

McHenry County
Department of Planning & Development

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Site Plan Review Memorandum

To: Hinz/Mixed Media LLC
From: Anna Kurtzman, Senior Planner
Date: April 7, 2025
RE: Z25-0034 --- Renewal of Conditional Use Permit 2014-043, Off-Premise Commercial Advertising Sign - Digital

The Planning Division has considered the following documents in developing this analysis of your zoning application:

1. Application for Conditional Use Permit Renewal received March 5, 2025
2. Plat of Survey drawn by William TenBusch, dated August 9, 2002
3. Site Plan undated
4. Construction drawings dated January 6, 2006

Staff has the following comments:

1. Section 16.56. EE of the McHenry County Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) requires the following. Yellow highlighted items are of concern and discussed after the list.
 - a. *No off-premises commercial advertising sign may be located within one hundred (100) feet of any residential zoning district or residential structure located in an agricultural zoning district. When an off-premises commercial advertising sign one hundred and fifty (150) square feet or larger in size is located within five hundred (500) feet of a residential zoning district, or within five hundred (500) feet of a residential structure within an agricultural zoning district, a conditional use permit is required.*
 - b. *Each off-premises commercial advertising sign must be located at least three hundred (300) feet from another off-premises advertising sign.*
 - c. *Off-premises commercial advertising signs must be located at least five (5) feet from any side lot line and ten (10) feet from a street lot line.*
 - d. *Off-premises commercial advertising signs are limited to a maximum height of thirty-five (35) feet, as measured from the grade of the roadway.*
 - e. *Off-premises commercial advertising signs are limited to a maximum sign area of two hundred sixty (260) square feet unless the sign is oriented to an Interstate Highway with a posted speed limit in excess of fifty five (55) miles per hour, in which case the maximum sign area is four hundred (400) square feet.*
 - f. *Off-premises commercial advertising signs are limited two (2) sides placed either back-to-back or in a V-type configuration, provided that the angle between V-type mounted sign faces does not exceed forty-five (45) degrees. If the angle between two (2) sign faces is greater than forty-five (45) degrees, the sign area is computed as the sum of the areas of the two (2) faces (see Figure 16.72-3).*
 - g. *Off-premises commercial advertising signs shall be maintained in sound structural condition and shall comply with all building and electrical codes.*
 - h. *Off-premises commercial advertising signs shall not create obstacles or traffic hazards by distracting or confusing motorists, impairing motorists' ability to see pedestrians, read other traffic signs, or see other vehicles.*

- i. *A conditional use permit is required for all digital off-premises commercial advertising signs. In addition, digital off-premises commercial advertising signs must meet the following standards:*
 - i. *Each message or image displayed on a digital off-premises commercial advertising signs must be static or depicted for a minimum of ten (10) seconds. Animation, streaming video, and images that move or give the appearance of movement are prohibited.*
 - ii. *A digital off-premises commercial advertising sign must not exceed a maximum illumination of three-tenths (0.3) footcandles above the ambient light level when measured from a distance equal to the square root of the square footage of the sign multiplied by one hundred. (measurement distance = (sign area) x 100) All digital off-premises commercial advertising signs must have ambient light monitors installed, which automatically adjust the brightness level based on ambient light conditions.*
 - iii. *In response to complaints, the Zoning Enforcement Officer may require that the owner of a digital off-premises commercial advertising sign submit a certification demonstrating that the sign complies with the maximum illumination standards.*
 - iv. *All digital off-premises commercial advertising sign must be programmed to automatically revert to a full black screen in the event of a malfunction.*
- j. *Conversion of an existing non-digital off-premises commercial advertising sign to a digital off-premises commercial advertising sign is subject to the following:*
 - i. *A conforming off-premises commercial advertising sign may be converted to a digital sign with approval of a conditional use permit.*
 - ii. *A nonconforming off-premises commercial advertising sign within a district that permits such signs may be converted to a digital off-premises commercial advertising sign if the nonconformity is remedied (i.e., the sign is brought into compliance) and a conditional use permit is approved.*
 - iii. *A nonconforming off-premises commercial advertising sign within a district that does not permit such signs may not be converted to a digital off-premises commercial advertising sign.*
- k. *The owner of a digital off-premises commercial advertising sign shall provide the County with space for public service announcements including Amber Alerts, weather related evacuations, or other emergency situations.*
- l. *An off-premises commercial advertising sign may be utilized to display a noncommercial message under the same standards as the display of a commercial message, unless otherwise allowed or restricted by State laws including, but not limited to, the Illinois Election Code and/or 10 ILCS 5/1-1 et seq. as enforced by State Board of Elections or other appropriate officials.*

Item 2.f. It is not clear from the drawing what the degree is of the angle. Please provide this information – either in the narrative or on the site plan.

- 2. Please note that the Zoning Board of Appeals may recommend, and the County Board may approve additional standards beyond those listed in the Unified Development Ordinance.