

**Zoning Board of Appeals
May 25, 2016 Regular Meeting**

STAFF REPORT

Subject: ZBA16-014, 615 East Huron Street

Summary: Brownie Signs, LLC is requesting a variance from **Chapter 61 5:502(2)(b)** Ground Signs of 11 feet to allow a ground mounted identification sign to be 5 feet from the front setback. Additionally, applicant is requesting a 5.5 foot variance to allow an 8 foot overall height identification sign to be installed at the property.

Background:

The petitioner, Brownie Signs LLC, is requesting variances on behalf of The Graduate Hotel, from **Chapter 61, Section 5:502(2)(b)** for the placement of 1 two-sided monument sign fronting 615 East Huron Street. The variances include a reduction from the required setback from the right-of-way from 16 feet to 5 feet.

The subject parcel is zoned D1 (Downtown Core District) and is a 14 story hotel constructed in the 1960's in the downtown area of the City. The hotel is located between an insurance company and historic Harris Hall. Currently, the hotel has 1 wall sign near the fourteenth floor and a detached monument sign does not exist.

Chapter 61 addresses sign height and setback requirements in the following sections:

5:502 Exterior Business Signs.

(2) (b) Ground Signs.

Signs not structurally attached to a building shall be at least 5 feet from all property lines. Such signs shall be permitted a maximum height of 1 foot for each 2 feet the sign is set back from the nearest property line, provided that the height of any such sign shall not exceed 25 feet.

Standards for Approval - Variance

The Sign Board of Appeals has the power granted by State law and by

Section 5:517(4), Application of the Variance Power from the City of Ann Arbor Sign Ordinance The following criteria shall apply:

(a) That the alleged hardships or practical difficulties, or both, are peculiar to the property of the person requesting the variance and result from conditions which do not exist generally throughout the city.

The petitioner states that the lot is split between the hotel and parking lot area, leaving a reduced front open space area to locate an identification sign. Traffic on East Huron Street flows in two directions at 35 miles per hour, therefore, making a sign difficult to see if it is installed at the 15 foot setback requirement and the height requirements. Applicant has indicated traffic and safety concerns for their patrons as a need for the sign variance to allow for better visibility for the subject business.

The City Traffic Engineer confirmed the viewing triangle for existing traffic is acceptable as the sign is located mid-block.

(b) That allowing the variance will result in substantial justice being done, considering the public benefits intended to be secured by this Chapter, the individual hardships that will be suffered by the failure of the Board to grant a variance and the rights of others whose property would be affected by the allowance of the variance.

Staff contends that approval of the setback variance would not negatively impact other property owners, and the proposal does not cause negative sight impacts. The petitioner proposes to setback the monument sign as far as practicable to be seen from traffic while not being a distraction to adjacent businesses.

(c) Is the condition which prevents you from complying with the ordinance self-imposed? How did the condition come about?

Staff has asked the petitioner why the sign cannot be reduced in overall height and to be prepared to respond to this inquiry at the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The condition which would make strict compliance with the ordinance problematic is not new to the current owner of this business. The Graduate hotel was built using the site and building of the former Dahlmann Inn, which was built in the 1960s. As the owners of The Graduate have always been conscious of their green building certification and carbon footprint, they decided early on to utilize the existing building structure on site and reuse or modify what has previously existed. The building will be LEED certified. As a result, it would not technically be correct to say this condition was self-imposed.

Zoning Board of Appeals
ZBA16-014 Sign Variance
May 25, 2016 - Page 3

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jon Barrett". The signature is stylized with large loops and a cursive script.

Jon Barrett
Zoning Coordinator

615 E Huron St

Catherine St

R4C

N Thayer St

E Ann St

N State St

PUD

E Huron St

D1

S State St

PL






E Washington St

PUD

C2A

PL

Zoning Districts




-  Township Islands
-  City Zoning Districts
-  Railroads
-  Parcels
-  Huron River



Map date 5/5/2016
 Any aerial imagery is circa 2015
 unless otherwise noted
 Terms of use: www.a2gov.org/terms

615 E Huron St



-  Railroads
-  Parcels
-  Huron River



Map date 5/5/2016
Any aerial imagery is circa 2015
unless otherwise noted
Terms of use: www.a2gov.org/terms

615 E Huron St



-  Railroads
-  Parcels
-  Huron River



Map date 5/5/2016
Any aerial imagery is circa 2015 unless otherwise noted
Terms of use: www.a2gov.org/terms

APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE OR ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL

SIGN BOARD OF APPEALS

Section 1: Applicant Information

Name of Applicant: Brownie Signs, LLC
Address of Applicant: 8791 Earhart, South Lyon, MI 48178
Daytime Phone: (248)437-0800
Fax: (810)900-3040
Email: browniesigns8791@yahoo.com
Applicant's Relationship to Property: sign contractor

Section 2: Property Information

Address of Property: 615 East Huron Street
Zoning Classification: 38-3974027 R-1 Residential, hotels, motels, board houses
Tax ID# (if known): 38-3974027
*Name of Property Owner: Jones Lang LaSalle

**If different than applicant, a letter of authorization from the property owner must be provided.*

Section 3: Request Information

Variance

Chapter(s) and Section(s) from which a variance is requested:

Chapter 61, 5:502 (b)

Ground Signs

Required dimension: PROPOSED dimension:

15 feet from lot line 5 feet from lot line

Example: Chapter 61, Section 5:26

Example: 40' Setback from Right of Way

Example: 36' Setback from Right of Way

Give a detailed description of the work you are proposing and why it will require a variance (attach additional sheets if necessary)

proposed ground monument sign requires a variance from Ch. 61 Sec. 5:502(2)(b), of 9 feet from the front setback and 5.5 feet from the allowable height to allow for 8*by 6* (54 sq/ft)

Section 4: VARIANCE REQUEST (If not applying for a variance, skip to section 5)

The City of Ann Arbor Sign Board of Appeals has the powers granted by City Code Chapter 61. A variance may be granted by the Sign Board of Appeals only in cases involving practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships when **ALL** of the following is found **TRUE**. Please provide a complete response to each item below. These responses will form the basis for evaluation of the request by staff and the Sign Board of Appeals. (continued...)

1. Are there hardships or practical difficulties to complying with the ordinance? Are these hardships or practical difficulties an exception or unique to the property compared to other properties in the City?

See attachment A.

2. Are the hardships or practical difficulties more than mere inconvenience, inability to obtain a higher financial return? (explain)

See attachment A.

3. What effect will granting the variance have on the neighboring properties?

See attachment A.

4. What physical characteristics of your property in terms of size, shape, location or topography prevent you from using it in a way that is consistent with the ordinance?

See attachment A.

5. Is the condition which prevents you from complying with the ordinance self-imposed? How did the condition come about?

See attachment A.

Section 5: Administrative Appeal (ONLY – DO NOT COMPLETE IF FILING FOR VARIANCE)

Current use of the property _____

Explain what you were denied and why you are requesting an Administrative Appeal:

Section 6: Required Materials

The following materials are required for all variance requests or administrative appeals. Failure to provide these materials will result in an incomplete application and will delay staff review and Sign Board of Appeals consideration of the request. The materials listed below must accompany the application and constitute an inseparable part of the application.

All materials must be provided on **8 1/2" by 11" sheets.**

- Building showing frontage dimensions.
- Photographs of the property and any existing buildings involved in the request.
- Any other graphic or written materials that support the request.
- Property Site Plan showing setbacks, right of ways, etc.

Section 7: Acknowledgement

SIGNATURES MUST BE SIGNED IN PRESENCE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, the applicant, request a variance from the above named Chapter(s) and Section(s) of the Ann Arbor City Code for the stated reasons, in accordance with the materials attached hereto.

248 437-0800 _____ Brad A Braun _____
 Phone Number Signature
Brownie signs 8791@Yahoo _____
 Email Address .com Print Name

I, the applicant, hereby depose and say that all of the aforementioned statements, and the statements contained in the materials submitted herewith, are true and correct. I acknowledge that I've received all instructions, time, date and place of meeting and will be present to present the appeal. Staff will not send additional notification of meeting times.

Brad A Braun _____
 Signature

Further, I hereby give City of Ann Arbor Planning & Development Services unit staff and members of the Sign Board of Appeals permission to access the subject property for the purpose of reviewing my variance request.

Brad A Braun _____
 Signature

On this 25th day of April, 2016, before me personally appeared the above named applicant and made oath that he/she has read the foregoing application by him/her subscribed and knows the contents thereof, and that the same is true as to his/her own knowledge except as to those matters therein stated to be upon his information and belief as to those matters, he/she believes them to be true.

