

**CITY OF TWINSBURG**  
**ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD**  
**Minutes**  
**February 15, 2018**

Chairman, Donald R. Spice, called to order the regularly scheduled meeting of the Architectural Review Board for the City of Twinsburg at 5:30 p.m.

**I. Roll Call**

Present: Traci Bonvenuto, Jennifer Frazier, Marge Gantous, John Midlik, and Don Spice  
Absent: None  
Others in attendance: Brian Steel, Council; Dale Steppenbacker, Building Department

**II. Approval of Minutes: February 01, 2018**

**Motion: Approve as submitted**

Jennifer Frazier moved and John Midlik seconded, upon roll call the motion passed unanimously.

**III. Excuse Absent Members:** All members present

**IV. Public Participation:** None

**V. Review:**

1. **Case 18-02-007 – 8934 Darrow Rd., Directory Sign Changes by Be Next Awnings for Pearle Vision**  
Jennifer Frazier and John Midlik both stated the sign was hard to read.

**Motion: Table the case until next meeting, no applicant in attendance**

Jennifer Frazier moved Marge Gantous seconded, upon roll call the motion passed unanimously.

2. **Case 18-02-008 – 8794 Independence Pkwy Suite 155, Non-Illuminated Wall sign for Curbell Plastics by Holzman Sign Services**

A representative with Holzman Sign Services the sign installer for Curbell Plastics appeared before the Board and stated this was a simple non-illuminated, flat, cut-out acrylic letters pin mounted to the front wall of the building. The "CURBELL" portion of the sign will be 155" wide and 28" high in blue letters. The "PLASTICS" portion of the sign will be 62" wide and 10" high in green letters. These letters will be attached to the building with stud mounts. The applicant passed out a photograph or drawing showing the entire north side of the building and he also passed out the PMS colors. Marge Gantous asked the applicant if he would consider moving his sign down to fall within the lighter brick band around the building. The applicant stated the other signs on the building were located above the lighter brick band. Don Spice stated he has a concern that the sign is on a brown background and there isn't enough contrast to make it legible. The applicant stated he is working with an existing building and a logo. He thought it would read better in person than in print. Don Spice asked about the thickness of the letters. The applicant stated they were calling for 3/8" thickness, with a pad that will stand off the building about 1/2". The applicant stated the sign probably would not be easily read from Aurora Rd., however, the client did not want an illuminated sign and thought the sign could be read from Independence Pkwy.

**Motion: Approve as submitted**

Jennifer Frazier moved and John Midlik seconded, Don Spice voted no, the motion passed.

3. **Case 18-02-009 – 11133 Ravenna Rd., New signage for Circle K by Watkins Lighting**  
Eric Rider with Cupkovic Architecture and Brad with Circle K appeared before the Board because Circle K is going through a re-branding of their stores.

**A. Replacement face for ground sign**

This will be a re-facing of an existing sign with the new logo. The applicant is proposing keeping the masonry base, replacing the "Circle K" face and updating the electronic pricing.

The will also include changeable text of the words "member price" and "credit" to match the price that is shown. Members will pay one price; customers using credit will pay another price. Jennifer Frazier confirmed the sign cabinet is not changing and the brick base is not changing. Jennifer Frazier asked if the sign ordinance permitted the price to change and word above it to change too. Usually the changeable copy is reserved for Government buildings and Churches. Don Spice stated when the electronic sign ordinance was being written the committee anticipated the price changing for gas stations and the ordinance would permit the cost of gasoline to change beyond that it would not allow anything more. Don Spice suggested the top line to be eliminated. Marge Gantous inquired if other Circle K stores had the signs with the changeable copy. The applicants stated yes.

The Board is noting:

1. The Board knows there has to be ten seconds between changing on any type of moveable sign and to make sure that it is within our sign ordinance that a business can have this kind of changing on their sign. This goes under interpretation of the sign ordinance. In the case that it is not permitted, the applicant stated they can remove the toggle at the top.

**Motion: Approve as noted**

Jennifer Frazier moved and John Midlik seconded, Don Spice voted no, upon roll call the motion passed

**B. Illuminated box wall sign south elevation**

This is the replacement of an existing sign that will have the word CIRCLE spelled out along with the letter "K". This sign will be 91 3/8" wide and 36" high and will be located over the door. Jennifer Frazier commented she thought the sign was placed a little too high on the building. The applicant stated it will be located in the same place as the existing sign so they can use the existing electrical connections.

