



Department of Planning and Economic Development

Staff Report to the Sign Board of Appeals

September 1, 2026

PVAI2026-0009

Parcel 15-26-351-005, East side of S. Rochester Road, North side of E. Auburn Road – Variance request for the total square footage of permissible monument signage

REQUEST	PVAI2026-0009 – The applicant is requesting a variance from <i>Section 134-5 Monument Signs</i> which allows a sign area of one square foot per each five feet of linear street frontage, up to a maximum of 200 square feet, with a maximum height of seven feet. The applicant is proposing one (1) thirty (30) square foot, seven (7) foot tall monument sign located along Rochester Rd. for a proposed Chick Fil-A within the existing Hampton Village shopping center parking lot. The proposed sign would be in addition to the approximately existing 372 square feet of monument sign(s) located along Rochester Rd. and an additional approximate 232 square feet of monument sign(s) along Auburn Rd. for various tenants within the shopping center. The shopping center has 6,353 ft. of linear road frontage.
APPLICANT	Leslie Accardo PEA Group 1849 Pond Run Auburn Hills, MI 48326
LOCATION	The Hampton Village shopping center located on the east side of Rochester Rd. north of Auburn Rd. The proposed sign location is along S. Rochester Rd., at the shopping center entrance drive near Chili's and Red Lobster.
FILE NO.	PVAI2024-0005
PARCEL NO.	Parcel 15-26-351-005
ZONING	CB Community Business with the FB Flex Business Overlay
STAFF	Chris McLeod, Planning Manager

Requested Variance

The applicant is requesting a variance from *Chapter 134, Signs*, of the Code of Ordinances which if granted would permit a single, freestanding monument sign with an area of 30 square feet. *Section 134-5* states that one (1) square foot of monument signage is permitted for each five (5) feet of linear street frontage, up to a maximum of two hundred (200) square feet.

The freestanding monument sign is for a drive through Chick-fil-A restaurant that is being proposed within the existing parking lot area of the overall Hampton Village shopping center. The Hampton Village Shopping Center sits on approximately 70 acres of property in addition to the 9 acres that the Target building (and associated parking) sits on. Based on the applicant's submittal there are over 50 tenant spaces located within the overall center and the outlots.

The site plans for the proposed Chick-fil-A have been under review by the City and have not been recommended for approval at this time. Further, it is important to note that the use and plans are a conditional use which require Planning Commission and City Council approval. Neither of those reviews have taken place at this time. During the administrative site plan review process, the applicant noted the desire to have a freestanding ground monument sign along Rochester Road and that a determination as to whether a freestanding ground monument sign would be permissible would likely determine the applicant's direction for any further submittals for the Chick-fil-A use.

The sign is proposed to be located on the south side of the main entrance drive to the overall shopping center that is located between the Chili's Restaurant and the Red Lobster Restaurant.

The subject site has approximately 6,353 square feet of linear frontage between the two (2) main road frontages along S. Rochester Road and E. Auburn Road as well as the frontage along Barclay Circle. Based on formula for signage for the City of one (1) square foot of monument sign for every five (5) linear feet of frontage, the site would be permitted approximately 1,270 square feet of signage. However, as noted above, the City limits freestanding ground monument signage for a site to a maximum of 200 square feet. The site currently has approximately 372 square feet of signage along Rochester Road and an additional 232 square feet of signage along E. Auburn Road. This existing total is approximately 402 square feet in excess of what is permitted by Ordinance. Staff is not aware of any variances that have been granted for this site, nor is staff aware of any development agreements that would have allowed for additional signage above and beyond what the ordinances have historically allowed. The proposed thirty (30) square feet for the Chick-fil-A sign is in addition to this.

As a part of the overall signage for the center and its associated outlots, there is one monument sign for the main tenants of the center along Rochester Road in addition to signs for Chili's, Emagine, Red Lobster, and Taco Bell. Target has its own monument signage along Rochester Road, as it is its own parcel. The overall center also has a monument sign at the intersection on the existing brick wall as a part of the overall landscape scheme at the immediate intersection of Rochester Road and E. Auburn Road. Along E. Auburn there are signs for Kohls, Harbor Freight, and for Target.