6/15/2016 _____ David M. Requier _____
 Notary Commission Expiration Date Notary Public, Signature
David M. Requier _____
 Print Name

Staff Use Only

Date Submitted: _____ Fee Paid: _____
 File No.: _____ Date of Public Hearing _____
 Pre-filing Staff Reviewer & Date _____ SBA Action: _____
 Pre-Filing Review: _____
 Staff Reviewer & Date: _____

APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE OR ADMINISTRATIVE APPEAL
SIGN BOARD OF APPEALS

ATTACHMENT A

1. There are hardships and practical difficulties with regard to strict compliance with the ordinance. The practical difficulty with complying with the ordinance involves the adequacy of the allowable setback placement for a monument sign in front of The Graduate hotel on East Huron Street (615 E. Huron Street). Located in the central downtown area of the city of Ann Arbor, The Graduate hotel is a large, non-descript, 21-floor skyscraper. There are unique conditions pertaining to the building that would make a strict application of the 15-foot setback portion of the sign ordinance unduly harsh and potentially dangerous for the public.

The lot itself is split between the hotel and parking lot area, with the frontage area of the hotel being limited in space between edge of sidewalk and beginning of building. There is a wall sign above the 14th floor which is all but impossible to see from the vantage point of a motorist looking for the hotel. This causes little to no street visibility for that signage attached to the building. Frankly, to an unfamiliar eye, the hotel building does not look like a hotel at all. The hotel property is sandwiched between an insurance agency and Harris Hall, est. 1886, a historic building that sits very close to the sidewalk all but entirely obstructing the view of the hotel entrance for motorists traveling west on Huron Street. Traffic flows two-ways at 35 mph and using signage at the size specified in the code could pose safety problems for motorists looking for the hotel, other motorists on Huron, and pedestrians.

Potential problems could include motorists making U-turns or needing to needlessly circle the block to double back to the hotel. The lack of ease of identification could cause motorists to slow down unreasonably to look for the hotel, reducing time needed to change lanes to enter the hotel driveway as they approach the location could cause traffic accidents. As such, this writer feels confident that the practical difficulties unique to this location would justify reducing the setback requirement for the proposed monument sign. (see attached pictures of proposed signage, ATTACHMENT B)

2. The particular hardship or practical difficulty with this location can be considered to be more than mere inconvenience or inability to obtain higher financial returns as this hotel will most certainly have a higher traffic volume than its neighbors in addition to the already fast-moving Huron Street traffic. There are always traffic safety concerns with a hotel business. As such, the proposed monument sign would be integral to the visibility of the business. Strict compliance with the ordinance would make for low-visibility signage, which would make identification of the business difficult for motorists and customers. The safety justifications for the variance and the aesthetics of the hotel and neighboring businesses provide adequate reasons to grant the requested variance.

3. Granting this variance would have a positive effect on neighboring businesses as the main hotel building on this property has recently undergone a full-scale remodification and placement of the main monument sign would not pose an

inconvenience to the neighboring businesses. In fact, as there are valid traffic safety reasons outlined above for granting our request, the neighboring buildings and business would likely benefit by having the hotel more readily identifiable to motorists traveling on East Huron Street. A more visible monument sign, closer and more visible to the road and traveling motorists would likely make locating and entering the parking lot of the hotel much easier and safer. The granting of this variance will not be contrary to the general objective of Ch. 61 of the City Code.

4. As indicated, this business location has a shallow frontage which would make a strict application of the setback provision unduly harsh. Because of the anticipated level of traffic a large hotel generates, and the two-way flow of traffic on Huron Street, the monument sign needs to be conspicuous and readable to motorists and others unfamiliar with the location. Strict compliance would put a properly-sized monument sign too far from the street to allow for easy identification of the business. Traveling in downtown Ann Arbor can be intimidating for the uninitiated, all the more reason to make this exception and allow for effective wayfinding for this hotel.

5. The condition which would make strict compliance with the ordinance problematic is not new to the current owner of this business. The Graduate hotel was built using the site and building of the former Dahlmann Inn, which was built in the 1960s. As the owners of The Graduate have always been conscious of their green building certification and carbon footprint, they decided early on to utilize the existing building structure on site and reuse or modify what has previously existed. The building will be LEED certified. As a result, it would not technically be correct to say this condition was self-imposed.






| | | |
|---|--|---|
|  | <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Wind load calculations for wall fasteners based on 30 mph at 2 second gust</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">ULC Standard - MCR 104 Code</p> |  <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Since 1954</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">Design • Fabrication • Installation • Service</p> |
| <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">© 2015 Brownie's Sign Co.</p> | | |

Attachments

- image001.jpg (108.37KB)
- image002.jpg (2.54KB)



Illuminated portion of face
will be:
7328 White Acrylic
Or
407 / RL42037 Yellow Acrylic

Recessed Reveal Detail:
Chromatic Paint
134 Golden Yellow
Cabinet and Skirt:
Chromatic Paint
156 Brilliant Blue



54"
96"

brownie signs
8791 Earhart Rd. South Lyon, MI 48178
248-437-0800

Original Art, Sketches, Mechanicals, and other materials originated by "The Sign People" are the property of "The Sign People". Sketch Deposit covers minimal costs involved in developing a concept. The Sketch remains the intellectual property of "The Sign People" Copyright Notice: This work is protected by Title 17 of the Copyright Laws of the United States as enumerated by Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution. The Holder of the Copyright, Enjoys all the Rights and Remedies Under Full Force of the Law.

