



CITY OF FORT PIERCE

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

REBECCA GROHALL, AICP, PLANNING DIRECTOR & FPRADIRECTOR
COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING ♦ DEVELOPMENT REVIEW
HISTORIC PRESERVATION ♦ URBAN DESIGN ♦ ZONING

TO: Members of the City of Fort Pierce Board of Adjustment

THROUGH: Rebecca Grohall, AICP, Planning Director

FROM: Kori Benton, Senior Planner

RE: **Variance – Exceed Allowable Sign Area & Height**
Westside Church
3361 South Jenkins Road

DATE: May 18, 2016

STAFF REPORT

Owners/Applicants: Westside Church
3361 S. Jenkins Road
Fort Pierce, FL 34981

Representative: Troy Ingersoll, Administrative Pastor

Requested Action: Approval of a variance to deviate from City Code Section 15-8(1)b. to exceed the allowable sign area of an on-premise ground sign and Section 15-6(b)(3)1. 4. to exceed the allowable sign height for a property within a Single-family residential zoning district. The application seeks approval to construct a 28 ft. tall ground sign, two-hundred (200) square feet in size.

Location: 3361 South Jenkins Road

Parcel ID: 2325-134-0000-000-6

Zoning: Single-Family Intermediate Density zone (R-2)

Surrounding Zoning:

North	East	South	West
C-3/ E-2	R-4/ RS-3 (SLC)	RM-5 (SLC)	I-95/CP

Future Land Use: RL, Low Density Residential

Parcel Size: 23.83 acres

Staff Analysis:

Request

In accordance with Article VIII of Section 22 of the City Code, the applicant is requesting the Board of Adjustments approve a variance to deviate from City Code Section 15-8(1)b. to exceed the allowable sign area of an on-premise ground sign and Section 15-6(b)(3)1. 4. to exceed the allowable sign height for a property within a Single-family residential zoning district.

The application proposes the construction of a 28 ft. tall ground sign, two-hundred (200) square feet in size, whereas the City Code limits the sign to six (6) feet in height and eighteen (18) square feet in sign area for a conditional use, in this case a church, with a single-family residential district.

Subject Site

The subject site is 23.83 acres in size, and features 1,270 linear feet of frontage upon S. Jenkins Road and approximately 1,200 linear feet of frontage along Interstate 95 (I-95). The property is host to a church campus which includes a 53,610 sq. ft. sanctuary, gymnasium, and other support structures.

The site currently features a ground sign along Jenkins Road towards the entrance to Westside's former sanctuary and gymnasium. Construction of a new, or replacement ground sign was not completed with the new sanctuary, therefore the current sign is relatively obsolete as it's not visible from the new entry further north on Jenkins. The existing sign is approximately 9 ft. in height, which the applicant proposes to abandon as a component of the variance request.

The proposed LED ground sign is presented in a location which is isolated the west of the property along I-95, over 1,000 ft. from the closest residence. The sign and location is designed to be visible to travelers north bound on I-95. It would conform to the applicable setback distance from the property line, and the display restricted from movement, animation, or flashing.

Analysis of Request

A comparison of the existing sign present on site, the sign allowance for the property, as well as the requested sign via a variance is provided in the table below:

	<u>Height</u>	<u>Area</u>
Existing Sign	9ft.	N/A
Sign Allowed	6ft.	18 sq. ft.
Requested Sign	28ft.	200 sq. ft.

Variance Criteria

The following criteria are specified in Section 22-108 of the City Code, which must be satisfied in order for a variance to be granted:

1. Special conditions and circumstances exist which are peculiar to the land, structure or building involved and which are not applicable to other lands, structures or buildings in the same zoning district;
2. The special conditions and circumstances do not result from the actions of the applicant;
3. The literal interpretation of the provision of the zoning ordinance would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same zoning district under the terms of the ordinance and would result in unnecessary and undue hardship on the applicant;

4. The variance granted is the minimum variance that will make possible the reasonable use of the land, building or structure;
5. The granting of the variance will be in harmony with the general intent and purpose of the ordinance and such variance will not be injurious to the area involved or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare.