The Board is noting:

1. Try to move the sign down from where it appears (approximately one foot) to be on the rendering so it is not tucked up under the soffit. John Midlik suggested aligning the new sign with the gutter board.

**Motion: Approve as noted**

Jennifer Frazier moved and Marge Gantous seconded, upon roll call the motion passed unanimously.

**C. Illuminated box wall sign west elevation**

This replacement sign is 121 7/8" wide and 48" high with the word CIRCLE spelled along with the letter "K".

**Motion: Approve as submitted**

Jennifer Frazier moved and Marge Gantous seconded, upon roll call the motion passed unanimously.

**D. Remove & Replace Gas Canopies and the signage on the gas canopy**

Circle K wants to take off the top part (deck) and the fascia of the gas canopies and rebuild it the same size as the existing supports and want to apply the new signage to this as well. Jennifer Frazier stated she is a little concerned about the amount of red. John Midlik stated he did not have a problem with this. This is a thinner canopy. Marge Gantous inquired and the applicant informed her Pantone number for the red is 485. Jennifer Frazier ascertained the former canopies had rounded corners these will have square corners. The foot print of the two canopies will remain the same size.

**Motion: Approve as submitted**

John Midlik moved and Traci Bonvenuto seconded, Jennifer Frazier voted no, upon roll call the motion passed.

**E. Fuel Dispensers and all other miscellaneous signs**

These are new graphics for the pumps and numbering on the poles for the pump numbers. There was some confusion concerning drawing depicting the labeling of the gas pumps and diesel pumps.

**Motion: Approve as submitted**

John Midlik moved and Jennifer Frazier seconded, upon roll call the motion passed unanimously.

**Motion: Approve the Air Pump as submitted**

Jennifer Frazier moved and Marge Gantous seconded, upon roll call the motion passed unanimously.

**4. Case 18-02-010 – 9009 Merryvale Dr. S/L 121 New Single Family Dwelling by Paglia Homes**

The applicants presented plans for a 1600 sq. ft. single story single family dwelling. The siding will be Tuscan clay; shake, Tuscan clay; trim, white: front door, brown and the roof will be GAF bark wood. The applicant passed out photographs to the Board. This is the last lot to be built on in the Whispering Woods subdivision. Jennifer Frazier confirmed this will be a ranch with a full basement. No basement windows are shown on the plans. Jennifer Frazier commented she liked the garage does not extend out past the front of the house. Jennifer Frazier thought when you come in through the garage there is a right hand push door followed by a left hand pull door was a little awkward. Jennifer Frazier liked all the windows. The applicant stated the only reasonable place for a basement window would be directly below the window in the dining area off the kitchen.

The Board is recommending:

- A. Although not required by code, one egress window out of the basement.

The Board is requiring:

- A. The Board is requiring at least one window in the basement.

**Motion: Approve as noted**

Jennifer Frazier moved and John Midlik seconded, upon roll call the motion passed unanimously.

**5. Case 18-02-007 – 8934 Darrow Rd., Directory Sign Changes by Be Next Awnings for Pearle Vision**

**Motion: That the Board re-visit Pearle Vision, the applicant is here.**

Jennifer Frazier moved and John Midlik seconded, roll call not taken.

The application appeared before the Board and stated this is a plaque for an illuminated directory sign. The applicant intimated there was no meeting on February 1<sup>st</sup> and Marge Gantous clarified that the Board did meet on February 1<sup>st</sup>. there was a quorum, and this sign was not on the agenda for that meeting. Jennifer Frazier stated on a quick glance this sign is difficult to read because the glasses in the middle are the same size as the text. They look like "o's." John Midlik suggested the eye glasses could be smaller and/or a different color. Jennifer Frazier and Marge Gantous checked the logo on line and noticed the eye glasses and EST. 1961 were presented as black. The Board decided the background of the sign can remain green, the words Pearle & Vision can remain white. The two dash lines, Est. 1961 & the eyeglasses are to be changed to either dark gray or black.

The Board is requiring:

- A. The two dashed lines (on either side of Est. 1961), Est. 1961 as well as the glasses (symbol/logo) be dark gray or black.

**Motion: Approve as noted**

Jennifer Frazier moved John Midlik seconded, upon roll call the motion passed unanimously.

**VI. Work Session:**

Larry Finch, Director of Community Planning & Development, arranged to speak with the Board this evening concerning the city's CIC and the development of the property on the south east corner of Darrow & Ravenna Roads. Mr. Finch passed out the manual prepared by Gaede Serne Architects, Inc., titled: *A Manual Covering the Gateway District Building and Site Design Standards* and other information pertinent to the central area re-development.

