



BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS STAFF REPORT

To: Members of the Board of Zoning Appeals

From: Sergio Mendoza, Planning Director

Meeting Date: June 10, 2025

Agenda Item: BZA 25-002

Hearing: Public Hearing

Application Type: Developmental Standards Variances

Summary: Alexander Alemis for Family Dental is Requesting variances from Table 26-6.701(B) Monument Sign Specific Standards for the height and square feet at 131 Ridge Rd.

Owner: Family Dental

Applicant: Alexander Alemis

Property Address: 131 Ridge Rd.

Current Zoning: General Urban – A District (CD-4.A)

Adjacent Zoning: North: CD-3. R-1
South, East, West: CD-4. A.

Applicant Requested: Approve requested Variances

Actions Required: Review of Zoning Code(s)
Review of DEVELOPMENTAL VARIANCE CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

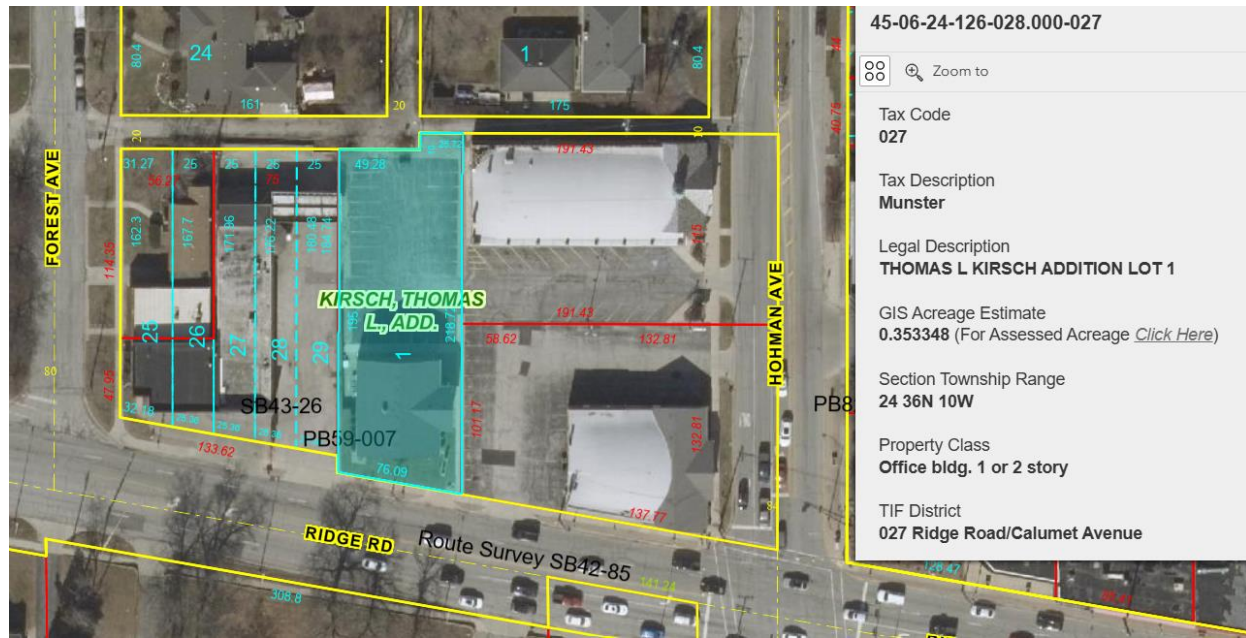
Staff Recommendation: Consider current code practical difficulty for Approval

Attachments:

1. Application, Exhibit A
2. Sign Document , Exhibit B
3. 1985 Sign Permit, Exhibit C

PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed monument sign is located on the north side of Ridge Road between Forest Avenue and Homan Avenue at the driveway entrance of an existing two-story professional office building, commonly known as 131 Ridge Road.

**PROJECT SUMMARY:**

The applicant recently acquired the building and has plans to update the existing brick and wood monument sign with a brick base and internally lit routed metal face tenant signs to identify current and future business tenants. The proposed new monument sign is approximately 8 – 8”H with an approximate 31.25 SF total sign face.



