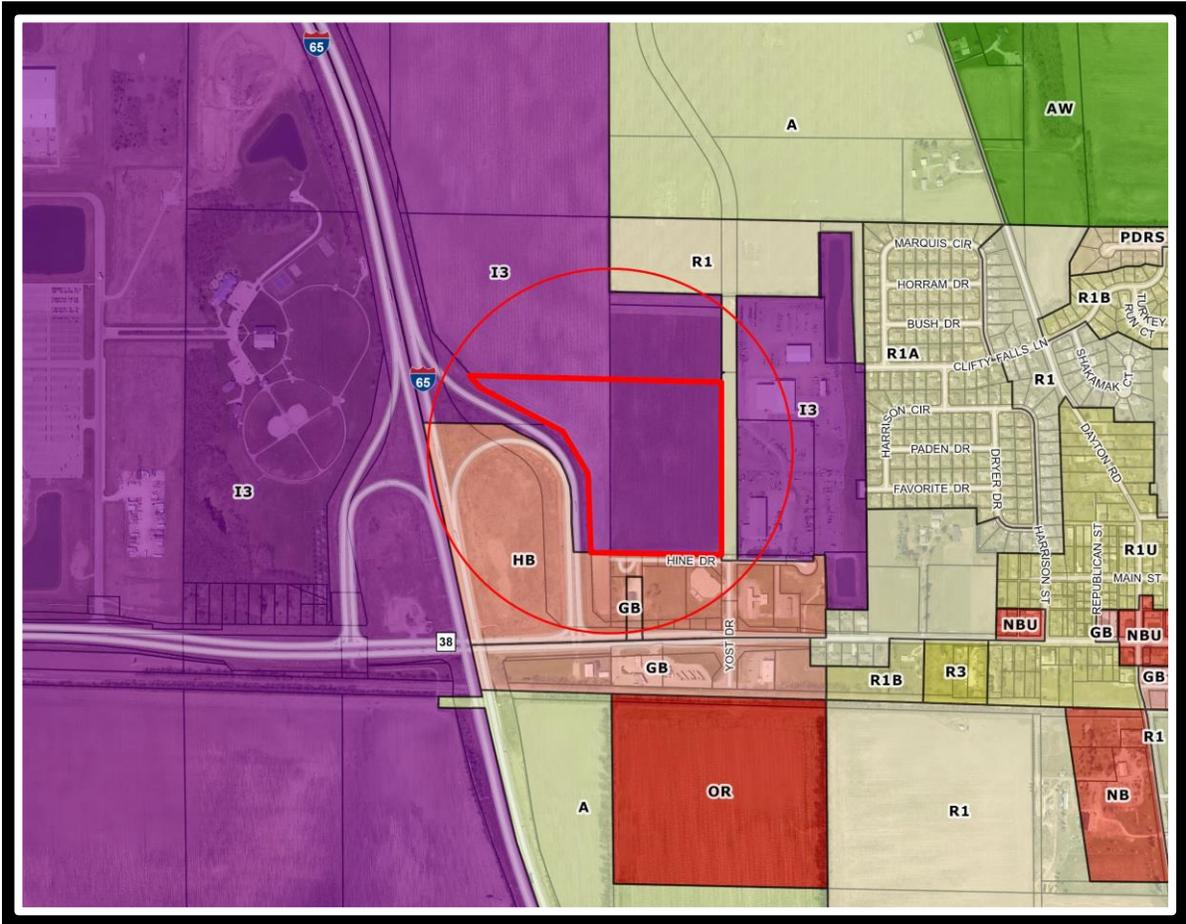
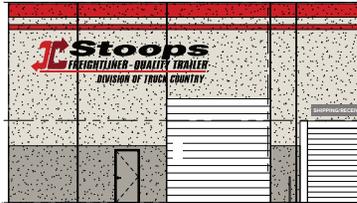

BZA-2064
MARK YOUR SPACE, MICHAEL SOBEL
(variances)