Larry Finch had three purposes for attending this evening's meeting:

**1. Clarify where we stand with the old school and its demolition**

When the Certificate of Appropriateness was issued a number of commitments were made to the Architectural Review Board and to the Historical Society. Some of the things we committed to were salvaging the balcony lights, the plaster medallions were cemented to the wall and could not be salvaged. Other salvaged items include the auditorium seats, wood trim, brass plaques, the sandstone above the entry that said Twinsburg School, the 1921 sandstone medallions that were on the front, the entry was numbered and disassembled and was shrink wrapped waiting for the next application for that material. The boiler doors from the furnaces were salvaged. The Historical Society has some of the doors and some of the doors will be used in the golf course clubhouse. Bricks were made available to anyone who wanted to stop at the site and pick one up. The Historical Society had requests, after the fact, for theater curtains, conduit, plugs, slop sink, portions of the railing, the clock that triggered the bells for class changes. Most of the flooring was recycled by "*The Old School Historical Salvage Company*" a company that specializes in recycling flooring from old schools. The things that we have committed to were done to the best of our ability. We actually exceeded what we originally anticipated in recycling materials from the building.

**2. Status of the Central Area Re-development**

We are also providing the ARB a seat at the table at CIC meetings where development planning is going to be discussed. Jennifer Frazier has participated in one of those meetings. The building is down. Due to the weather the grading on the site will not be finished until spring so it can be appropriately compacted and then backfilled and seeded. We are nearly complete with the demolition all the materials have been hauled off site we have only the site restoration that will be continued into the spring. We have now is a cleared five acre site of which the old school site which three acres is developable. We also own the two acres at the southern end of the southeast quadrant there; the property immediately north of the post office is in the ownership of the CIC. Right now we do not have a development plan other than the concept plan that was part of the comprehensive plan. We will not have a project until we have a developer/ partner involved. Until the developer/partner has had an opportunity to look at the market and tell us what is feasible there. We have a long way to go yet before we have something we can bring to you as a plan. The ARB will have a seat at the table for the development of that plan and will be able to comment as that plan is developed.

**3. What the Architectural Review Board's Role in that Re-development**

In looking at the minutes from the last couple of meetings I felt it necessary to come here tonight and make a few statements to try to clarify the expectations on everybody's part at least with regard to central area re-development and the design of that. We are not going to design it, the ARB is not going to design it, our developer will design it. He will certainly have the participation of the CIC and the city. We are hoping to find a developer that is going to be open to a very involved community process and allow for comment and input during the whole development process, during the whole design. Once we have a better idea what the market will support and we have a developer who is willing to take the risk to move forward with something then we will have a better idea at that time what kind of things might be possible and we will develop a specific plan depending upon how much property we can get into the project to begin with. Right now we only have the old school site as one piece we have two acres at the south end as another piece. That is not what we want. We want to have a whole cohesive area plan. Until we get to a point where can have a significant re-development effort that is supported by market strategy that deals specifically with things that are marketable in this community we probably will not be moving beyond just trying to assemble that property and get things together. Even that is going to take the participation of a developer/partner because there might be instances where property owners may wish to have an equity interest in the project rather than just outright selling their land. We cannot negotiate that on the part of the developer. That has to be something that the developer contributes to. I just wanted to make those statements and make sure you are aware that we do value the input and are actively seeking the participation of the ARB in the plan development process and we have material standards already in place in the central area. We are not going to impose a specific design type on the property. There is no purpose in doing that before we at least have market studies and know how to position the property for re-development. We are not the ones taking the risk; the developer is going to be putting his money in the project

and investing in the city. We want to make sure that we can do what we can do to have a project that meets everyone's expectations but is also economically and marketable feasible. We have another meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> and we are going to continue to find a developer. I don't expect the developer will be discussed at that meeting but they may; if not at that meeting it will be the next meeting. Larry Finch then asked if the Board members had any questions.

**John Midlik:** asked if there was a retainer on a developer for a while.

**Larry Finch:** stated about two years ago we did a request for qualifications and we selected Fairmont Properties who have been involved in a number of large mixed use projects, unfortunately, they were basically over burdened at the time and in addition they were the developers of "First at Main" in Hudson after spending approximately six months under a letter of intent we learned there was some concern on their part about anything here competing with some of their interests in the Hudson facility. We didn't feel they were giving us adequate consideration in the development of the plans or adequate effort in trying to assemble property. That didn't go anywhere. I think we have a very good prospect now if we can keep them interested. There was a little concern based on some discussions about what an iconic building might be in this project and what the expectations of the community might be even prior to having a market study. We want to get past that and we want to be able to move on to at least looking at a market study and property assembly before we start putting any conditions on anybody related to the development itself.