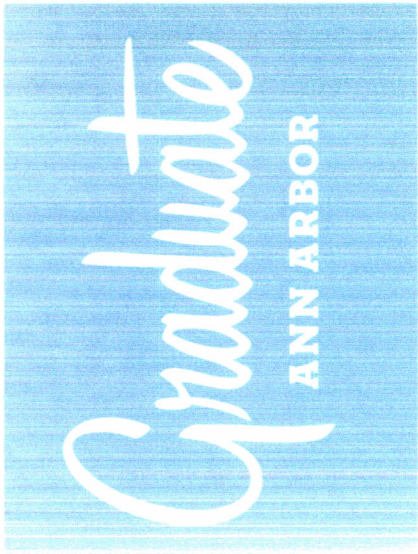


Wind Load calculations for wall fasteners
based upon 90mph at 3 second gust.

IBC Standard Mich Bldg Code

**Brownie's
SIGN CO.**
Since 1954
Design ♦ Fabrication ♦ Installation ♦ Service

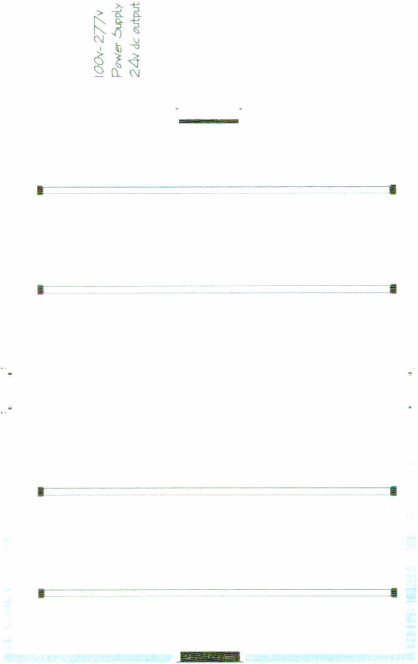
72"



54"

96"

LED Lamps



100V-277V
Power Supply
24V ac output

Pole: Hard Dig post hole 42" Minimum

42" Deep Minimum
24" Diameter.
Back Filled with Pea Gravel
and Quick Crete to 3" below grade.

Customer Approval:

Date:

All Components used in the fabrication and installation of Signage from "The Sign People" are listed and used in accordance with manufacturers' instructions. NEC 2008, UL 48

Typical Drawing
Not for Construction
Copyright © 2008, The Sign People, LLC
All Rights Reserved

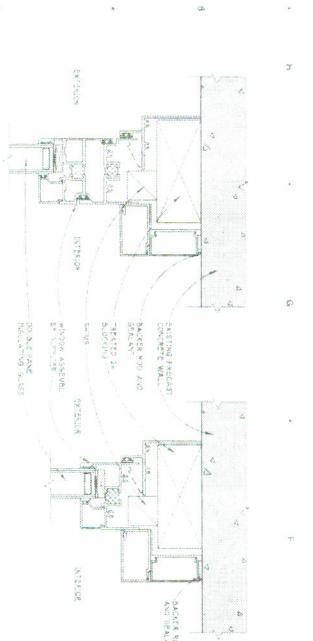
brownie signs
8791 Larnhart Rd. South Lyon, MI 48178
248-437-0800

© Original Art, Sketches, Mechanicals, and other materials originated by "The Sign People" are the property of "The Sign People". Sketch Deposit covers minimal costs involved in developing a concept. The Sketch remains the intellectual property of "The Sign People" Copyright Notice: This work is protected by Title 17 of the Copyright Laws of the United States as enumerated by Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution. The Holder of the Copyright Enjoys all the Rights and Remedies Under Full Force of the Law

Brownie's SIGN Co.

