

GENERAL INFORMATION

Subject

- Request - Text Amendment to allow for an off-premise Electric Message Center (EMC) billboard sign
- Location - 6920 W. Central Avenue,
Toledo, OH 43617
Central Avenue Overlay
- Property Owner - Central Rock LLC
5215 Monroe Street, Ste 8
Toledo, OH 43623
- Applicant - LAMAR
Gregory Churilla
5030 Advantage Drive, Ste 102
Toledo, OH 43612

Case History

- Z20-C812 - Text Amendment to prohibit billboards in the Central Avenue Overlay (Township Trustees approved on 4/18/02)
- Z20-C897 - Text Amendment to prohibit billboards 100 feet or larger (Township Trustees approved 11/15/06 Res 06-160)
- Z20-C988 - Text Amendment for political signs to remain in place after the election with no restrictions (Township Trustees approved on 5/2/2017)
- Z20-C939 - Text Amendment to allow Electric Message Centers (EMC) (Township Trustees approved 10/5/10 Res 10-349)
- Z20-C944 - Text Amendment for Special Events signs (Township Trustees approved 10/4/11 Res 11-159)

GENERAL INFORMATION (cont'd)

Case History

- | | | |
|-----------|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Z20-C980 | - | Text Amendment to allow monument signs (Township Trustees approved 6/7/16 Res 16-072) |
| Z20-C1031 | - | Text Amendment for Billboards and additional off-premises signs to be allowed in additional districts (Township Trustees disapproved the request 11/4/20 Res 20-192) |
| Z20-C1036 | - | Text Amendment to remove pole signs from the Central Avenue Overlay (Township Trustees approved 4/6/21 Res 21-053) |
| Z20-C1047 | - | Text Amendment to allow EMC's in S-1 Districts and sign maintenance (Township Trustees approved 7/5/22 Res 22-086) |

STAFF ANALYSIS

The applicants request two text amendments, one for Article 5 for the Central Avenue Overlay, and the second to Article 14 for the Signs and Advertisement, to allow for a double-sided Electric Messaging Center (EMC) billboard in the Sylvania Township Zoning Resolution as a Conditional Use in Commercial and Industrial Districts with a spacing requirement of 2,500 feet. The text amendment was initiated by the applicant and property owner, which is permissible in Sylvania Township.

The subject site is located in the Central Avenue Overlay and is zoned C-2 General Commercial zoning. If this text amendment is approved, the applicant will be able to install and operate a double-sided billboard that will entail a 45-foot pole with an EMC screen that is 10 feet 5 inches x 36 feet at the Central Avenue location after applying for a Conditional Use permit that requires a plan review through the township.

Staff reviewed Sylvania Township's text amendments pertaining to signage over the past twenty-five years. In 2002, a text amendment was approved by the Township Trustees to prohibit billboards in the Central Avenue Overlay, and permitted billboards in the remaining portion of the township. In 2005, a text amendment was approved by the Township Trustees to prohibit billboards 100 feet or larger for the entire township. Lastly, a text amendment in 2021 was approved by the Township Trustees to remove pole signs from the Central Avenue Overlay and any remaining billboard language was removed from the Zoning Resolution in its entirety.

STAFF ANALYSIS (cont'd)

The one remaining billboard sign located in the Central Avenue Overlay is for the Lowe's Home Improvement store that was installed at the time of construction in 2001 and will remain until the business closes. The existing EMC sign located at Taylor Kia is outside the Central Avenue Overlay and was installed prior to 2010 when billboards that were one hundred square feet or smaller were permitted. Once a business is considered closed and no longer advertises for a business, the existing sign shall be removed within 30 days of notification by the Township Zoning Inspector.

Multiple studies and reports have been published on the visual blight of billboards. An article written by Edward T. McMahon in 1998 for the Planning Commissioners Journal and then republished in 2011 describes billboards as a form of visual pollution. The article contains ten points as to why communities, urban or rural, do not need billboards as a form of advertisement. The top three major points of concern is the billboard location, billboards are the only form of advertisement you can't turn off, and visual pollution. Most billboards are placed in urban and rural landscapes where they create a negative impact on the natural setting or destroy the distinctiveness of the community. An advertisement in a magazine, newspaper, on television or the internet can be flipped, blocked or turned off but a free-standing billboard is on 24 hours a day and cannot be turned off. Lastly, messages on a billboard can be ugly or ordinary but when randomly installed along streets, highways and the entire side of a building, they are a visual hazard.

The case history for Sylvania Township demonstrates a desire to protect the township from negative impacts associated with billboards. Based on the Sylvania Township Zoning Resolution currently prohibiting billboards and pole signs, staff recommends disapproval of the amendment that would reintroduce an EMC billboard into the Central Avenue Overlay District and potential commercial and industrial sites in the township.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Lucas County Planning Commission recommend disapproval of the proposed text amendment and recommends no changes be made to the Sylvania Township Zoning Resolution to the Sylvania Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees. An example of the proposed double-sided EMC billboard is provided in "Exhibit C."