**John Midlik:** commented the Board did go through materials before and that might be obsolete now.

**Larry Finch:** The material standards. We committed to that as part of what we were talking about when the building was being torn down. That has been put in place and you had an opportunity to review those before it was adopted.

**John Midlik:** I'm glad we have seat there, on it.

**Jennifer Frazier:** I'm worried that the method we are going about for developing this downtown puts a lot of responsibility and a lot of trust into the developer to decide what is best for us based on what is profitable for him. My concern is where in the process do we sign and turn over the land for his developing as he sees fit. Where do we get to contribute?

**Larry Finch:** We are not turning the land over to the developer at any point up until we have something that is approvable by the city.

**Jennifer Frazier:** For ARB even are we going to see the businesses are we going to see the types of housing are we going to see all of that before we . . .

**Larry Finch:** You're representative will be at every meeting when a plan is being discussed. You will be at the meeting when we review whatever market studies come out of this. You will be at the meeting whenever there is a conceptual plan or detailed plan involved. You will know what they are doing in terms of the type of unit they are proposing, the mix of uses. All that information has to come from them from their market study. They are the ones that are paying the money and taking the risk. It is their risk in terms of investment in this project. We can only standby and help. We won't be conveying any property to anybody until we have a plan that we agree to.

**Jennifer Frazier:** Are we paying for the development of the pro-forma or are they doing that to present to us as part of. . .

**Larry Finch:** Typically the way that this works is you enter into a letter of intent or memorandum of understanding with a developer who will act as your sole real estate consultant and developer for the project. So it will be their responsibility to assemble the property, to gain financing, to do both the market study, develop a pro-forma that we will have an opportunity to review and provide the information that would come about in terms of a plan or master plan for the overall development. Nobody is going to transfer property until we have something that we think is going to be a benefit to the City of Twinsburg and to the residents. I think we are fortunate right now in that we have the opportunity to work with a developer/partner with a not a big firm, a mid-sized very responsive firm, that has a track history of being very open in the way that they proceed with development including the community having an open book approach to the project itself in how it is financed so that is one reason why we are looking at the developer we are looking at now.

**Jennifer Frazier:** This developer if I am correct in my research has two years of experience. I mean as a group other members do but the one we are working with only has two years of experience as a developer.

**Larry Finch:** The individual?

**Jennifer Frazier:** Yes.

**Larry Finch:** He is a long term community development person. He has been in the land development business, community development business, for his entire career. He has been with this company for two years and the company has been around for some time. The reason the company has a lot of appeal to me is because they have the ability to self finance. They have been involved in existing mixed use projects and they have a very open approach to development.

**Jennifer Frazier:** The other large thing I am looking at is the look-alikes. I know our policy for suburban detached housing is next door and across the street. You know, can't look alike. But when you are looking at a compact downtown you will be able to see many units at the same time. They won't be 100 yards down the street until you get to the next look-alike house. I worry that we will be heading into a very uniform looking development downtown that could be seen as being as almost a new project. I don't want the houses to look like they went in during the 2020s when you get to the 2040s and 2050s and it is hard to change it. The same way that you look at 1980s condo complexes. They are hard to change now because all the units look alike.

**Larry Finch:** You will have the opportunity to comment on that during the planning stage and you also have the opportunity to comment on that during the development stage as you normally would any new building.

**Jennifer Frazier:** I want to make sure we were going to get in on the on the front end because I saw the one development that the developer did with the company that he is with and there are 40 units that are identical besides changing of the siding color all attached to each other. I liked the form that he worked with trying to do like a mega block New Jersey style. You know, having everyone parking on the back side and put a park in the middle that everyone's back door faces the park. I know they are trying to do some things like Radburn, New Jersey but I just worry that approach would not be the exact right approach to do downtown. We are not looking to do that again.

**Larry Finch:** We are going to see what they suggest. They know what the market will bear.

**Jennifer Frazier:** We have had a couple of instances with developers that come in and we try to say something like we want to add a window to the side. The market doesn't dictate that is appropriate. If a homeowner wanted a window there they would have bought it.