Staff discussed with the applicants the potential of revising the overall sign scheme for the center to try to bring the current freestanding ground monument signs further into compliance with the City's current sign regulations, particularly with regard to the monument sign height for the main tenant spaces (the current sign for TJ Maxx and the empty space allocated for the former Best Buy tenant space, as well as the Target sign along Rochester Road and the Kohl's sign along E. Auburn Road). The applicants have indicated that revisions to those signs are unlikely at this time due to negotiations that would be necessary with the multiple tenants.

The site plan that has been provided at this time for the Zoning Board of Appeals application is relatively conceptual in nature. A more refined location has been shown on the actual site plans

submitted for Chick-fil-A that have been reviewed by staff but was not officially submitted as a part of the sign variance application. Should the application be approved in some form, the approval should be subject to all City requirements for clear vision, siting, etc. being met.

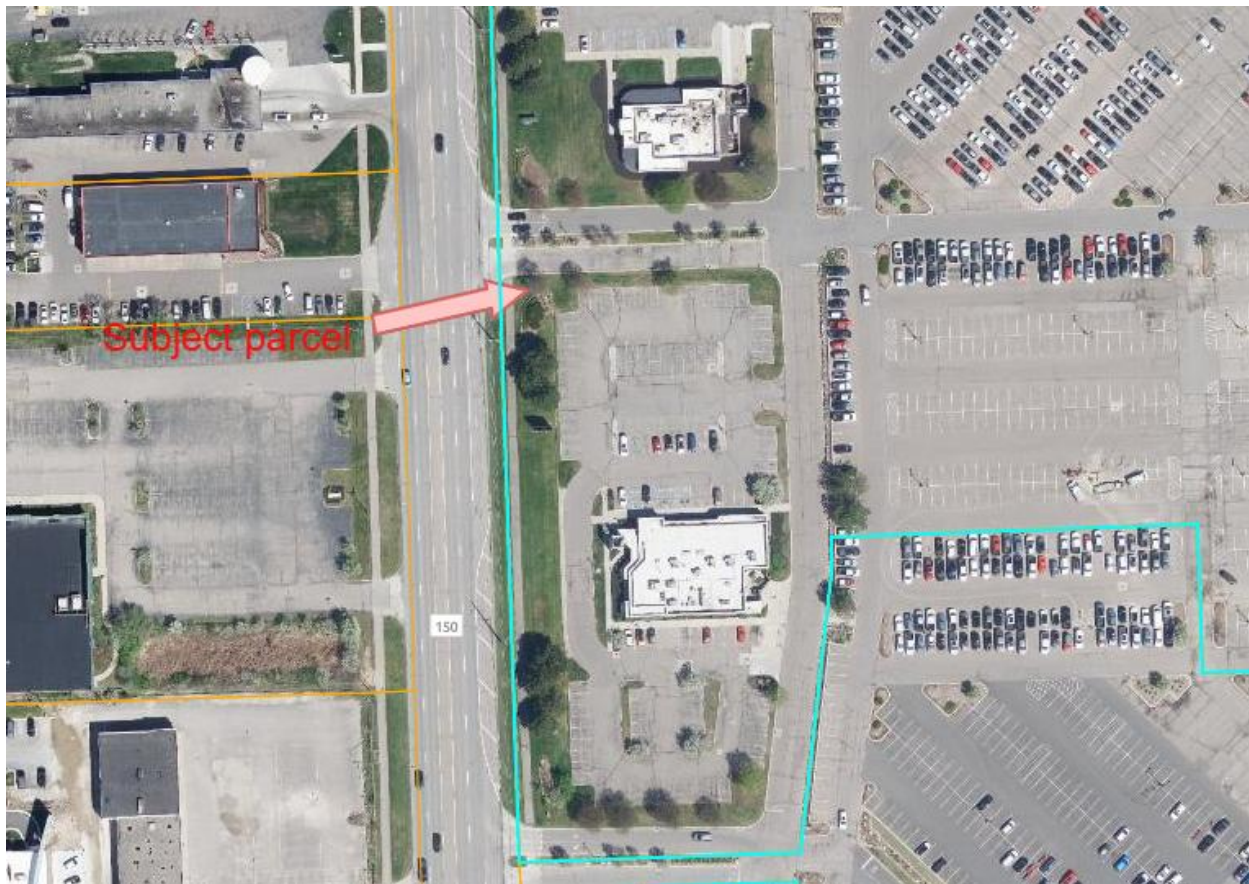
Existing Hampton Village Shopping Center Signage (freestanding ground monument signage)