TEXT AMENDMENT
SYLVANIA TOWNSHIP
LUCAS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
REF: Z20-C1079
DATE: May 28, 2025
TIME: 9:00 A.M.

MLM
Three (3) exhibits follow

EXHIBIT A

Z20-C1079

Letter of Intent

Requesting an amendment to the Sylvania Township sign code to allow for an off-premise EMC sign, maximum of 378 square feet and maximum height of 45 feet. See attachment. Applicant propose that off-premise signs be restricted to commercial and Industrial zoned districts only, and as conditional Use. That way, all off-premise sign applications gets reviewed and voted on by Sylvania Township Board of Trustees. Applicant is also proposing that off-premise signs shall maintain a distance of 2500 feet between signs. The proposed spacing will further, significantly, restrict the number of off-premise signs that can be built within the Township's limits.

The geography of the parcel requires a sign of significant size in order to clear local road signage, signage from the Ohio Department of Transportation, power lines, and monument signs for neighboring tenants and significant natural barriers with trees.

The proposed amendment would add value by serving residents, local businesses and Sylvania Township. The Applicant would donate to Sylvania Township a dedicated slot on the sign as needed to connect with the public to provide safety updates, meeting information for local events and news updates for Sylvania Township residents.

Approval of the variance would allow Sylvania Township to also keep up with regional community standards as similar signs are being erected in neighboring communities. The Sylvania Township branding of the sign will serve as a local landmark. See drawing attached.

Members of the Sylvania Chamber of Commerce and some representatives of Sylvania Township government have expressed interest in this project.

Thanks for the consideration.

