



ZONE CASE 75 OF 2017
February 9th, 2017

Good morning, I am Vivien Li, residing at 611 William Penn Place, Pittsburgh 15219. I am President and CEO of Riverlife, a nonprofit riverfront organization with supporters and donors throughout Pittsburgh and along the riverfronts.

Riverlife strongly oppose the proposed variance requests for the signage at 625 Stanwix Street.

Maintain current requirements: No variance should be granted, as the proponent has not demonstrated hardship. A variance should only be granted when no other design is possible or when there is not the ability to use the property because of unique physical circumstances or conditions. That is not the case here.

Protection of Pittsburgh's scenic beauty from the rivers: Pittsburgh has remarkable architecture and landscape that has national appeal. The overwhelming scale of this particular sign would detract from the visual beauty of the whole of downtown in favor of a focus on the identification of a very specific individual property within it.

Dimensions of proposed sign: Section 919.03.M.7 (c) permits a maximum signage size of 2% of exposed facade area, which if calculated for the entire riverfront facing facade (including the parking structure owned by a different entity) would allow for a sign of 578 Sq. ft. The project proponent is proposing a lettered sign of 2,880 square feet, almost 5x the permitted size.

Moreover, the proposed 2,880 square foot signage calculation does not include the architectural lighting portion of the signage. Architectural horizontal lighting strips are integrated with the text and appear to be an extension of the illuminated text. The horizontal lighting strips do not appear to wrap around the four sides of the building. The horizontal lighting creates a single 2-dimensional billboard that presents 100% of the facade as sign. In actuality, the proposed signage is much greater than 5x the permitted size.

Relationship to other buildings: Sign lettering at 625 Stanwix is proposed to be 20 feet high, significantly larger than all other adjacent buildings in downtown Pittsburgh. To put this in context, as an example, the Highmark building sign has a 10 feet high letter "H" and a 9.5 feet high letter "M", half the height of the lettering proposed at 625 Stanwix.

As proposed, the 20 feet high letters will not only be readable from the riverfront, but as far away as Fineview. It is not clear why this is necessary for this residential building.

Sign animation: The project proponent is requesting approval for sign motion and animation, with changing red, green, blue and white colors for the lettering and the architectural lighting stripes. This is not compatible with any other signage within Pittsburgh's Golden Triangle, and it is not clear why an animated billboard-sized sign is needed for this residential building.

Thank you for your consideration.