The applicants, in the attached application and supporting documents, cite various factors and explanation with regard to the above-referenced criteria. The concentration of the presented justification is centered the size of the subject campus and complex, the location of the property along I-95, the intended sign location, and the semi-commercial nature of the church facility

In reviewing the presented characteristics and special circumstances unique to the site, and the proposed request, Staff considered the allowable parameters for similar sized sites adjacent to I-95. The large tracts of land along I-95, along I-95 are typically commercially zoned or undeveloped commercial property. A commercial store or development on a similar size property would be permitted a sign up to twenty (20) feet in height, with an allowable sign area of 200 sq. ft.

Due to the scale and nature of the facility, and the community activities on-site open to the general public such as concerts and sports programs, the Board may deem it appropriate to consider allowing a sign size consistent with a commercially zoned property, of this scale, along two major roadways. The request for an additional eight (8) feet in height, to offset the grade change between the subject size and I-95 is not supported as the sign height would no longer be consistent with the allowable dimension of adjacent properties within this segment of the I-95 corridor.

The presented sign design is isolated from the church structures, and over 450 ft. from the most adjacent property line, therefore visibility is limited from all views other than I-95 to the west. The sign design would need to be amended to comply with the City's Design Review Guidelines (Section 22-59) with the addition of architectural features indicative of a monument sign, which is encouraged to embody the architectural style of the principal building on site. A conceptual exhibit of possible adjustments to the sign, to integrate columns and an architectural cap are attached for the Board's review.



Property Owner Response Summary:

A total of 24 notifications were mailed to abutting property owners. As of May 19th, 2016, 0 responses have been received. An updated recording of responses will be provided to the Board at the hearing.

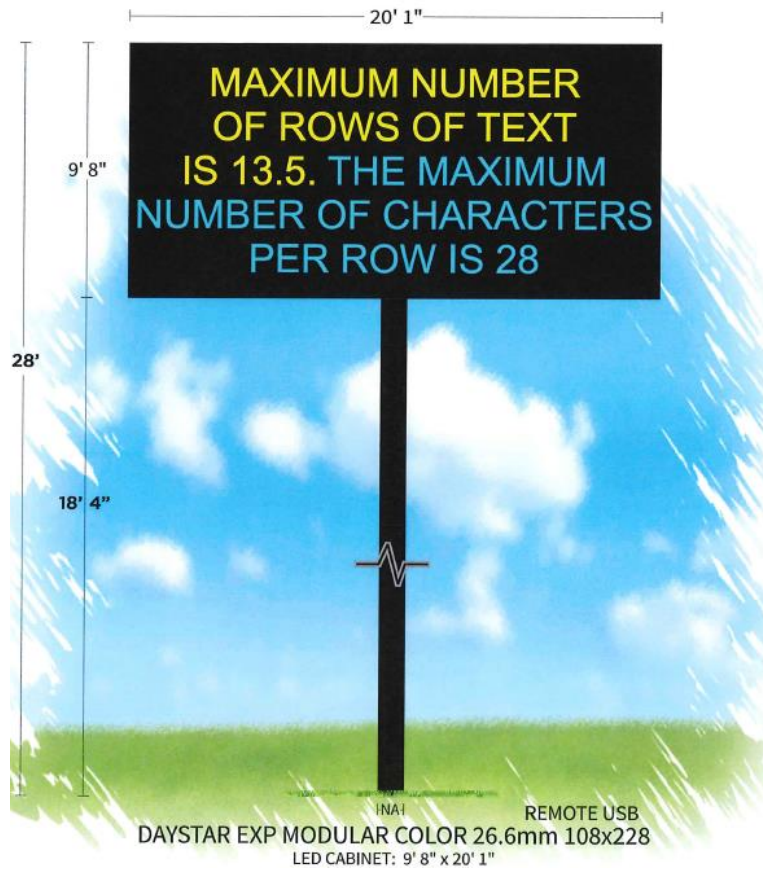
The applicant has secured signatures (unverified) from adjacent residential neighbors from the single-family subdivision to the north.

Staff Recommendation:

The characteristics associated with the presented site, nature of the use, and location along Interstate 95, and the applicant's application present factors for the Board of Adjustment to consider validation through the criteria specified in Section 22-108 of the City Code.

The recommendation of Staff is to **approve** a variance to permit a monument sign of twenty (20) feet in height, and 200 sq. ft. in sign area with the acknowledgement that the sign will conform to City Code Section 22-59 – Design Review, and other requirement of the City's Sign ordinances.

Proposed Sign 28 ft.



Conceptual Sign Exhibit – Incorporating Design Review Elements & Height of 20ft.

