote at 12:47 PM.