



City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

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City Council Meeting Staff Report December 8, 2015

Comprehensive Sign Plan – One39 LLC (139/143 North Liberty Street)

Matchbox Realty and Management Services, Inc. manages the properties at 139 and 143 North Liberty Street; formerly known as the Hess Furniture Store building and parking lot. Both parcels are owned by One39 LLC. The building on site (139 North Liberty Street) is currently being redeveloped as commercial space for multiple tenants, while the adjacent lot (143 North Liberty Street) would be used exclusively as parking for the building. Matchbox desires to install free standing signage on the parking lot parcel advertising the uses located at 139 North Liberty Street. The property is located within the B-1, Central Business District, which requires that all permanent signs be for on premises advertising only.

Section 11-7-6 of the sign regulations applies to signage within the B-1 zoning district. Subsection (9) of that section allows for shopping centers or multiple tenant buildings, on single or multiple parcels of common ownership or managed by a single entity as a unified commercial project, to present a comprehensive sign plan to City Council to allow otherwise non permitted signage to include wall signage advertising a business on walls not occupied by that business and off premises free standing signage for the development.

The Comprehensive Sign Plan request is for the multiple tenant building and adjacent parking lot, where one freestanding sign would advertise the adjacent building and tenants. The sign would be placed behind the property line upon entering the parking lot at 143 North Liberty Street. The proposed signage is meant to direct traffic traveling south on Liberty Street to the businesses located at 139 North Liberty Street, as well as to the available parking for the businesses. The applicant indicates the signage would be contemporarily styled to match that of the updated façade and improvements at 139 North Liberty Street. The sign is shown as nine feet in height with sign area of 32.5 square feet. Allowable free standing signage for the two parcels is 158 square feet.

As stipulated by the regulations, if approved, no free standing signage would be allowed on the property at 139 North Liberty Street; however, building signage advertising the tenants within the building is planned. It is desired to allow all tenants to advertise on any front or side wall of the structure. All building signs would conform to the overall size requirements within the B-1 district.

The submitted plan conforms to the regulations set forth in Section 11-7-6 (9). Staff recommends approval of the One39 LLC Comprehensive Sign Plan as requested to allow one off premises free standing sign and wall signage advertising uses on walls not occupied by that use.