

ATHENS TOWNSHIP ZONING HEARING BOARD

February 27, 2018

Zoning Hearing Board members in attendance were: Solicitor, Andrew Hutz, Esq., Chairman John Baird, Rita Jo Swingle, William Bresser, Edmund Reid, Zoning Officer, and Secretary, Elaine Daddona. Stenographer was Caitlin Shaylor of Verbatim Reporting. Sign-in sheet was available for all others in attendance and is hereby attached.

Chairman John Baird called the meeting to order at 6:31PM.

Motion to approve the minutes of January 23, 2018 as read by Rita Jo Swingle, second by William Bresser, and motion unanimously carried.

**ALDI, Inc.**

**Parcel #09-007.10-042-029-000**

**Application for Sign Variance**

The applicant, who was represented by Christopher V. Kamar of APD Engineering & Architecture, was present to request a sign variance for a conforming use of Ordinance 704B2(a) to allow for the total area of business identification wall signs to exceed 50 square feet for each 20,000 square feet of floor area in the building to which it is attached located at 2756 Elmira Street in a Commercial District.

Edmund Reid, Athens Township Zoning Officer presented the application to the Board. Testimony of the applicant began at 6:35PM and concluded at 6:52PM. Mr. Kamar stated that there would be an increase of 14 square feet from the existing signage.

Executive session of the Zoning Hearing Board began at 6:53PM to discuss a decision and concluded at 7:03PM. Rita Jo Swingle made a motion to **APPROVE** the sign variance, second by Chairman Baird, a “yes” vote by William Bresser, and she explained that Attorney Hutz would address the reasons for the approval as follows:

1. The current building and signs were constructed and placed prior to the 1997 onset of Zoning in Athens Township.
2. The new sign is of the Aldi Corporate standard, used at its other store locations. It will provide the visibility needed to maintain its market share with the surrounding businesses on Elmira Street.
3. The four (4) current signs amount to 135.8 square feet. The proposed two (2) signs would amount to 149.8 square feet. This is a De Minimis increase from the current wall signs. There will be no change to the freestanding sign.
4. The new expansion will replace the current canopy and increase its size. The size of the new facility will be 19,186 square feet. The new sign would increase proportionately to the increase in the canopy size. To do otherwise would diminish architectural symmetry.
5. To hold the applicant to the 50 square foot standard would act to punish them for making improvements and putting money into the community. It would hold them to a standard that did not exist at the time of their original construction.

Rita Jo Swingle made a motion to make the appointment of Attorney Hutz a permanent position on the Zoning Hearing Board due to the fact that it has been nearly two years and she felt that he had met the requirement of the twelve (12) hearings for the temporary position, and that the position should now be made permanent. Motion was made unanimous by the “yes” votes of John Baird and William Bresser.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30PM, as there was no further business to discuss.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine J. Daddona, Secretary