STAFF REPORT
October 21, 2021



LAFAYETTE, IN - EXTERIOR SIGNAGE - VARIANCE REQUEST



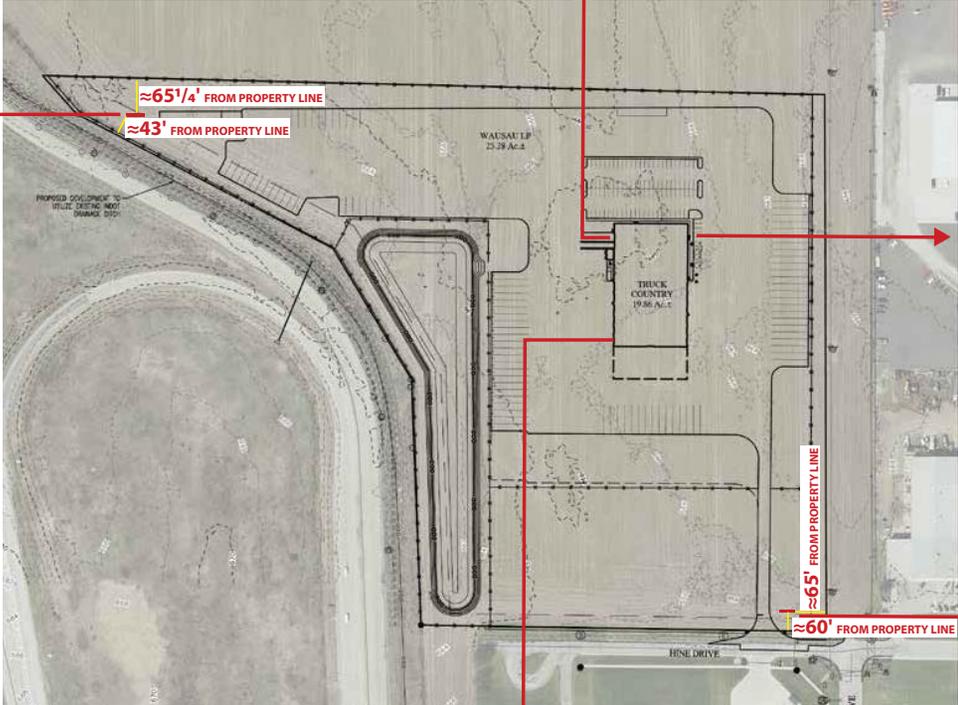
LIGHTED DIMENSIONAL LOGO WALL SIGN:
24' x 6.5'
Black lettering should light up to white at night when lit.



LIGHTED DIMENSIONAL LOGO WALL SIGN:
26' x 7'
Black lettering should light up to white at night when lit.



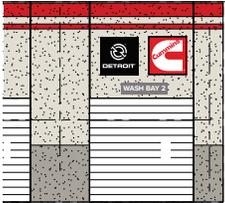
ILLUMINATED PYLON:
Sign Face: 14' 3" x 17' 8"
Sign Face Sq. Ft.: 251 .75
Overall Height: 60'



NOT TO SCALE



ILLUMINATED PYLON SIGN:
Sign Face 1: 5' 6" x 10'
Sign Face 2: 2' 6" x 10'
Overall Height: 20'



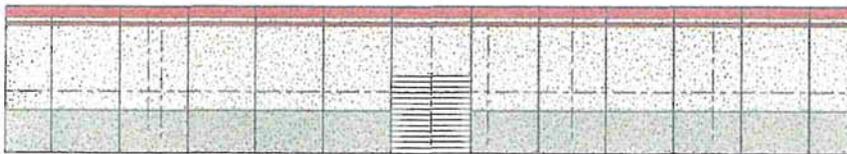
DETROIT/CUMMINS LIGHTED BOX SIGNS:
4' x 4'
Cummins sign provided by Cummins. Detroit sign to be produced by vendor.

LAFAYETTE, IN - EXTERIOR SIGNAGE - VARIANCE REQUEST

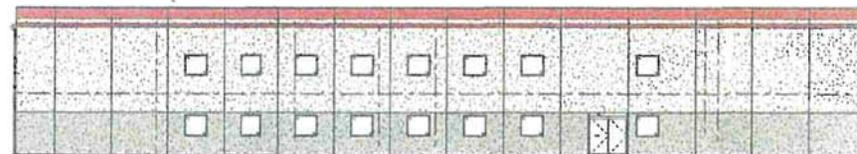
LIGHTED DIMENSIONAL
LOGO WALL SIGN:
26' x 7'
Black lettering should light up
to white at night when lit.