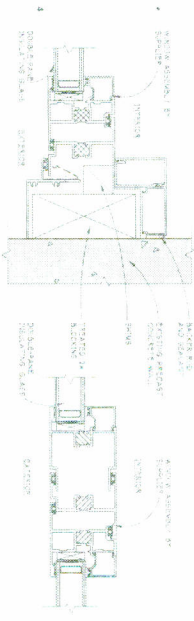
Since 1954

Design ✦ Fabrication ✦ Installation ✦ Service



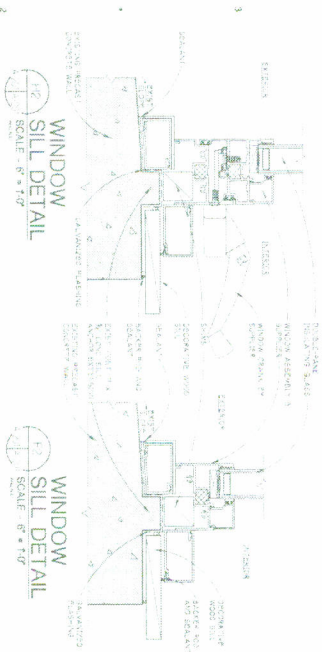
14 WINDOW HEAD DETAIL
SCALE - 8" = 1'-0"

15 WINDOW HEAD DETAIL
SCALE - 8" = 1'-0"



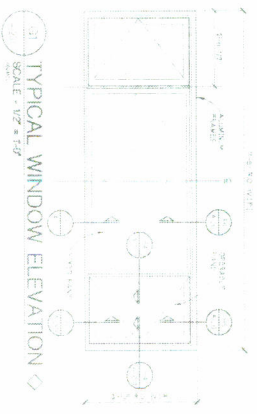
14 WINDOW JAMB DETAIL
SCALE - 8" = 1'-0"

