

Village of Geneseo
Zoning Board of Appeals
Public Hearing For: Sonbyrne Sales, Rep.: Christian Brunelle
Address: McGeneseo LLC, 39 E. South Street
Tax Map ID. # 81.13-2-13.21
October 2, 2012; 4:30 p.m.
Approved: January 08, 2013

Present:

Carolyn Meisel, Chair
Marlene Hamilton
Paul Schmied
Bruce Teall
Thomas Wilson

Code Enforcement Officer:

Ronald Maxwell

Secretary:

Debra Lund

Applicant:

Christian Brunelle, representing Sonbyrne Sales as V.P. of Store Development

Public:

None

Chair C. Meisel opened the meeting and public hearing at 4:30 p.m. Members of the Board were introduced. The applicant is requesting permission to replace an existing 16 square foot canopy sign granted by variance on December 1, 2009 with 75.24 square feet of canopy signage: the proposed signage to be “Byrne Logo” – 27.74 square feet, “Since 1933” – twice- 6.6 square feet total, and “Byrne Dairy Since 1933” band – 40.9 square feet; the requested variance is 59.24 square feet. It was noted proper notice was published and nine notices were sent by certified mail to neighbors within one hundred feet of the property with nine acceptance cards returned. Livingston County Planning Board has returned a response of “no significant Countywide or inter-municipal impact in regard to existing County plans, programs, and activities. Therefore, approval or disapproval of this application is a matter of local option”. Chair C. Meisel invited C. Brunelle to state his case.

Sonbyrne Sales and Byrne Dairy representative C. Brunelle started his presentation by passing out an updated package of the requested sign including photos of the existing sign, rendition of the proposed sign, enlargement of the proposed lettering and logos, and a photo of another Sonbyrne Store (opened June, 2012- a two-story refurbished building) sporting the proposed signage for comparison purposes. An actual portion of signage exactly like the proposed sign (approximately 4’ long x 36” high) was also displayed. C. Brunelle commented he thinks it is an important visual aid for the Board to see what is actually being sought. He feels the new colors and logos are a lot less intrusive than the current white signage and much more pleasing than a Blue Mobile or Yellow Sunoco gas sign. The store is a center point when entering the Village from the east. C. Brunelle asked who would not want a “brick house vs. a

vinyl sided one” comparing the visual effect of the proposed vs. existing canopy sign. The Board agreed the colors were nicer than the stark white.

C. Meisel asked if the reason for white color on the original variance request was due to the gas companies. C. Brunelle responded the company was not as involved with the gas companies as much. He stated the sign is viewed from about 80’ away so needs to be at least the 36” inches high to be visible in time to stop at the store.

P. Schmied noted the December 01, 2009 public hearing granted a sign on only one side of the canopy. C. Meisel asked if only one panel was still being sought. C. Brunelle said this was so. He commented Geneseo has the least amount of allowed signage, most other places allow between 100 and 200 square feet. He would like more square footage than granted with the December 01, 2009 variance to visibly improve the looks of the canopy sign by coloring it to closely match the roof color of the store and to update the logo. The site has been kept up beautifully, clean inside and out, and looks like a much newer store than it actually is but it is struggling with sales. Of the twenty-five stores, it ranks twenty-fifth in sales and he needs to boost sales. Updating the appearance of the store should help. He will keep dipped ice cream all year round as it seems to be a big seller and the store does get a lot of walk-in traffic from the neighborhood. The store is located at a busy traffic location but does not seem to generate the anticipated vehicle traffic.

Chair C. Meisel commented the location would fare better if there were a traffic light at the Center Street- South Street intersection. Several board members agreed a light would help; it was noted many people avoid that intersection as it is hard to enter and exit the main road from the side street.

C. Brunelle stated he had received a favorable recommendation from the Planning Board at their June 27, 2012 meeting for the proposed colors. He noted Secretary D. Lund had faxed him a copy of the Livingston County Planning Board’s response showing the decision would be up to the local board; County Planning did not see an issue with the proposed changes and the letter seemed to be their standard response form.

M. McCarthy, who came before the Board at the September 04, 2012 meeting had computed out the signage request. C. Brunelle was aware the Village has a more stringent manner of calculating the sign’s square footage than many other municipalities. Most calculate the size by the dimensions of the rectangle alone. It is easier to come to Geneseo as the guidelines let him know what is aesthetically pleasing to the Board members and exact colors can be discussed using the Pantone color chart.

T. Wilson asked if the lettering on the tan strip of the canopy sign was necessary as it is basically just ”fine print”. If it could be eliminated, it would greatly reduce the size of the needed variance. C. Meisel asked how much change in the square footage Sonbyrne Sales is requesting. The original variance allowed 116 square foot of total package with 16 square foot allowed for the canopy sign. Sonbyrne Sales, Inc. is asking for an additional 59.24 square feet of canopy signage.

