

## Development Activities Meeting Report (Version: 06/24/2020)

This report created by the Neighborhood Planner and included with staff reports to City Boards and/or Commissions.

Logistics	Stakeholders
<b>Project Name/Address:</b> 2655 E Carson Street (Signage)	<b>Groups Represented (e.g., specific organizations, residents, employees, etc. where this is evident):</b>
<b>Parcel Number(s):</b> 12-M-00330	South Side Community Council (RCO)
<b>ZDR Application Number:</b> DCP-ZDR-2021-15158	Local Review Committee of South Side Community Council Friends of South Side Park
<b>Meeting Location:</b> Zoom	Residents
<b>Date:</b> January 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Rite Aid/Applicant Team City Planning
<b>Meeting Start Time:</b> 6:00pm (this applicant started presentation at about 7:20pm due to agenda sequence)	
<b>Applicant:</b> David Steinberg (Rite Aid), Bill (with development team supporting Rite Aid's project)	<b>Approx. Number of Attendees:</b> 29
<b>Boards and/or Commissions Request(s):</b> HRC, ZBA	

### How did the meeting inform the community about the development project?

*Ex: Community engagement to-date, location and history of the site, demolition needs, building footprint and overall square footage, uses and activities (particularly on the ground floor), transportation needs and parking proposed, building materials, design, and other aesthetic elements of the project, community uses, amenities and programs.*

*[Preliminary to meeting presentation:]* SSCC (RCO) lead contact mentioned that they had reviewed a project before about Rite Aid and it was for their storefront and this presentation tonight is about their signage. SSCC contact positively recognized Rite Aid on removing the white paint from another Rite Aid store façade on Carson Street. The applicant David S. at Rite Aid shared that he was the person who got the white façade paint removed right away, stating that someone had made a mistake. He apologized that a mistake had occurred and emphasized that Rite Aid got it fixed right away. Bill, a member of the applicant team asked about DAMs. The SSCC contacts shared background about the process and links to the DAM information. They shared how a lot of business and property owners don't fully know historic guidelines. The DAM process has been very enlightening to the community and also for developers going to City, and for City to see what developers are planning to do, and how it helps to get community involved early. SSCC and applicant representatives recognized the importance of early engagement to avoid developers getting blindsided at public hearing boards. The SSCC lead asked if the presentation will be going to HRC and to ZBA. Bill with the development team shared that after DAM and HRC review this, the ZBA may have concerns with the signage. David S. at Rite Aid stated that the day prior to this DAM he discussed the signage labeled in Rite Aid's PDF package as R4 and R5 and was proposed for 26<sup>th</sup> Street. The applicant team came up with alternatives for signage to help address that concern, and he would pull up that updated PDF package to show on the screen. The SSCC lead stated that the LRC and SSCC members had seen the applicant's original presentation PDF package (not the updated one) but other community members here tonight have not seen the original...SSCC lead mentioned that since members of the community group have an understanding of signage guidelines, that is something to discuss here so that when the applicant goes to the Zoning Board, often if the SSCC members are in agreement, it will go through approval, depending on what other factors are in place. Bill from the applicant team asked if the SSCC recommendations soften the blow of the Zoning Hearing Board. The SSCC contact stated that, yes they can, because if there is something SSCC sees that is problematic,

SSCC will share that guidance with the applicant to help address that, because the SSCC members do understand the signage dimensions and what will be approved by Zoning.

*[Presentation:]*

David S. with Rite Aid presented an aerial visual of the site, and stated that this has been a 6-year project. The team looked at many elements, sought to address all concerns that they could, to make the development function properly since it is not a typical Rite Aid. At the corner of S 27<sup>th</sup> St and E Carson St, the applicant faced challenges in that there is very limited area for signage. While showing an elevation of the southeast corner of the building site, David explained how the signage has to be below the railings and also above the overhang at the front door. This creates a challenge that minimizes Rite Aid's signage ability and therefore puts Rite Aid at a tactical disadvantage with other retailers in neighborhood. In the original PDF package they had two "Pharmacy" signs (listed as R1 and R3 in the original package) on either side of the main Rite Aid sign. The applicant team has now decided to remove those two "Pharmacy" signs and will not seek to install them. The main Rite Aid sign at the front door is a very small sign here due to space constraints, and it is labeled as "R2" in the original presentation package.