15 WINDOW JAMB DETAIL
SCALE - 8" = 1'-0"

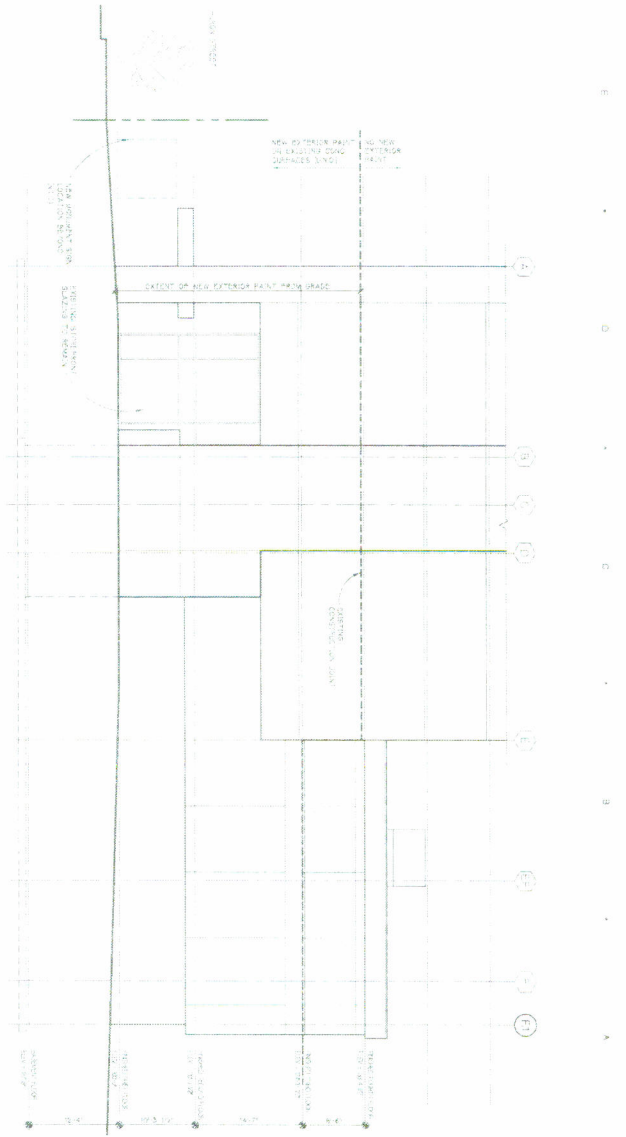


16 WINDOW SILL DETAIL
SCALE - 8" = 1'-0"

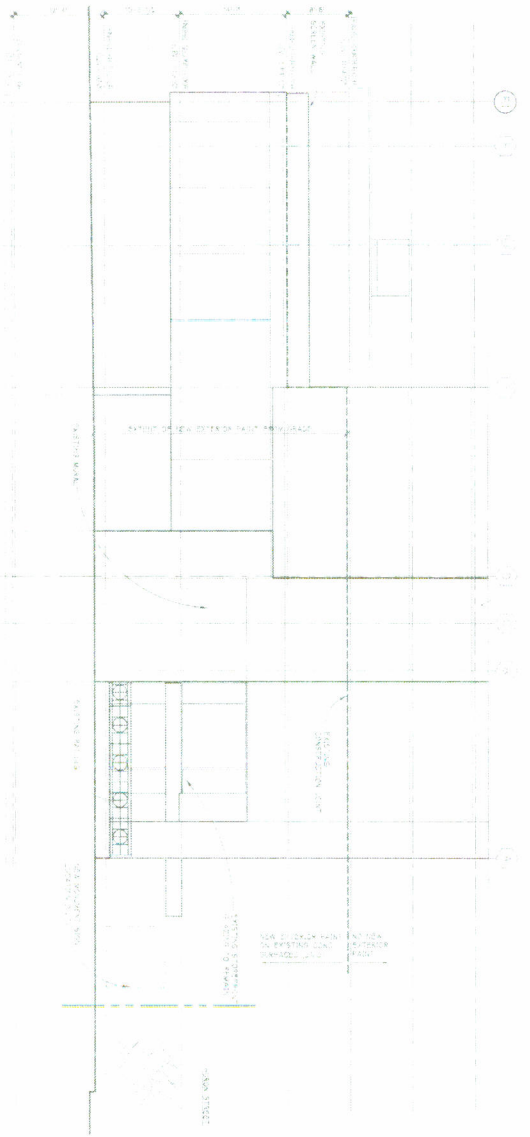
17 WINDOW SILL DETAIL
SCALE - 8" = 1'-0"



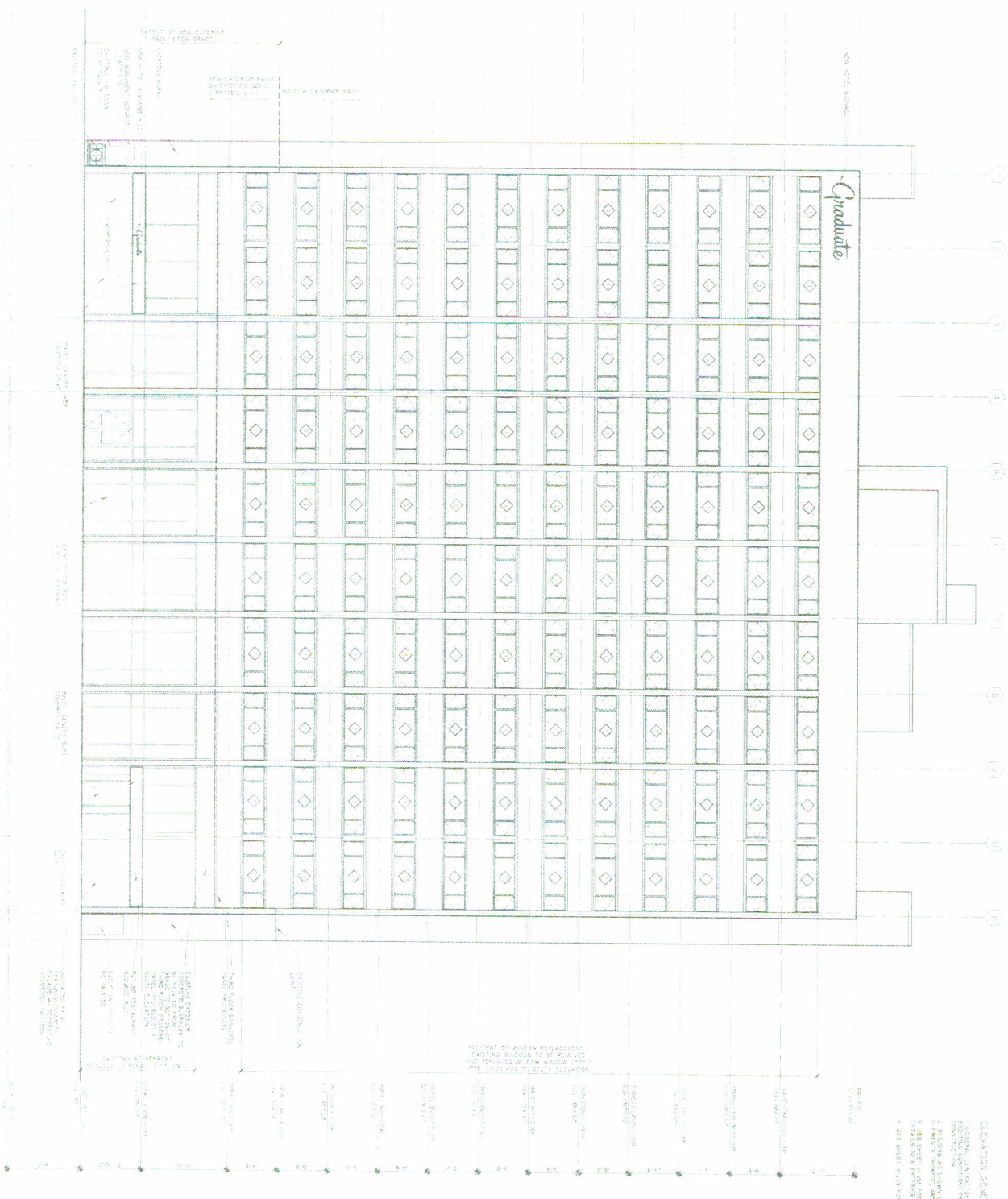
18 TYPICAL WINDOW ELEVATION
SCALE - 1/2" = 1'-0"