C. Brunelle referred the Board to the piece of signage with exactly reproduced dimensions, print, graphics and color as the proposed replacement sign. He noted the farm graphics incorporated into the Byrne Dairy logo in the green portion of the sign will be 27.74 square feet of the sign and presents a more rural agricultural image than the current white sign.

Although the band is 36” high it will be installed 18’ feet off the ground. The “Since 1933” logo is repeated on the ends of the canopy, each sign being 3.3 square feet for a total of 6.6 square feet. The lettering on the tan strip of the banner is 40.9 square feet and repeats the logo “Byrne Dairy - Since 1933”. He did not ask for any additional signs on the other sides of the canopy. The replacement sign would be on the east side in the space occupied by the existing sign.

T. Wilson asked how much of the signage was taken up by the “fine print” on the tan strip. When looking at the presented package, the tan strip has a “mottled” appearance; the print does not jump out. C. Brunelle noted this was not a problem with the Planning Board. The strip lettering accounted for 40.9 square feet of the total sign package. C. Meisel suggested the printing could be taken off the tan strip and this would get rid of a lot of the requested additional signage. The colored strip does not count as signage only the words do. C. Brunelle responded he would need to go back to the sign designer to see if the verbiage could be eliminated and leave the tan strip. The Board was correct in saying the words were really “fine print” and would not be very visible to someone driving by. If possible, he would consider eliminating it to reduce the requested square footage.

It was noted the strip lettering accounted for approximately eighty percent of the requested package. T. Wilson asked CEO R. Maxwell if the Code did indeed count the lettering on the strip. CEO R. Maxwell responded it absolutely did count. Chair C. Meisel asked if C. Brunelle would like to have the public hearing tabled so he could check on whether the lettering could be removed from the tan strip. C. Brunelle said that would not be necessary, he would go back to the sign designer and see what can be done. T. Wilson stated he would not be willing to grant the variance if the “fine print” could not be removed from the strip. Byrne Dairy would have to continue with the current canopy sign.

M. Hamilton asked if the canopy logo itself is larger than the current one. C. Brunelle said the current canopy signage is 16 square feet; the requested footage is 27.74 square feet plus an additional 6.6 square feet for the “Since 1933” portion for a total square footage of 34.34 square feet without the lettering on the tan strip. If the tan strip lettering is removed 18.34 square feet of variance is needed beyond the originally granted 16 square feet.

P. Schmied asked R. Maxwell what the Code allowed for signage. R. Maxwell responded a total of 100 square feet. With no further discussion, the questions were reviewed.

1. Will an undesirable change be produced in the character of the neighborhood or will a detriment to nearby properties be created by granting the variance? Yes _____ No X
2. Can the benefit sought by the applicant be achieved by some feasible method other than a variance: Yes _____ No X
3. Is the requested variance substantial? Yes X No _____ from 100 to 134 square feet.
4. Will the proposed variance have an adverse effect or impact on the physical or environmental conditions in the neighborhood or district? Yes _____ No X
5. Is the alleged difficulty self-created? Yes X No _____

It was noted this is an area variance and a type two action that does not require a SEQR. C. Meisel stated it was so noted that the proposed action has been considered under SEQR and has met the requirements for a Type II action: the proposed action is not environmentally significant.

P. Schmied moved to grant Sonbyrne Sales, Inc. permission to replace an existing canopy sign granted by a previous 16 square foot variance on December 01, 2009 on property located at

McGeneseo LLC (Byrne Dairy), 39 E. South Street, Tax Map ID# 81.13-2-13.21. Granted is an additional 19 square feet of variance for a canopy sign with colors, lettering, graphics and logos as per the package presented at the October 02, 2012 Zoning Board of Appeals Public Hearing. The lettering from the tan strip along the bottom portion of the sign must be removed as the square footage for said lettering was not granted. T. Wilson seconded the motion. The vote was as follows: Chair C. Meisel, aye; M. Hamilton, aye; P. Schmied, aye; B. Teall, aye; and T. Wilson, aye. The motion carried.

C. Brunelle thanked the Board and exited the meeting. P. Schmied moved to close the public hearing; M. Hamilton seconded the motion. All were in favor and the public hearing closed at 5:08 p. m.

Following review, T. Wilson moved to approve the September 04, 2012 Sonbyrne Sales, Inc. minutes with a second by M. Hamilton. The vote was as follows: Chair C. Meisel, aye; M. Hamilton, aye; P. Schmied, aye; B. Teall, aye; and T. Wilson, aye. The motion carried.

M. Hamilton moved to approve the September 04, 2012 Cyclepath minutes as presented. P. Schmied seconded the motion. The vote was as follows: Chair C. Meisel, aye; M. Hamilton, aye; P. Schmied, aye; B. Teall, aye; and T. Wilson, aye. The motion carried.

P. Schmied moved to close the meeting at 5:10 p.m.; T. Wilson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the meeting closed.

Debra L. Lund
Secretary