



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

THROUGH: Rebecca Grohall, AICP, Planning Director

FROM: Kori Benton, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: Variance
 Wawa Retail Store, Gas Station, & Cafe – 2nd Ground Sign
 5575 Okeechobee Road

DATE: August 18th, 2016

STAFF REPORT

Owner: S and S Rentals B LLC.
 400 High Point Drive, Suite#500
 Cocoa, FL 32926

Applicant: Gregory Davis
 Thomas Sign & Awning Co.
 4590 118th Avenue N
 Clearwater, FL 33762

Requested Action: Approval of a Variance to deviate from Section 15-8(5)(3) of the Fort Pierce Code of Ordinances to construct an additional advertising ground sign at the proposed Wawa Gas Station. The applicant is seeking to install a second ground sign twelve (12) feet in height, and sixty (60) square feet in area, along Jenkins Road whereas the code limits the site to a single ground sign.

Location: 5575 Okeechobee Road (aka 2674 S Jenkins RD)

Parcel: 2419-322-0004-000-9

Lot Size: 3.34 acres

Current Zoning: C-3, General Commercial Zone

Surrounding Zoning:

North	East	South	West
C-3	C-3	C-3	C-3

Staff Analysis:

Request

In accordance with Chapter 22, Article VIII and Chapter 15 – Signs & Billboards of the City Code, the applicant is requesting that the Board of Adjustment approve a Variance to deviate from Section 15-8(5)(3) of the Fort Pierce Code of Ordinances to construct an additional advertising ground sign at the proposed Wawa Gas Station. The applicant is seeking to install a second ground sign twelve (12) feet in height, and sixty (60) square feet in area, along Jenkins Road whereas the code limits the site to a single ground sign.

The subject site is presently home to a Goodyear Elpex Commercial Tire & Service Center, built in 1968. The facility consists of a 10,246 sq. ft. brick stucco building and a 9,120 sq. ft. metal structure with 9 commercial vehicle service bays. The site was permitted by St. Lucie County, prior to annexation, to feature two (2) large pole signs to advertise the Goodyear center which are nearly 25 feet in height.

The applicant has filed a Site Plan proposal to construct a 6,119 sq. ft. Wawa fueling station and convenience store to replace the existing structures and redeveloped site. The applicant is seeking to remove the old pole signs and replace with two matching ground signs; twelve (12) feet in height and sixty (60) square feet in area, one along Okeechobee Road and one fronting Jenkins Road whereas the code limits the subject property to a single ground sign.

Sign Allowance

Pursuant to Section 15-8(5) a.3. of the City Code, within the C-3, General Commercial Zoning District: “any establishment, or group of establishments, which has a main street lot frontage of sixty (60) linear feet or more, shall be permitted one ground sign. Such sign shall not exceed a sign area equal to one square foot for every three (3) linear feet of main street of lot frontage, up to a maximum of two hundred (200) square feet except that one additional ground sign shall be permitted when the main street lot frontage exceeds five hundred (500) feet.”.

The subject project's main street frontage is appropriately designated as Okeechobee Road with approximately 270 linear feet of frontage on this major arterial roadway. Additionally, the subject property has approximately 420 linear feet of frontage along Jenkins Road, a minor arterial roadway.

The subject property's “main” street frontage does not exceed 500 linear feet; therefore authorization of a second ground necessitates the requested variance consideration as the City Code does not contemplate the occasional situation when a property may have multiple road frontages along what may be argued as other “main” streets. Specifically, the subject property does not exceed 500 feet on any one frontage; the cumulative frontage for all four sides is approximately 690 linear feet. With the application of this cumulative frontage, the applicant would be granted the capacity to construct two (2) ground signs of 166 sq. ft. and 63 sq. ft.

The applicant is requesting to place two (2) modest sized signs, twelve (12) feet in height and sixty (60) square feet in area, below the noted figures, and much lower than the existing pole signs. Furthermore, the proposed signs are presented at each entrance with notable separation from each other, and embody the architectural design of the proposed structure. The placement of landscaping seeks to further balance the proposed monument signs with the overall development.

Signs present along the subject corridor and adjacent to the interstate interchange are generally much larger in size, and height, therefore the presented request does not adversely impact the corridor or create concern of visual disturbance.

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.

Public Notification Letters

Staff distributed 10 notification letters via mail to owners of property abutting the subject site. To date, 0 responses have been received. An update will be provided to the Board at the public hearing.

Staff Recommendation:

The proposed application and supporting documents provide adequate justification through the criteria specified in Section 22-108 of the City Code and does not present adverse impact to the adjacent properties, therefore Staff recommends approval of the requested variance for a second ground sign of sixty (60) square feet and twelve (12) feet in height with the condition that the landscape plan is adjusted to accommodate the placement of this second sign.