



Division of Development Administration and Review

City of Pittsburgh, Department of City Planning

412 Boulevard of the Allies, Second Floor

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

Date of Hearing: October 2, 2025
Date of Decision: November 17, 2025

Zone Case: 127 of 2025
Address: 59 South 2nd Street
Lot and Block: 3-A-80
Zoning Districts: RIV-IMU
Ward: 17
Neighborhood: South Shore

Request: Wall Sign

Application: BDA-2025-08382

Variance	Section 919.03.M.5	80 sf maximum wall sign area; 126 sf proposed 20' maximum wall sign height; 75' height proposed
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Appearances:

Applicant: Kento Ohmori, Kate Marshall, Tony Mazzarini

Findings of Fact:

1. The Subject Property is located at 59 South 2nd Street in a RIV-IMU (River, Industrial Mixed Use) District in the South Shore.
2. The building on the property was constructed in 1854. Its height is 77'7-stories and it has a variety of uses.
3. The Subject Property is adjacent to both the Liberty Bridge and the Panhandle Bridge. The proposed location of the sign would be at a height of 75' from grade, just below the parapet wall that faces the Liberty Bridge. The text of the sign would be "The Distillery Complex." and the sign would be internally illuminated.
4. The Applicant offered testimony that the proposed height and dimensions of the sign are necessary to provide visibility and wayfinding to the building, in the context of the site.

5. The Applicant submitted evidence that the proposed sign is the minimum height and size that would be visible from the Liberty Bridge and that a sign complying with the Code's height and area standards would only be visible from grade on 2nd Street.

6. The Applicant provided a historic photograph of the building, from 1906, which depicts a painted sign at the same general height and with significantly larger dimensions, as compared to the proposed sign.

7. The Applicant confirmed that no additional wall signage would be mounted on the building.

8. The Southside Chamber of Commerce submitted a letter of support for the request.

9. No one appeared at the hearing to oppose the request.

Conclusions of Law:

1. Section 919.03.M.5(a) sets forth the requirements for signs in the RIV-IMU District. For wall-mounted signs, the total face area is not to exceed 2 sf of sign face area for each lineal foot of the building wall width, to a maximum of 80 sf, and signs are to be mounted no higher than 20' above grade.

2. The Applicant requests variances from the sign height and size standards to allow the installation of a 126 sf wall sign, at a height of 75' above grade.

3. Section 922.09.E sets forth the general standards that the Board is to consider with respect to variances, including demonstrating the existence of a hardship associated with the property that precludes strict compliance with the Code's requirements and demonstrating that the variance proposed is the minimum variance that would afford relief, with the least modification of the Code requirement at issue. See *Marshall v. City of Philadelphia and Zoning Bd. of Adj.*, 97 A.3d 323, 329 (Pa. 2014); *Hertzberg v. Zoning Bd. of Adj. of the City of Pittsburgh*, 721 A.2d 43 (Pa. 1998), citing *Allegheny West Civic Council v. Zoning Bd. of Adj. of the City of Pittsburgh*, 689 A.2d 225 (Pa. 1997).

4. The Applicant provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the sign, as proposed, would be placed at the minimum height that would allow it to be visible in the context of the surrounding bridges, and that the proposed sign face area would be the minimum that would be legible from the Liberty Bridge.

5. The proposed sign would be at the same approximate height, with a significantly smaller area, than the painted wall sign that was on the building as of 1906 and the proposed sign would be more consistent with the current sign standards.

6. Consistent with the evidence and testimony presented, and the applicable legal standards governing dimensional variances, the Board concludes that approval of the request is appropriate.

Decision: The Applicant's request for variances from Section 919.03.M.5 to allow the installation of a 126 sf wall sign at a height of 75' from grade is hereby APPROVED; subject to the condition that no additional wall-mounted signs shall be permitted.

s/Alice B. Mitinger
Alice B. Mitinger, Chair

s/Lashawn Burton-Faulk
LaShawn Burton-Faulk

s/ John J. Richardson
John J. Richardson

Note: Decision issued with electronic signatures, with the Board members' review and approval.