Given the small size of the front door Rite Aid sign, the team came up with the idea to put signage on the S 26<sup>th</sup> Street frontage that states "Rite Aid – Enter on 27th" with a Rite Aid logo so it would be away from everybody else and would cause minimal impact – since it would be above windows and above sightlines for the majority of the building and would not interfere with anyone's quiet enjoyment of space within the building, and this lets Rite Aid pick up some more signage potential, since front door signage is very small in comparison to other neighborhood competitors, such as LA Fitness and more. *[Editor's note: David and his team refer to this signage as the "27<sup>th</sup> Street signage," likely since the signage states "Enter on 27th Street" however it should be noted that the signage's location is proposed on the southwest corner of the building above the third floor windows at S 26<sup>th</sup> Street and E Carson St, per the images David from Rite Aid showed].*

David heard a concern from Zoning that this would be considered off-site signage. He said he had thought about this in the beginning and considered the building's context, including that he has negotiated and paid for access to the whole parking lot on the block where all Rite Aid customers can get validation under the development. From his perspective he had considered it to fall under a single property owner and thus not an off-site signage issue, but since there is a ZBA concern, he came up with other alternatives if needed. Bill from the development team also added that the "Enter on 27th Street" signage on 26<sup>th</sup> and Carson would serve as a directional to get customers back to the parking lot, since people won't know how to park and get there and it is a hassle to park on Carson Street. David emphasized that people will need guidance as to where to park, since the site has not been in use for six years, and the idea is to help people know how to circulate to the parking lot.

*[SSCC members asked questions (questions 1, 2, and 3 below) re: parking].*

*Presentation continued. David showed the southeast elevation image of the building again, with just the Rite Aid sign showed and no pharmacy signs.]* David stated that the main Rite Aid sign is small at 18" high and was "just squeezed in there." The development team added a blade sign on E Carson near S 27<sup>th</sup> St stating "Rite Aid" as an alternative option to the signage proposed at S 26<sup>th</sup> St and E Carson. This blade sign alternative could be located immediately above the second floor. It is not David's first choice, but it adds to the Rite Aid signage for the building. He is unsure if the landlord will accept the blade sign option, and recognizes it also took a long time to get the "Enter on 27th" street signage negotiated. David believes the "Enter on 27th Street" signage is less intrusive and is more sensible approach. Wanted to run the idea by SSCC and see if the "Enter on 27th Street" signage could be preferred to the blade sign.

## Input and Responses

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
Will you give one hour of parking?	David: Free 30-min validation as customer.
Don't I have 30 minutes free parking anyway? Or at least 15 minutes free?	David: Unless you have an LA Fitness membership, you don't have 15 or 30 minutes at this parking garage. You get charged from the first minute you go in. There are other garages further east that may have a different approach.
And you can't go in the back into your store, can you?	David: Yeah, there is a breezeway, which is the best way to enter and most likely way people will enter, and it's how LA Fitness people enter. Or people can go around to the front. You get validation inside the store.
I don't know the zoning language exactly, but isn't an off-site sign considered a billboard?	Bill: yes, all off-premise signage is considered billboard. David: but the question is whether if it is truly determined to be off-site or is part of the building. Bill: the way the code reads, they will look at your demising wall to demising wall of your leased property.
[City planner]: This is a question you should ask Zoning.	David: Understood. Assuming this proposed signage is not allowed, we would probably request the blade sign. And I would probably move it here to our outside border <i>[cursor indicated another column slightly different from what proposed visualization showed]</i> .
Billboard question aside, this is in SP5, and I am not familiar enough to say what is allowed for that... is that height permissible within size requirements that the SP5 allows? Could others with more experience or longevity with these issues jump in?	
<p>The East Carson Street Historic District has its own Neighborhood Sign Guidelines for historic district. In terms of what is over the awning, if it's 18" max high letters, that looks fine.</p> <p>You're allowed a certain number of signs: a wall sign, and a projecting sign. These banner signs that have come into the district since the district sign guidelines were written are considered a variation on a projecting sign. The banner signs are held to the same standard (9 square feet total) and letter size (18"). The position has been that the projecting sign has to be below the sill of the second floor for the ground floor businesses. There have been some deviations to that...for example there is a blade sign at the federal credit union at 10<sup>th</sup> and Carson, which is up higher and they occupy both the first and second floors of their building. So the issue is a sticking point, and blade signs are usually starting just above the store fronts on the first floor and up against the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor columns, and I think would be a bit lower than what you're proposing here. I think your position, as long as it is within footprint or area of your tenant space, it would not necessarily be</p>	David: So you're saying it needs to be lower? Do you mean it needs to be this level here? <i>[cursor showing on screen that instead of the blade sign being immediately above the second floor it would be immediately above the first floor and up against the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor column]</i>

