

Sign Special Exception Justification

Site Conditions:

We've worked hard so that the entire venue is hidden from the street to keep a rural feeling for neighbors. You can't see the venue from the highway or any access roads. All 4 sides, including the 2 road sides are all natural. But we do need a sign that would let people know where we are and what's coming.

Request:

We are asking for is a 2-sided monument sign along the 1/2 mile of our property that faces the highway where no one lives we can have a sign that lets commuters and event goers know where we are located and inform them of entertainment coming soon. The sign will have an screens on both sides facing North and South bound highway 65 travel lanes.

Justification:

- **Current Codes:** The current signage standards didn't conceive of the requirements a world class entertainment venue would need **in our little town**. To get people to come to our town we need to let them know what's coming and when, and signage is the way to best inform them. Without a good sign for the amphitheater people won't believe it's as good as it is...we need a **world-class presentation**.
- **Specific Plan Zoning:** The site's Specific Plan zoning allows for structures that are different from other zoning provisions throughout town, if it's consistent with the use, function, design and purpose of the business. There are only 2 other grandfathered SP zoned lots in town and they are not entertainment venues, and they have different approved usages. And, since this is the only SP zoning with this use and location, this request doesn't set a general precedent. The State TDOT has told me they would approve the permit for LED after TS approves it.
- **Site Location:** The location is at the extreme edge of town – separated from the rest of town by an **interstate highway**. Since this is only visible to highway 65 traffic, a major North/South INTERstate artery, the expectations for signage is different along this highway 65 than in INTRAsate arteries (431 and 31 for example). Along highway 65 there is a precedent for LED signs - even in Franklin, Brentwood, and into Nashville. Though none will be as pretty as the one we're building.
- **Sign Design:** This will be a very beautiful sign built consistent with the town branding **with rock clad and steel in keeping with the architecture of the rest of the site**. (The intention behind the current sign rules as they've been explained to me was to prevent the proliferation of cluttered, ugly and cheesy signs – this sign isn't those things). The screen portion is a small part of the overall sign and only large enough so it can be easily and safely read by passing highway traffic. The sign is 100' from the closest highway travel lane.

Additional Benefits of the sign

- *This sign serves a public good* – it's helpful to people in the greater Nashville area to make their entertainment plans in Thompson's Station by informing them of upcoming events - this isn't possible on a static sign
- *This sign will help traffic flow* to events as it is a bit confusing to find us without signage and people can plan alternative routes on show days if they wish.
- *This sign can promote Thompson's Station Town Events* - Also, we would be happy to have a TS page in the upcoming event rotation which will be useful in driving awareness to town events and activities.

Response to standards for Variance:

iii. Standards for Variances. The BZA shall not grant a variance, except where special circumstances or conditions fully described in the findings of the BZA, do not apply generally in the district. The burden of showing that the variance should be granted shall be upon the person applying for the variance. In granting a variance, the BZA shall ascertain that the following criteria are met:

a) The particular physical surroundings, shape, are/or topographic conditions of the specific property involved would result in a particular hardship upon the owner as distinguished from a mere inconvenience, if the strict application of this ordinance were carried out, must be stated.

Response: The site has preserved a rural feeling on all traffic visible sites. However, we need a sign to identify the location of the business and the upcoming attractions. Without this it will definitely be hard for people to know which entertainment options coming.

b) The conditions upon which the petition for a variance is based would not be applicable, generally, to other property within the same district.

Response: The signage requested is typical for entertainment venues of this size and prominence. This Specific Plan property and the business use isn't applicable to other properties.

c) The granting of the variance requested will not confer on the applicant any special privilege that is denied by this ordinance to other land structures, or buildings in the same district.

Response: This is a Specific Plan and it's only applicable to this line of business.

d) The variance is the minimum variance that will relieve such difficulties or hardship and thereby make possible the reasonable use of the land, building, or structure.

Response: Yes. The sign has been designed for materials and style consistence with other structures at Graystone Quarry and in keeping with the rustic, all-natural feeling in Thompson's Station. The location for the sign is visible to traffic traveling North and South on Highway 65 and isn't seen from any other property. The sign is located out of any right of way and is situated approximately 7 BELOW the service road grade, so the sign has to be slightly taller to be seen from the highway. The screen portions of the sign are just largest enough to be read easily and safely by moving traffic. For point of reference, the screen size is approximately the same size as the blue-highway attraction signs; however, this sign is located approximately 100 feet from the closest travel lane so it will appear smaller.

e) That the granting of the variance will not be detrimental to the public welfare, injurious to other property or improvements in the area in which the subject property is located, or a substantial impairment to the intent and purpose of the zoning district wherein such property is located or of the general provisions of this ordinance.

Response: This variance won't be detrimental to public welfare or to other property in the area. This variance is requested for this SP zoned property only. This property is on the

outer edge of town separated from the rest of the town by Highway 65. See justification letter.

f) That the proposed variance will not impair an adequate supply of light and air to the adjacent property, or substantially increase the congestion in the public streets, or increase the danger of fire, or endanger the public safety.

Response: This won't impair light or air. The monument sign is only visible to highway 65 travelers. The sign informs people when upcoming events will happen so they can make entertainment plans in Thompson's Station. It also allows them to make alternative travel routing plans if they choose on concert days. Traffic Studies submitted to the town show only a nominal increase in traffic on concert days. Most concerts begin after 6 pm after most commute traffic.

g) That the alleged difficulty or hardship has not been knowingly and intentionally created by any person having an interest in the property after the effective date of this ordinance.

Response: As the amphitheater plans have progressed and we've partnered with the largest music entertainment company, Live Nation, it's become clear to us how important this signage will be in informing the public of upcoming events in order to drive attendance at these concerts.