**Larry Finch:** You are working primarily with home builders that have set plans that come in and it is an additional cost to both the property owner who comes in for that plan to be reviewed and the developer doesn't want to necessarily do anything more that will perhaps take anything out of his pocket. It is a different situation because you are going on a unit by unit basis for tract homes that are built around package plans. What we are seeking here is a situation where we have a plan and we have buildings that are unique to Twinsburg and are not necessarily reflective of "First and Main." They don't necessarily look like "First and Main." They can't look like what is historically here in Twinsburg because nothing has been around the square here in Twinsburg. This will set a new standard. We appreciate that and I appreciate your concern for things like monotonous and stark facades and that is one reason why we have material standards in place. All of that is going to be something that gets discussed during the planning and design stages where the ARB will have a seat at the table.

**John Midlik:** How many acres are we trying to get to build on?

**Larry Finch:** We would like to have the whole southeast quadrant re-developed. We don't know if that is possible because we have to work with other property owners. That is why we don't have a project yet. We won't have a project until we know exactly how much land we are going to be able to draw into this.

**John Midlik:** And then we are going to develop the land, hopefully.

**Larry Finch:** We will or the developer will. We can't afford to buy all the land and that is another reason why we need a developer/partner.

**Marge Gantous:** In just hearing some of the comments from the residents being around it they feel that all of a sudden we are going to build that whole corner out. They think that something is in place right now and they want to know what it is.

**Larry Finch:** Like I said, we don't have a developer, we don't have land assembled, we are so early in this process and it has taken me 20 years to get here.

**Marge Gantous:** If something could maybe be put in the Bulletin like what you spoke of tonight. That this is not going to happen overnight and the people should be completely aware of that and that it is going to take time and approvals and many meetings to develop it the way the city would to see it done.

**Larry Finch:** We are working on an update of the CIC website. We are going to make it more interactive. This is the very kind of thing we are going to try to get out there on the CIC's website.

**Marge Gantous & John Midlik:** That's good, thanks Larry.

**Brian Steel:** The last time I was at the old school building the newer park, the north end of the building, everything was collapsed down into the basement. Has that rubble been removed?

**Larry Finch:** Basically that was the plan for demolition of the building. They pushed all the walls inside into the foundation. They removed all the bricks and debris from the building being collapsed has been removed and they are removing the basement walls, the foundations. . .

**Brian Steel:** I was concerned that they were going to push dirt over it.

**Larry Finch:** Oh no.

**Brian Steel:** My second question is for the CIC when it comes in and the developer says we believe this is what the market will bear financial wise. Is the CIC going to back check on what this developer says.

**Larry Finch:** We have the ability to do some of that yes.

**Brian Steel:** My concern is that the guy is going to say that we can put 1,000 of these in there and this and then it end up that nobody wants it.

**Larry Finch:** I can read a pro-forma; I know how to do that.

**Brian Steel:** My question is somebody going to back check the numbers in the pro-forma. Not read it but go yeah this looks realistic. Double check this guy's expectations.

**Larry Finch:** We can certainly do that. We only have one chance at this and I think everyone realizes that. We realize it, the Mayor realizes it, everybody realizes it. We have one opportunity to get this right so that it what we are trying to do.

**Jennifer Frazier:** That is what worries me about doing it all in one big move, one fowl swoop, going through and doing so much of the downtown. I know it is going to make it look amazing and new for 20 years or so but then after that will it look amazing still or will the style go out of style. I would like to see it look like it grew organically over time. Not saying put in a bunch of historical old buildings but have enough variety in the individual parcels that people can change them in the future without having to change the entire downtown.

**Larry Finch:** To a certain extent that will depend on density issues and other things.

**Jennifer Frazier:** Looking into which people and types, I know they are supposed to do that as part of their research and market trends, but looking at what kind of units and what kind of we want to bring into the downtown.

**Larry Finch:** The mix of units and the types of units will be predicated on the target market.

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**Jennifer Frazier:** That is what we need is a mix of units. Because if we focus it on senior housing although the community may need more senior housing if the downtown is mostly senior housing that is probably going to be one or two car attached garages single floor living and it is not going to get the density.

**Larry Finch:** That is not the intent. Empty nesters, certainly but the intent is not necessarily to cater specifically to seniors. I think if we want to have a vibrant downtown we need to have a cross section of users.

**Jennifer Frazier:** We have a Kent State campus that is easily walk-able from that block. There should be some young people living there. We have the Clinic and UH here.

**Larry Finch:** We have people who work at those facilities that are just clamoring to live close by. Thank you.

**VII. Adjournment:** As there was no further business before the Board Jennifer Frazier moved and Traci Bonvenuto seconded and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

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Donald R. Spice, Chairman

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Marilyn L. Freed, Secretary