19 PARTIAL EAST ELEVATION
SCALE - 1/8" = 1'-0"



20 PARTIAL WEST ELEVATION
SCALE - 1/8" = 1'-0"



SOUTH ELEVATION
 (FACING HURON STREET)
 SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

- REVISIONS GENERAL NOTES
1. REVISIONS AS SHOWN ON SHEET A-200
 2. REVISIONS AS SHOWN ON SHEET A-200
 3. REVISIONS AS SHOWN ON SHEET A-200
 4. REVISIONS AS SHOWN ON SHEET A-200
 5. REVISIONS AS SHOWN ON SHEET A-200
 6. REVISIONS AS SHOWN ON SHEET A-200
 7. REVISIONS AS SHOWN ON SHEET A-200
 8. REVISIONS AS SHOWN ON SHEET A-200
 9. REVISIONS AS SHOWN ON SHEET A-200
 10. REVISIONS AS SHOWN ON SHEET A-200

SOUTH ELEVATION

Graduate
 HOTELS
 ANN ARBOR MICHIGAN

HOBBS + BLACK
 ARCHITECTS
 100 N. State St.
 Ann Arbor, MI 48104
 734.663.4189
 www.hobbsblack.com

DATE: 08/11/11
 DRAWN BY: J. HOBBS
 CHECKED BY: J. HOBBS

15-507-01
 A-200



NORTH
 SITE PLAN
 SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

SITE PLAN

15-507-01

SP-101

Graduate
 HOTELS
 ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

HOBBS + BLACK
 ARCHITECTS
 100 N. State St.
 Ann Arbor, MI 48104
 P 734.663.4187
 www.hobbsblack.com