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objectionable, but if anybody has objection on LRC, blade sign location may need to be finessed.	
Yeah, we advocate they're high enough so people don't wack them and so usually up above 8ft or so. If it's a projecting sign – meaning a more common one that is straight out on the façade and not this type of blade or banner sign – it would want them to stay below the second floor sill, I think is what the guidelines say.	
I have the guidelines open on my desk here and it is a 10ft vertical clearance.	
Just like the Golden Triangle with a 10 ft clearance.	
9 square feet per side max and 4 feet max projection off the building. 18 inches letter size max. All in South side signage guidelines.	David: So, this would require a variance if we want to do it. I believe this sign is sized right, but if it's not sized right, it's not in the right position height-wise, so if we go lower, we'll have the sign blocked by trees.
I feel you for LA Fitness, but they're not in the district.	David: Oh they're not in the district?
Correct. You're the end of the district.	
Aldi's is in the district, right?	
Yes, that is correct.	
There are a lot of outstanding questions here, and from a signage package standpoint from a national retailer, do you have any back-up that has due diligence from your code research and elevations with dimensions listed, both from the side of the building and from a straight-on façade elevation. There is a lot of randomness I feel going on here in the discussion and I feel there needs to be more detail in the presentation, if you don't have that already...	David: You are correct that we normally would. The original package that we sent in, which we altered yesterday, had all the dimensions you are requesting. However, these new designs were an attempt to get a fix here, and to make the best use of the time. If we were not going to get the "Enter on 27 <sup>th</sup> street" sign to work, I wanted to talk to you and make the most of the meeting, discuss that this is an alternative idea, so that we could then subsequently submit a package with all the scale measurements you're asking for. But I wanted to get guidance from you as to what to do with the signage because I didn't learn until yesterday that the "Enter on 27 <sup>th</sup> street" sign would be an issue.

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
Got it. Yeah, this is not so much a working session as needing to review what has been submitted. That's just my opinion, I'm not sure what the LRC feels about how to give direction and move forward with what's been presented tonight.	
Yeah, good points, HRC would want all that dimensioning and better documentation as you state.	
And to zoning, correct?	Bill: Yeah, zoning is going to require all the dimensions from grade to bottom of sign, grade to top of roof, grade to top of sign, everything like that.
Yeah, and I think from Historic District guidelines, the off-site signage down at the end of the block, we wouldn't support that, because that would set off a precedent where every business would want to have their sign at every intersection, and it would get out of control.	Bill: Can I ask a question? If the blade sign that we drew last night is up high, if you notice on the lower elevation, you will see three or four existing brackets used by American Eagle for banners...is that something that Rite Aid could utilize?
It's a great question, because I don't remember all those blade signs, what was originally on them and what was approved.	Bill: We put the American Eagle up originally. If I dug through the archives, I think I could find drawings showing 3 or 4 brackets with American Eagle logos on it. There may be a fourth bracket behind the tree, with an AE logo on it, similar to what LA Fitness has across the street with its street banners.
[City Planner:] I looked on Google Street View and there were four – two on each side – two on 27 <sup>th</sup> and two on Carson.	Bill: That's what I thought, I just couldn't see the fourth one in the current view on the screen due to the tree.
So as emblems are decorative items, they're probably alright, but if they said Rite Aid, then you're probably starting to exceed your number of signs allowed in district. So, yes, you could put banners on those and they could just be more of a graphic, perhaps.	Bill: Maybe we could just put the Rite Aid logo. David: yeah, just the shield. Bill: I think the banner idea, when it was American Eagle, was they had their eagle on those four banners.
If you have a photo of that, and that was established as a precedent in the past...	
[City planner:] it was the Eagle logo plus letters AE –	
Again, if you have that evidence that this was approved before, it would likely be approved again.	
Yeah, we're seeing in Google street view it has it there, and also had American Eagle Outfitters on canvass	

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
awnings over the two side bays on each side of the main door.	
It would be nice to have something there instead of just the brackets.	
And I think it would be much better than the proposed high-rise sign as well.	
Right.	David: So we'll re-approach that. Do you want us to come back and present it to you again before we go back?
Normally, and I'll speak for LRC but Barbara (SSCC lead) can chime in, we would highlight the big things here at this meeting that are issues, then we'd invite you to come to the LRC meeting to do a working session and get you in compliance, and as we work to avoid applicants from having to come back through the DAM process again. If people tonight agree that the sign above the canopy is not objectionable, your possibly redoing the banners, and doing the projecting sign (one or the other as long as staying within district guidelines), I'd say there is no need to come back. We want to get you through in compliance. We want to help you get through HRC and Zoning. If anyone differs, please speak up.	David: We appreciate that and that is what we want to do to – to be compliant.
[Jacky]: No, we just want to see the revised package so Barbara (SSCC lead) can then send a letter of support.	David: Exactly. You would see the revised package if we did the working session, so that would be covered there, right?
[SSCC lead]: Jacky doesn't attend the LRC, but we can be in communication with LRC so that if there are additional questions we can send them to you and then also to the LRC.	David: That's fine.
Ultimately you'll make an application to HRC with what you're going to present to HRC, and that gets posted 10 days before so everyone gets an email blast that those things have been posted, so everyone can look at them. Sometimes there are last-minute changes, but usually 10 days in advance everyone can see exactly what you will be presenting to HRC.	David: We'll get everyone the documentation put together in short order.
Was there another attachment that was sent that was graphics and branding that was intended for the aluminum storefront?	
[SSCC lead]: With the windows?	