EXHIBIT B

Z20-C1079

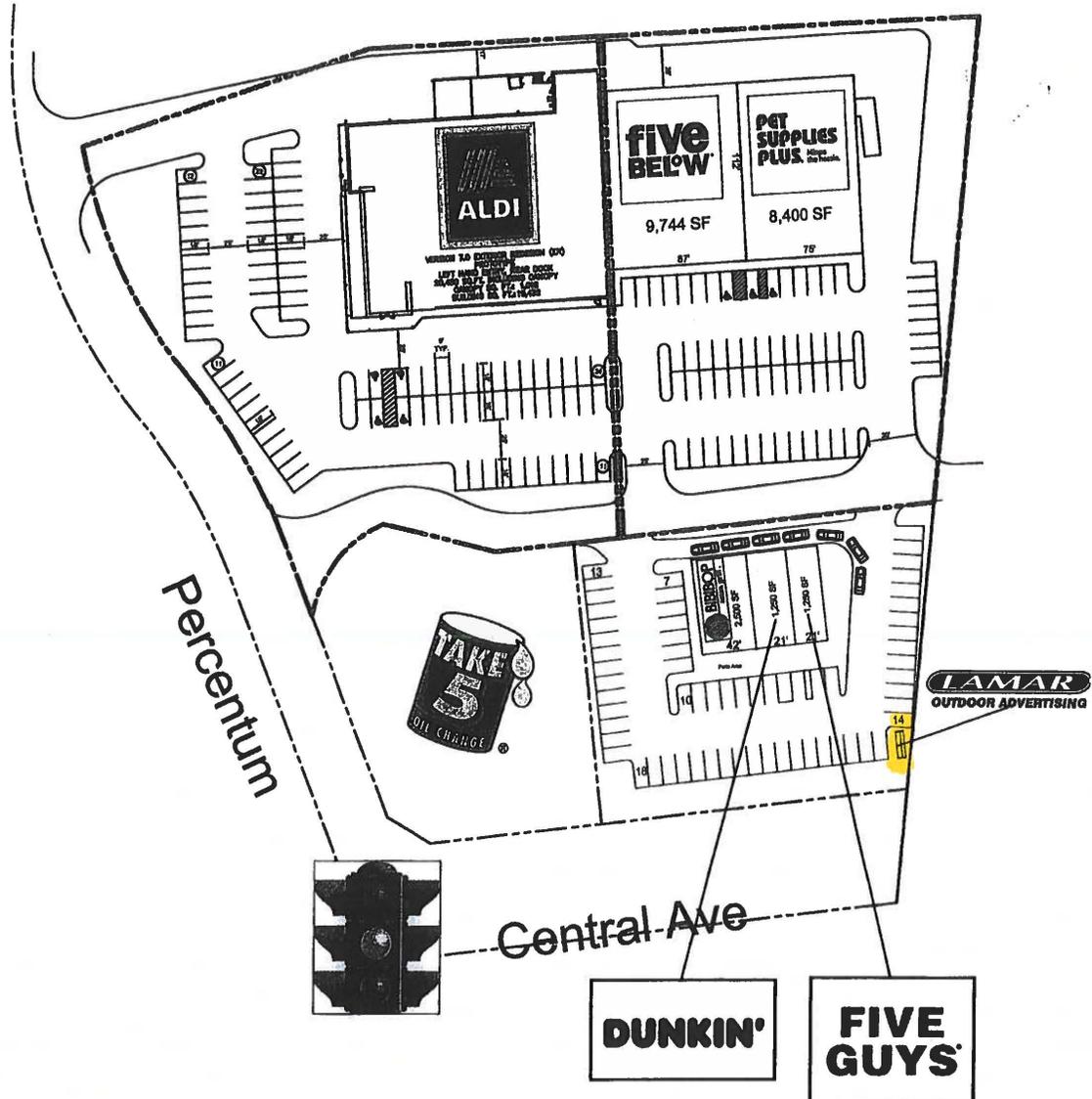
**Central Avenue Center
Sylvania, OH**

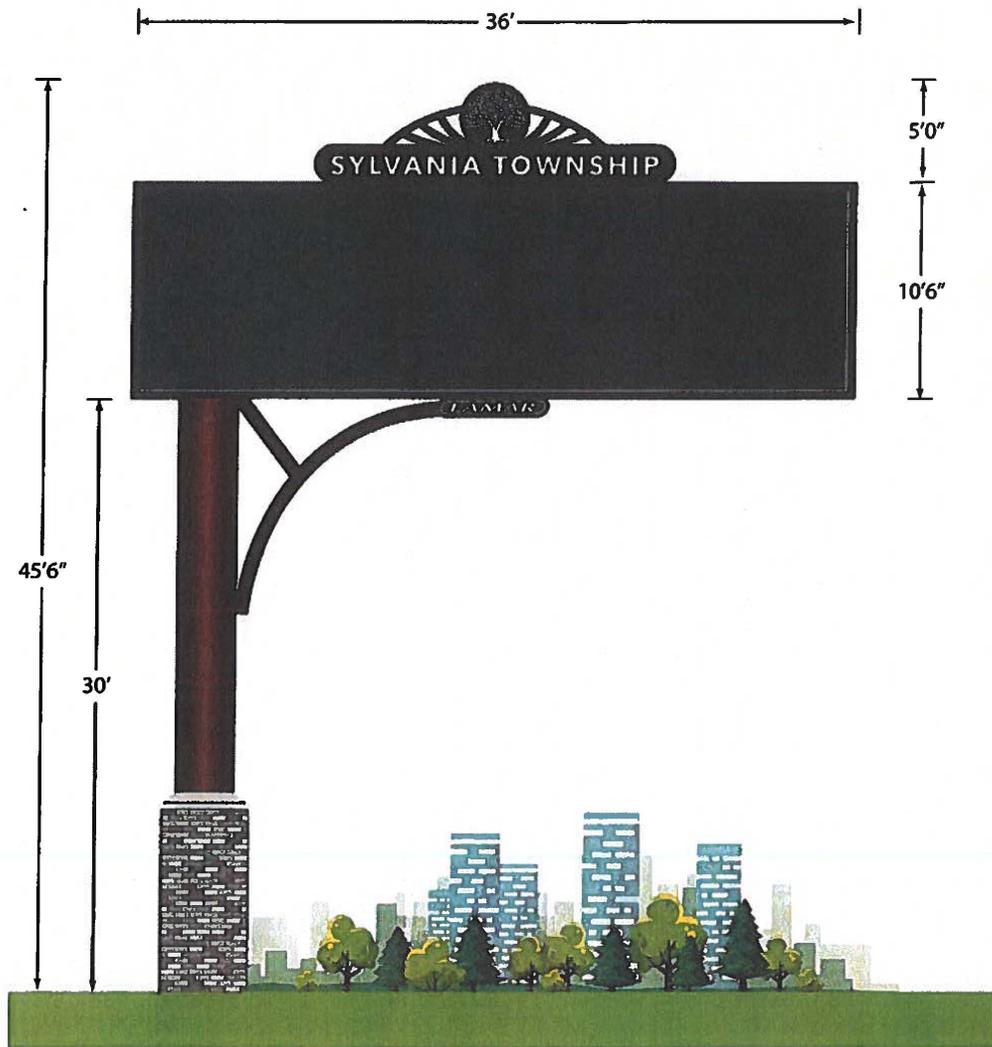


River Rock Property Group

----- 1.877 Acres

----- 1.622 Acres





Sylvania Township Proposed 10'6" x 36' Digital Display
378' sq. ft.