| NO. | DATE | DESCRIPTION |
|-----|----------|-------------|
| 1 | 10/15/15 | PRELIMINARY |
| 2 | 11/10/15 | REVISED |
| 3 | 12/15/15 | REVISED |
| 4 | 01/15/16 | REVISED |
| 5 | 02/15/16 | REVISED |
| 6 | 03/15/16 | REVISED |
| 7 | 04/15/16 | REVISED |
| 8 | 05/15/16 | REVISED |
| 9 | 06/15/16 | REVISED |
| 10 | 07/15/16 | REVISED |
| 11 | 08/15/16 | REVISED |
| 12 | 09/15/16 | REVISED |
| 13 | 10/15/16 | REVISED |
| 14 | 11/15/16 | REVISED |
| 15 | 12/15/16 | REVISED |
| 16 | 01/15/17 | REVISED |
| 17 | 02/15/17 | REVISED |
| 18 | 03/15/17 | REVISED |
| 19 | 04/15/17 | REVISED |
| 20 | 05/15/17 | REVISED |
| 21 | 06/15/17 | REVISED |
| 22 | 07/15/17 | REVISED |
| 23 | 08/15/17 | REVISED |
| 24 | 09/15/17 | REVISED |
| 25 | 10/15/17 | REVISED |
| 26 | 11/15/17 | REVISED |
| 27 | 12/15/17 | REVISED |
| 28 | 01/15/18 | REVISED |
| 29 | 02/15/18 | REVISED |
| 30 | 03/15/18 | REVISED |
| 31 | 04/15/18 | REVISED |
| 32 | 05/15/18 | REVISED |
| 33 | 06/15/18 | REVISED |
| 34 | 07/15/18 | REVISED |
| 35 | 08/15/18 | REVISED |
| 36 | 09/15/18 | REVISED |
| 37 | 10/15/18 | REVISED |
| 38 | 11/15/18 | REVISED |
| 39 | 12/15/18 | REVISED |
| 40 | 01/15/19 | REVISED |
| 41 | 02/15/19 | REVISED |
| 42 | 03/15/19 | REVISED |
| 43 | 04/15/19 | REVISED |
| 44 | 05/15/19 | REVISED |
| 45 | 06/15/19 | REVISED |
| 46 | 07/15/19 | REVISED |
| 47 | 08/15/19 | REVISED |
| 48 | 09/15/19 | REVISED |
| 49 | 10/15/19 | REVISED |
| 50 | 11/15/19 | REVISED |
| 51 | 12/15/19 | REVISED |
| 52 | 01/15/20 | REVISED |
| 53 | 02/15/20 | REVISED |
| 54 | 03/15/20 | REVISED |
| 55 | 04/15/20 | REVISED |
| 56 | 05/15/20 | REVISED |
| 57 | 06/15/20 | REVISED |
| 58 | 07/15/20 | REVISED |
| 59 | 08/15/20 | REVISED |
| 60 | 09/15/20 | REVISED |
| 61 | 10/15/20 | REVISED |
| 62 | 11/15/20 | REVISED |
| 63 | 12/15/20 | REVISED |
| 64 | 01/15/21 | REVISED |
| 65 | 02/15/21 | REVISED |
| 66 | 03/15/21 | REVISED |
| 67 | 04/15/21 | REVISED |
| 68 | 05/15/21 | REVISED |
| 69 | 06/15/21 | REVISED |
| 70 | 07/15/21 | REVISED |
| 71 | 08/15/21 | REVISED |
| 72 | 09/15/21 | REVISED |
| 73 | 10/15/21 | REVISED |
| 74 | 11/15/21 | REVISED |
| 75 | 12/15/21 | REVISED |
| 76 | 01/15/22 | REVISED |
| 77 | 02/15/22 | REVISED |
| 78 | 03/15/22 | REVISED |
| 79 | 04/15/22 | REVISED |
| 80 | 05/15/22 | REVISED |
| 81 | 06/15/22 | REVISED |
| 82 | 07/15/22 | REVISED |
| 83 | 08/15/22 | REVISED |
| 84 | 09/15/22 | REVISED |
| 85 | 10/15/22 | REVISED |
| 86 | 11/15/22 | REVISED |
| 87 | 12/15/22 | REVISED |
| 88 | 01/15/23 | REVISED |
| 89 | 02/15/23 | REVISED |
| 90 | 03/15/23 | REVISED |
| 91 | 04/15/23 | REVISED |
| 92 | 05/15/23 | REVISED |
| 93 | 06/15/23 | REVISED |
| 94 | 07/15/23 | REVISED |
| 95 | 08/15/23 | REVISED |
| 96 | 09/15/23 | REVISED |
| 97 | 10/15/23 | REVISED |
| 98 | 11/15/23 | REVISED |
| 99 | 12/15/23 | REVISED |
| 100 | 01/15/24 | REVISED |



Jones Lang LaSalle Americas, Inc
Project and Development Services
200 E Randolph St. Chicago, IL 60601
tel. 312-228-3750

April 18, 2016

Re: April 27th Variance Board Meeting

Dear Ann Arbor Planning and Zoning Department,

I am writing on behalf of, RAAJ Ann Arbor Owner LLC, owner of The Graduate Hotel located at 615 East Huron.

Attorney, David Reginer is acting as the applicant's agent as we seek permission to appear in front of the zoning board of appeals on April 27th in hope of approval of variance for a monument sign.

All of the supporting documentation is enclosed which references the scope of work and justification for the monument sign.

Thank you in advance for your review and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mabry Kritzer".

Mabry Kritzer, Project Manager and Owners Representative, Jones Lang LaSalle

CC: Brad Braun, Brownie Signs

From: Kathy Duquette
Sent: Thursday, May 19, 2016 8:49 AM
To: Gale, Mia
Subject: ZBA16-014; 615 East Huron Street

We will be out of town on Wednesday, May 25, 2016 for the hearing of the signage variance requested by Brownie Signs, LLC, property located at 615 East Huron Street, ZBA16-014.

We want to voice an objection to granting a variance to allow an 8 foot overall identification sign on the front of the property.

We believe that the building can properly identify itself within the current signage regulations. This block of East Huron Street is not a motel strip. All other building identification signs are mounted on the building (not on the ground), and comply with current signage regulations.

A large sign will be a further distraction on this very busy traffic block which already has many distractions for drivers such as multiple building entrances for cars, and pedestrian traffic crossing mid-block.

Please do not grant the sign variance at the public hearing on Wednesday, May 25, 2016.

Thank you for listening to 615's immediate neighbors. We hope you will consider our objection when making your decision.

Donald N. Duquette
Kathy J. Duquette

505 E. Huron St. 603
Ann Arbor, MI 48104-1541