



Division of Zoning and Development 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: May 7, 2026
Date of Decision: May 28, 2026

Zone Case: 37 of 2026
Address: 1600 Methyl Street
Lot and Block: 35-F-204
Zoning Districts: R1D-H
Ward: 19
Neighborhood: Beechview

Request: New Electronic Sign

Application: BDA-2026-01494

Variance	Section 919.03.O.3	Electronic Non-Advertising Sign not permitted in R1 Districts
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Appearances:

Applicant: Terry Oden, Pastor Oscar Cruz

Findings of Fact:

1. The Subject Property is located at 1600 Methyl Street, at the intersection with Hampshire Avenue, in an R1D-H (Residential One Unit Detached High Density) District in Beechview.
2. A church building is located on the Subject Property.
3. The Applicant explained that a small bulletin board sign was previously located on an area of the site that faces the corner of Methyl Street and Hampshire Avenue. The bulletin board sign was used to provide information about the programs and services that the church provides.
4. The Applicant proposes to replace with bulletin board sign with a 3' by 6' (18 sf) LED sign. The intent of the electronic sign is to display messages related to church activities. The Applicant indicated that the electronic sign would be more visible than the bulletin board and would allow the text of the messaging to be changed more easily.

5. The Applicants were unable to present any evidence of any unique condition of the Subject Property that would create an unnecessary hardship that would prevent compliance with the Code's requirements.

6. The Applicant did not present any information about how the proposed electronic sign would impact nearby residential properties.

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

Conclusions of Law:

1. Pursuant to Code Section 919.03.O.3, electronic non-advertising signs are permitted only in HC, UI and GI Districts. This type of electronic sign is prohibited in R1 Districts. The Applicant thus seeks a use variance to allow an electronic sign in an R1D-H District

2. Section 922.09.E sets forth the general conditions the Board is to consider with respect to variances. The criteria for determining whether to grant a variance include: 1) whether unique circumstances or conditions of a property would result in an unnecessary hardship; 2) whether the property could be developed in accordance with the Code's requirements to allow for its reasonable use; 3) whether the applicant created the hardship; 4) whether the requested variance would adversely affect the essential character of the neighborhood or the public welfare; and 5) whether the variance requested is the minimum variance that would afford relief with the least modification possible. See *Marshall v. City of Philadelphia and Zoning Bd. of Adj.*, 97 A.3d 323, 329 (Pa. 2014); *Hertzberg v. Zoning Board 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); see also *Metal Green Inc. v. City of Philadelphia*, 266 A.3d 495, 510 (Pa. 2021).

3. The Applicant seeks to replace the existing bulletin board sign with an electronic sign in an effort to enhance the sign's visibility and to facilitate changing messages on the sign. These goals, however, are not unique conditions associated with the property and are not sufficient to justify a variance from the Code's prohibition against electronic non-advertising signs in residential districts.

4. Consistent with the evidence and testimony presented and the applicable legal standards governing variances, the Board concludes that the request for a use variance from the prohibition against electronic non-advertising signs must be denied.

Decision: The Applicant's request for a variance from Section 919.03.O.3 to allow the installation of an electronic non-advertising sign is hereby DENIED.

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.