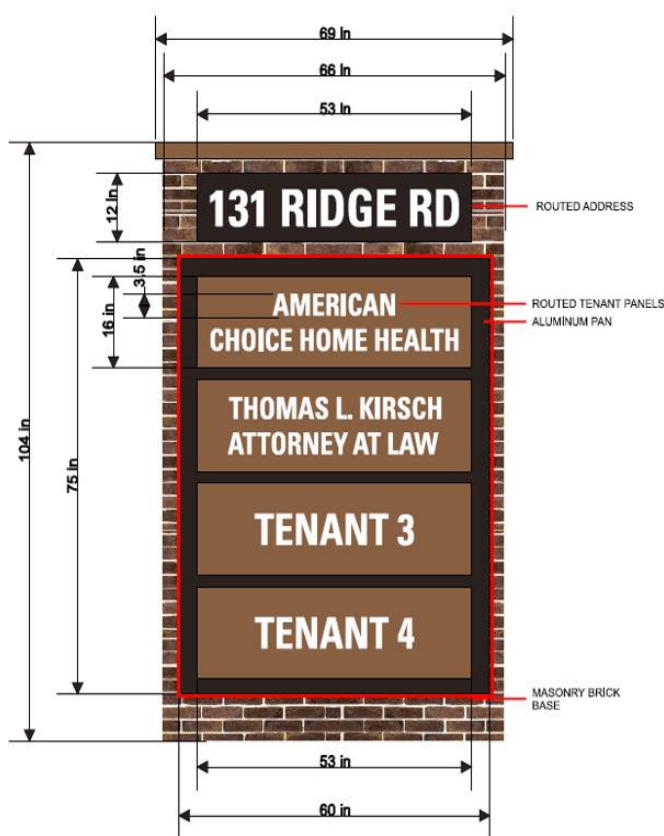
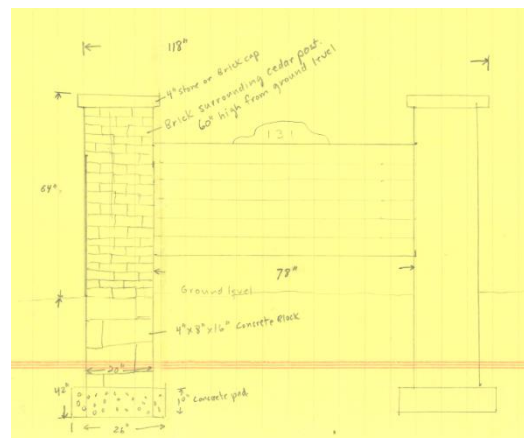
**NEW PROPOSED SIGN 10FT SET BACK
LOCATED WHERE EXISTING SIGN IS**

VARIANCE REQUESTS:

The applicant is requesting to remove an existing monument sign and proposing to install a non-conforming monument sign through several developmental standards variances.

Table 26-6.701(B) Monument Sign Specific Standards

<u>2019 Code (current)</u>	<u>Proposed Sign</u>	<u>Existing Sign</u>	<u>1985 Code</u>
1. Height (Max): 6' H	<i>Proposed 8 – 8" H</i>	<i>5' – 9" H</i>	18' H
2. Area: Standards 18" SF structure)	<i>Proposed 31.25" SF</i>	<i>23.6" SF</i>	48" SF (sign face); 72 SF (sign

Proposed Sign**Existing Sign****VARIANCE STANDARDS**

The variance process is established to provide relief to a property owner when, due to unique circumstances, compliance with the zoning code imposes a hardship or practical difficulty on a property owner. The BZA is under no obligation to grant a variance. It is the petitioner's responsibility to prove a hardship or practical difficulty. The BZA should ask the petition to address the criteria listed below.

Section 26-6.804. I. Deviation from Standards & Requirements (pg 392) of the Munster Zoning Code states that the basis for a variance is as follows:

g. General Standards.

A variance may be granted only if the Decision-Making Authority has made the following determinations for such variance:

- i. The practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships that would be incurred by strict application of the Use or Development standard, as applicable, are unique and not shared by all properties in the vicinity and are not self-imposed;
- ii. Such Variance is the minimum Variance that will relieve such practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships, as applicable;
- iii. Such Variance is in the spirit of the general purposes and intent of this Article as stated in Division 1; and
- iv. Such Variance is so designed as to provide reasonable consideration to, among other things, the character of the neighborhood, District, or Civic Zone, the conservation of property values in the vicinity, and the guidance of Development in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.

h. Specific to development standards variances:

A variance from development standards may be approved or approved with conditions only if:

- i. It will not be injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community;
- ii. The use and value of the area Adjacent to the property included in the Variance will not be affected in a substantially adverse manner; and
- iii. The strict application of the Development standards will result in practical difficulties in the use of the property.

STAFF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds compliance with the Certifications and Publication requirements to hold a Public Hearing. In addition, staff's review of the DEVELOPMENTAL STANDARDS VARIANCE CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL: staff finds no unique circumstances to the property, or hardship that occur from the existing monument sign dimensions constructed in 1985. However, staff finds practical difficulty with the current zoning code in that it significantly reduced the previously permitted sign face square foot and lacks dimension standards for multi-tenant signs. Previous BZA action has granted the multi-tenant Fairmont monument sign (47 SF x 10' H) to remain. In addition, the Lake Business Center PUD regulates a multi-tenant monument sign to 37.5 SF x 6' - 8"H.

MOTION

The Board of Zoning Appeals may consider the following motion:

Motion to Approve BZA25-002, a request for Developmental Standards Variances for a monument sign dimension standards for a multi-tenant monument sign, including the Conditions of Approval Form and all discussion and findings.