

**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 21, 2026**Date of Decision:** June 30, 2026**Zone Case:** 46 of 2026**Address:** 30 Isabella Street**Lot and Block:** 8-H-211**Zoning Districts:** RIV-NS**Ward:** 22**Neighborhood:** North Shore**Request:** High Wall Sign**Application:** BDA-2026-01401

Variance	Section 919.03.M.7(c)	Only the name of the building or business can be mounted higher than 40' above grade; signs identifying two businesses proposed on the Isabella Street façade at heights above 40' Area of high wall signs limited to 2% of the area of the exposed façade area
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Appearances:

Applicant: Bill Kolano, Ryan Wotus

Findings of Fact:

1. The Subject Property is located at 30 Isabella Street in a RIV-NS (River North Shore) District in the North Shore.
2. The parcel extends from Isabella Street to E. General Robinson Street and from Range Way to Vulcan Way.
3. Located on the parcel is a 6-story/90' high multi-tenant office building.
4. Portions of the building, at the Range Way and Vulcan corners, extend to the front property line on Isabella Street. At the mid-point of the building's frontage, a design feature creates

a triangular courtyard, with a 62' length along Isabella Street and the entrance to the building is set back approximately 60' from the front property line. The length of the façade on Isabella Street, on each side of the open area, is 79'. The central courtyard creates the appearance of a separation between the two sides of the building.

5. A 2020 Certificate of Occupancy for the Subject Property permits "Use of 172 sf internally illuminated wall sign at top of façade facing Isabella Street."

6. The 172 sf high wall sign described in the 2020 Certificate of Occupancy is located on the Isabella Street/Vulcan Way corner of the building, at the height of approximately 85' above grade. The approved sign identifies Wabtec, one of the principal entities that occupies the premises.

7. The Applicant proposes to install a second high wall sign on the Isabella Street façade of the building. The dimensions of the proposed sign would be 3'-3" by 47'-5" (236 sf), with the text "PJ Dick Trumbull." As proposed, it would be mounted at a height of 85' from grade on the Isabella Street/Range Way corner.

8. The Applicant asserted that PJ Dick Trumbull is also a principal entity that occupies the building and indicated that the building is not typically identified by a building name or specific tenant. The intent of the proposed signs would be to identify the location of the offices for PJ Dick Trumbull.

9. Because the Wabtec sign, as permitted with the 2020 Certificate of Occupancy, remains on the building, the addition of the new sign would identify a second tenant of the building at a height above 40' above grade.

10. The Applicant asserted that, as a result of the design of the building, the front façade creates the appearance of two separate structures, and that the additional high wall sign will not have a significant impact on the surrounding neighborhood.

11. The full area of the building's Isabella Street façade is approximately 20,637 sf. The area of each "half" of that façade is approximately 10,319 sf. The 172 sf area of the existing sign is approximately 0.8% of the full façade and 1.6% of the façade of the Isabella Street/Vulcan Way side of the building.

12. The 236 sf area of the proposed sign would be approximately 1.1% of the full façade but would be 2.3% of the façade of the Isabella Street/Range Way side.

13. The Applicant identified several other high wall signs in the proximate area of the Subject Property.

14. The Applicant indicated that it would agree to a condition that would prohibit any additional high wall signs on the building.

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

Conclusions of Law:

1. Section 919.01.C includes these special definitions for Chapter 919 "Signs":

- *Business sign* means a sign that directs attention to a business, organization, profession or industry located upon the premises where the sign is displayed; to the type of products sold, manufactured or assembled; and/or to the service or entertainment or other activity offered on such premises; except a sign pertaining to the preceding if such activity is only minor and incidental to the primary use of the premises.
- *Identification sign* means a sign used to identify the name of the principal entity occupying the premises; the profession of the principal occupant; the name of the building on which the sign is displayed; the name of a public destination facility, or portion thereof, including any sponsor or memorialized names assigned thereto; or the name of the major enterprise or principal product or service on the premises.

1. The requirements for business and identification signs in the RIV-NS District are set forth in Section 919.03.M.7.

2. Section 919.03.M.7.c provides that “only the name of the building or business shall be mounted higher than 40 feet above grade.”

3. Where high wall signs are permitted, the face area of the sign is limited to 40 sf or 2% of the exposed façade area, whichever is larger.

4. Because the Wabtec high wall sign is located on the Isabella Street façade of the building, the Applicant seeks a variance to allow the installation of an additional high wall sign on that façade which would identify a second building tenant, PJ Dick and Trumbull. As proposed, the 236 sf area of the sign proposed would be 1.1% of the full façade but would be 2.3% of the area of the Isabella Street/Range Way half of the façade. The Applicant has not sought a variance from the 2% area of the exposed façade area limitation.

5. The Board agrees that the unique design of the building, which creates the appearance of two separate buildings at the Isabella Street façade, supports the requested variance to allow a sign mounted at a height more than 40' above grade on each “half” of the façade.

6. However, if the separate halves of the façade are to be considered for the purposes of the high wall sign limitation, the separate halves of the façade must also be considered for the limitation on the area of the proposed sign. As proposed, the area 236 sf area of the sign would be 2.3% of the area of the Isabella Street/Range Way half of the façade, which exceeds the 2% area limitation. The Board thus concludes that a high wall sign on the Isabella Street/Range Way half of the façade must comply with the 2% area limitation.

7. Consistent with the evidence and testimony presented, and the applicable legal standards governing variances and non-conforming signs, the Board concludes that approval of the request is appropriate, subject to the conditions that the area of the sign does not exceed 2% of the area of the exposed façade of the Isabella Street/Range Way half of the building and that no additional signage is permitted on the building.

Decision: The Applicant's request for a variance from Section 919.03.M.7(C) to install a second high wall sign on the front façade of the building, at the Isabella Street/Range Way corner, is hereby APPROVED, subject to the conditions that the area of the sign does not exceed 2% of the area of the exposed façade of the Isabella Street/Range Way half of the building and that no additional signage is permitted on the building.

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.