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
Yes. Is that part of this review as well? I just wanted to check because it was part of the documents.	Bill: I was on the understanding that the architects already had their DAM review some weeks ago for the interior build-out of the store. Is that correct?
Yes.	Bill: And I also understood that this window package was part of that and I was told they wanted us to include it just to be sure it was in front of you a second time.
No, we actually brought up that we wanted to know more about the windows at the DAM. I can't remember exactly, but I know their other location at 23 <sup>rd</sup> street had pull-down security shades which we wanted to highly deter you from doing and I don't believe it's allowed in the district either.	David: We're not doing that. We already came up with a different solution for that because of the last meeting we had.
And then we talked about are you going to put stuff on the windows, and they said yes but it hasn't been decided, and we wanted to see again to ensure it wasn't too loud or too crazy. So is this it in terms of what you are going with? <i>(referring to images on screen).</i>	Bill: my understanding is yes. David S: the actual graphics may shift based on what our branding is for whole health graphics. Concern from prior DAM was height of graphics so that could see into store and left openings at the top, like Aldi's, and these graphics hide the shelving on other side of it so need something as a backer, but then what was discussed at DAM was if we could leave the top open, that's preferred, and so we made that adjustment and left top open. And the pictures showed on the screen here are likely to shift...there are other pictures like whole health pictures that could tie into other uses (daycare, gym, etc.) and wanted to make community connection. Did that address your concerns?
Yes, I didn't have other issues, would defer to others on windows regulations, but I've seen wild and crazy stuff so that's why at the last meeting I asked the architects to see what it was.	
They did go to HRC and got approval for storefront changes, including the vinyl application. I don't know if it's exactly what was approved, but I looked through my files and that is what was presented. And they downsized the amount of covering of vinyl to keep the interior open, and HRC was agreeable. They have approval.	David: Not ostentatious images are just of people, promoting health and diversity, health and wellness, leaves, people, etc. softer pictures, people pictures, leaves, things along those lines.
Yeah, that's perfect. Not cigarettes and magazines (joke).	David: No. cigarettes are being pulled out of store so that's not happening.
Great. Thanks again. Anything else?	David: No, I appreciate your input. I apologize about not having a package earlier, but we just learned there would be an issue with that sign so had to pull an audible and you all had such great input about the storefront and it was really relevant in helping us get the project across the finish line, so I wanted to tap into that knowledge base again.
We appreciate you making the change.	

Questions and Comments from Attendees	Responses from Applicants
	Bill: I do have a question about the vinyl work, did you say HRC approved it?
I remember it being part of the storefront package. I'd have to go back and look. It was posted on their website, so it may still be available to look at. But yes, the vinyl came up in that hearing, the vinyl was discussed, and something was approved.	<p>Bill: sometimes the City looks at the windows being part of the sign package? Will that count towards our square footage?</p> <p>David: the vinyl is on the inside, my understanding is that was not the case.</p> <p>Bill: I wanted to make sure not deducting from the 40 square feet allowed.</p> <p>David: No, it's on the inside of the window, if it were on the outside it would be different.</p> <p>Bill: Ok, just wasn't sure in that district or not.</p>
	Bill: In the architectural review, did they bring up any comments about the sign on the canopy and about any encroachment process needed for the historic district?
They only discussed what you applied for, and so signage was not part of the package, so that is what this is all about – it's a separate process.	Given we had American Eagle up there before, do you see a problem?
Not a problem with HRC. Encroachment is more of a zoning issue. Others may know.	
[City planner:] It may be a DOMI issue if encroachment is in Public ROW, but given that the sign structure is already there, I wouldn't see there being an issue.	David: Thank you all, really appreciate it.
[SSCC lead]: At some point this will go to Zoning Board, and as work through details, can share. We will let you know when Zoning Board is meeting about this property and public comment is always available to be made. If ever there is something that you want to involve SSCC in that we haven't thought about then we share that with presenters.	David: do you mean as far as an idea? I'm not sure I understand.
[SSCC lead]: There is a 30-day comment period when there is still time for people to make comment. You could not set up a Zoning Board meeting until after that 30 days. We put this meeting recording on our YouTube page so that people who are attending this meeting can also go back and revisit what it is that was discussed at this meeting as they may have questions, and also so people who couldn't attend could review and share comments. We ask people to bring SSCC those comments so that we're not blindsided by neighbors concerned by a project who say they are not in support and nobody heard them. The same holds true of historic review commission and this will be presented there too.	Thank you.

**Other Notes**

**Planner completing report:** Thomas Scharff