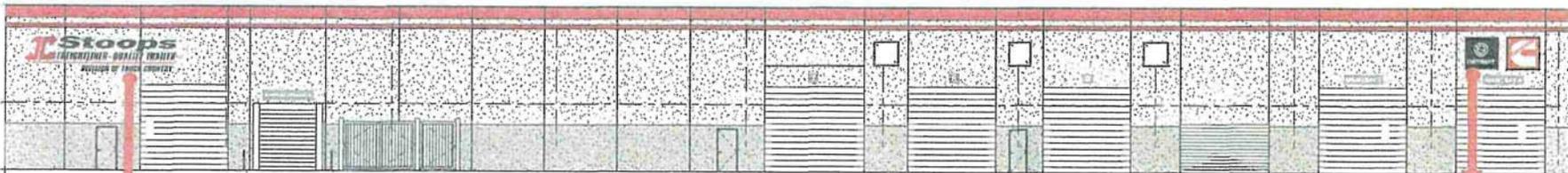
EAST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION



NORTH ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION

LIGHTED DIMENSIONAL
LOGO WALL SIGN:
24' x 6.5'
Black lettering should light up
to white at night when lit.

DETROIT/CUMMINS
LIGHTED BOX SIGNS:
4' x 4'
Cummins sign provided
by Cummins. Detroit sign
to be produced by vendor.

BZA-2064
MARK YOUR SPACE, MICHAEL SOBEL
Variances

Staff Report
October 21, 2021

REQUEST MADE, PROPOSED USE, LOCATION:

Petitioner, with consent from the owner, Jim Kane, Vice President of Wausau Limited, LLC, is requesting 5 sign variances for Truck Country, a Freightliner dealership and service center for commercial truck fleets. The variances requested are:

1. An overall signage amount of 701.75 square feet instead of the maximum allowed 260 square feet;
2. A freestanding sign height of 60 feet instead of the maximum allowed 24 feet (the I-65 sign);
3. A freestanding sign measuring 251.75 square feet instead of the maximum allowed 160 square feet (the I-65 sign);
4. A freestanding sign measuring 80 square feet instead of the maximum allowed 40 square feet (the Hine Drive sign); and
5. A freestanding sign setback of 43 feet instead of the required 60 foot setback (the I-65 sign).

The property is located in Dayton and is commonly known as 6584 Hine Drive, Sheffield 05 (SW) 22-3.

AREA ZONING PATTERNS:

The site is zoned I3 (Z-2723, May 2018) as is land to the north. Additional I3 zoning is located to the east across the future Yost Drive and west across I-65. Land south across Hine Drive is zoned HB, except for one lot that was rezoned to GB (Z-2749, 2018). The most recent variance heard by the Board in this area was in 2014 for land directly east of the subject property, MacAllister Machinery. This variance allowed a reduction in the parking requirement (BZA-1922). The most recent sign variance heard for property in the area was in 2010 when MacAllister Machinery was denied a request to erect additional signage (BZA-1812).

AREA LAND USE PATTERNS:

The site contains the newly constructed Truck Country, a truck dealership for commercial freightliners. MacAllister Machinery is located to the east. South of the site across Hine Drive is a compressed natural gas station. Land to the north is currently unimproved and the entrance/exit ramps for I-65 border the site to the west.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION:

The site is located on the north side of Hine Drive, a local road that dead-ends at the interstate right-of-way. Access to the site from SR 38 is via Yost Drive (another local) and Hine. Traffic counts taken in 2019 indicate that over 46,000 vehicles pass this site daily on I-65.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND UTILITY CONSIDERATIONS:

Sewer and water serve the site.

STAFF COMMENTS:

Truck Country is a freightliner dealership and service center, catering to commercial truck fleets. It is not the type of business that receives impulse customers. The newly constructed 37,400 square foot building is nearing completion at the interchange of I-65 and SR 38 on about 25 acres of land. The site has excellent visibility from I-65; State Road 38 provides easy access to the site via Yost Drive.

Variance #1 would allow a total of 701.75 sq. ft. of overall signage, detailed as follows:

1. A freestanding sign of 251.75 sq. ft.;
2. A second freestanding sign of 80 sq. ft.;
3. Fascia signs on the west side of the building totaling 188 sq. ft.; and
4. A fascia sign on the east side of the building of 182 sq. ft.