Tenant Signs (Rochester Road)	Sign Area (square feet)		Tenant Signs (Auburn Road)	Sign Area (square feet)
Target (technically a separate parcel)	81.34		Target (technically a separate parcel)	19.51
Taco Bell	63.22		Harbor Freight	30.0
Red Lobster	32.69		Kohl's / Sephora	144.43
TJ Maxx	33.15		Hampton Village	38.5
Vacant (Former Best Buy)	- (Applicant has indicated 50 square feet is reserved for this space)			
Chili's	33.75			
Emagine	53.84			
Olive Garden	24.38			
Total	322.36 square feet		Total	232.44 square feet

Adjoining land uses are discussed below.

	Zoning	Existing Land Use	Future Land Use
Subject Site	CB – Community Business District and the FB Flex Business District	Entrance to Hampton Village Shopping Center	Mixed Use Development
North	CB - Community Business District and the FB Flex Business District	Chili's Restaurant	Mixed Use Development
South	CB Community Business District and the FB Flex Business District	Red Lobster Restaurant	Mixed Use Development
East	CB – Community Business District and the FB Flex Business District	Hampton Village Shopping Center	Mixed Use Development
West (across Rochester Road)	CB – Community Business District and the FB Flex Business District	Jax Kar Wash, Belle Tire, former Barnes and Noble	Mixed Use Development

Site Photograph



Sign Plan



A D/F MONUMENT SIGN
ONE (1) REQUIRED - MANUFACTURE AND INSTALL

SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"
30 SQ. FT.



1. *Special conditions.* That special conditions or circumstances exist which are peculiar to the land, structure or building involved and which are not applicable to other lands, structures or buildings in the same district.

The applicant has also indicated, in a separate response, that the shopping center has approximately 54 tenants (not all tenants have a presence on the freestanding monument signs). Further, that the proposed location of the Chick-fil-A will be such that the restaurant will have limited visibility from the adjacent roadways and therefore, will not benefit from the building frontage itself or any wall signage. The proposed Chick-fil-A sign is designed to provide adequate wayfinding and identification for the restaurant.

Staff questions that if a variance is granted for the proposed Chick-fil-A location since it is an interior outlot with no frontage, whether it is the intent of the shopping center ownership to create additional outlots or uses within the parking lot that would be similarly situated and therefore request separate, additional variances due to similar circumstances.

2. *Deprivation of rights. That literal interpretation or application of the provisions of this chapter would deprive the applicant of property rights commonly enjoyed by other properties in the same district under the terms of this chapter.* The applicant has indicated that the existing shopping center exceeds the maximum allowable signage area by 120 square feet, with a total of 320 square feet of signage where 200 square feet is permissible by ordinance (the city has actually calculated the overall square footage of signage along Rochester Road as 322 square feet). Further, the applicant indicates that due to their location, the restaurant will have limited visibility from adjacent roadways and will not benefit from building frontage or wall signage visibility. To provide adequate wayfinding and identification for customers, Chick-fil-A is requesting a monument sign containing 30 square feet. It should be noted that the building would be permitted a wall sign per the sign ordinance without the need for a variance.
3. *Substantial justice. Allowing the variance will result in substantial justice being done, considering the public benefits intended to be secured by this chapter, the individual difficulties that will be suffered by a failure of the sign board to grant a variance, and the rights of others whose property would be affected by the allowance of the variance, and will not be contrary to the public purpose and general intent and purpose of this chapter.* The applicant has indicated that the requested variance would allow the opportunity for the subject site to have visibility, identification and wayfinding while not requiring the overall center to reduce its signage allocation for existing tenants and thereby impacting existing tenants. Further, the proposed sign area of 30 square feet is consistent with the other outlots in the development. Staff does note that those other outlots do have direct frontage on Rochester Road or E. Auburn Road.

Sample Motions – Variance Request

Motion to Approve

MOTION by _____, seconded by _____, in the matter of File No. PVAI2026-0009, that the request for a variance from *Section 134-5 Monument Signs* of the Rochester Hills Code of Ordinances to allow a freestanding ground monument sign at the subject location, totaling 30 square feet, as shown on the site plan submitted, Parcel Identification Number 15-26-351-005, zoned CB Community Business District, be **APPROVED** because a competent, material, and substantial evidence **does** exist in the official record of the appeal that supports all of the following affirmative findings:

1. That special conditions or circumstances exist which are peculiar to the land, structure, or building involved and which are not applicable to other lands, structures or buildings in the districts noted above. Specifically, that the site has approximately 2,000 linear feet of frontage along Rochester Road and an additional approximate 1,600 feet of frontage along E. Auburn and that based on the prescribed formula in the sign ordinance would allow for freestanding ground monument sign areas well in excess of what is being requested for a property of this size and nature. In addition, the City has very few commercially zoned properties with this extent of linear frontage on a major

roadway(s).

2. That literal interpretation or application of the provisions of *Chapter 134* would deprive the applicant of property rights commonly enjoyed by other properties throughout the City in the subject district and other similar districts. Further, that signs of this size and configuration have been traditionally permitted for individual properties that have much less frontage than the what the subject property currently has.
3. Allowing the variance will result in substantial justice being done, considering the public benefits intended to be secured by *Chapter 134*, the individual difficulties that will be suffered by a failure of the Sign Board of Appeals to grant a variance, and the rights of others whose property would be affected by the allowance of the variance, and will not be contrary to the public purpose and general intent and purpose of this chapter, since the applicant would have no other means of publicly advertising their business on the subject property, similar to other nonresidential uses throughout the City.
4. As a condition of this approval, the sign location shall comply with all other city requirements for location including, but not limited to clear vision, setback, and avoidance of all applicable utilities.

Motion to Deny

MOTION by _____, seconded by _____, in the matter of File No. PVAI2026-0009, that the request for a variance from *Section 134-5 Monument Signs*. of the Rochester Hills Code of Ordinances to allow a freestanding ground monument sign at the subject location, totaling 30 square feet as shown on the plans submitted as a part of this application, Parcel Identification Number 15-26-351-005, zoned CB Community Business District, be **DENIED** because competent, material, and substantial evidence **does not** exist in the official record of the appeal as documented in the following findings:

1. Special conditions or circumstances do not exist which are peculiar to the land or the developed site involved and which are not applicable to other lands, structures or buildings in the CB Community Business District or other similar nonresidential districts, particularly since the existing site is already 402 square feet over the total signage permitted for the entire site, including the signage along both Rochester Road and E. Auburn Road.
2. A literal interpretation or application of the provisions of *Chapter 134* would not deprive the applicant of property rights commonly conferred to other properties in the CB Community Business District or other nonresidential zoning districts under the terms of *Chapter 134* since the existing signage allocations throughout the site could be adjusted to provide additional signage area for the Chick-fil-A without increasing the overall total area of all ground monument signs for the site, which is already in excess of what the Ordinance permits.
3. Allowing the variance will not result in substantial justice being done, considering the public benefits intended to be secured by *Chapter 134*, the lack of individual difficulties that will be suffered by a failure of the SBA to grant a variance, and the rights of others whose properties would be affected by the allowance of the variance. Allowing the variance would be contrary to the public purpose and general intent and purpose of this chapter by allowing more/larger signage than would otherwise be permissible by Ordinance.