Staff completed a sign worksheet and the site is permitted 260 sq. ft. of total signage by right, so this variance would permit a 269% increase from the permitted amount of signage.

It should be noted that after this request was filed petitioner applied and received a permit to install the 182 sq. ft. fascia sign on the east side of the building (#4 above), leaving behind 78 sq. ft. of available signage. Additionally, the site plan shows a very large truck display platform directly behind the freestanding sign along the interstate ramp measuring approximately 135 feet by 45 feet. This type of signage (presumably trucks and large vehicles will be parked here) is unregulated and does not count towards allowed signage.

Variances #2, #3 and #5 all have to do with the freestanding sign proposed for the area near the entrance ramp for I-65. Petitioner is asking for an increased size (251.75 instead of 160 sq. ft.), increased height (60 instead of 24 feet) and a reduced setback (43' instead of the required 60 feet). Staff believes that a 160-sq. ft. sign, 24 feet tall with a setback of 24 feet is of sufficient size and in an excellent location to advertise the business.

According to the application, petitioner states that "truckers will need to see the facility in time to safely exit the highway and safely navigate the standard street." While staff does not disagree that truckers need to safely navigate to their destinations, staff thinks that a larger, taller, closer sign is simply unnecessary when every truck on the road today uses GPS.

Additionally, due to the nature of the business being a destination for other businesses interested in purchasing a fleet of trucks, not an impulse stop, staff questions the belief that there is a need to advertise to passing motorists who would spontaneously patronize the business.

Outside of Lafayette's South Street/SR 26 exit, very few high-rise signs exist along the interstate in Tippecanoe County. One such sign proposed the previous month in Battle Ground was removed from the requested sign package prior to hearing...and this for a gas station/convenience store that motorists would need to spontaneously patronize. Once a variance is granted for a high-rise sign at an interchange, it becomes harder to prevent multiple high-rise signs from being erected (See Lafayette's South Street/SR 26 exit). If absolutely needed, a billboard well before the exit would be preferable to staff.

Variance # 4 would allow a freestanding sign on the east side of the property to be 80 sq. ft. instead of the maximum allowed 40 sq. ft. This proposed sign would meet the required setback. Staff believes a sign of 40 sq. ft. is more than adequate for a local street such as Hine Dr. This sign, whether 40 sq. ft. or doubled in size, would not be visible to motorists traveling on the interstate or SR 38, but is rather meant to direct patrons once they are near the site.

Regarding the ballot items:

1. The Area Plan Commission at its October 20, 2021 meeting determined that the variances requested **ARE NOT** use variances.

And it is staff's opinion that regarding all 5 variances:

2. Granting these variances **WILL NOT** be injurious to the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community. The increased signage and decreased setbacks requested will have no negative impact on public safety.
3. Use and value of the area adjacent to the property included in the variance request **WILL** be affected in a substantially adverse manner. Increased signage, taller signs and decreased setbacks for signs presents an unfair advantage for surrounding properties and future businesses.
4. The terms of the zoning ordinance are being applied to a situation that **IS** common to other properties in the same zoning district. There is nothing unusual with these 25 acres relative to its shape, size, or topography. There is no vegetation obscuring the site. In fact, the elevated portion of I-65 at the interchange gives this site very clear visibility.
5. Strict application of the terms of the zoning ordinance **WILL NOT** result in an unusual or unnecessary hardship as defined in the zoning ordinance. This site could have a freestanding sign along I-65 up to 160 sq. ft. and 24' tall which would be large enough and tall enough to be seen from the interstate by passing motorists. Petitioner could rent space on a billboard at a safe location away from the interchange.

Note: Questions 5a. and 5b. need only be answered if a hardship is found in Question 5 above.

5a. The hardship involved **IS** self-imposed or solely based on a perceived reduction of or restriction on economic gain. The overall amount of signage allowed by the ordinance is appropriate for this area with such good visibility from the highway. It is only petitioner's belief that increased signage will result in an economic gain.

5b. The variance sought **DOES NOT** provide only the minimum relief needed to alleviate the hardship. Staff can find no hardship as defined in the zoning ordinance.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

- Variance #1: Denial
- Variance #2: Denial
- Variance #3: Denial
- Variance #4: Denial
- Variance #5: Denial