



## **CITY OF RACINE DEPARTMENT OF CITY DEVELOPMENT STAFF REPORT**

**Meeting Date:** 4/10/2019

**To:** Mayor and Plan Commission Members

**From:** City Development Department, Division of Planning and Redevelopment

**Division Manager:** Matt Sadowski – (262) 636-9152 [matthew.sadowski@cityofracine.org](mailto:matthew.sadowski@cityofracine.org)

**Case Manager:** Jeff Hintz

**Location:** 2219 Washington Avenue, located on the southwest corner of Washington Avenue and Taylor Avenue.

**Applicant:** Michael's Signs

**Property Owner:** CIRCA ON SEVENTH LLC

**Request:** Consideration of a minor amendment to an existing conditional use permit to update and reface signage on an Office/Institutional Zone District with a Flex Development Overlay as allowed by Sec. 114-155 of the Municipal Code.

**BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY:** The applicant seeks to reface and update the signage at the property by re-facing and updating the existing monument signage with a roughly 16.5 square foot sign, to replace a changeable copy sign located near the center of the lot along the Washington Avenue side. The project also contemplates changing the signage located near the intersection of Washington and Taylor Avenue with a 20 square foot sign, replacing a changeable copy sign. Both signs would be externally illuminated as required by the zone district and comply with all zoning requirements.

The Zoning Ordinance classifies this proposed project as a minor amendment to an existing conditional use permit (114-155) upon approval from the Plan Commission. The contemplated changes do not change the concept or intent of the development.



Birdseye view of the property, indicated in red, signage location indicated by purple ovals (image from City Pictometry).

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**Parcel Number:** [09764000](#)

**Property Size:** 2.066 acres

**Comprehensive Plan Map Designation:** Governmental and Institutional

**Consistency with Adopted Plans:**

The [Racine Comprehensive Plan](#) states that:

- Continue to administer architectural design guidelines that preserve the aesthetics that contribute to the City's character.
- One of the goals of the comprehensive plan is to achieve a community that is aesthetically pleasing and efficient while promoting a sustainable land use pattern that meets the social, economic, physical, ecological, and quality-of-life needs of the City, maintaining a sense of place in urban areas.

**Corridor or Special Design District?:** N/A

**Historic?:** On the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as the [George Murray House](#). The historical information on the significance of the property indicates there is both architectural and historical significance to the property. The narrative from a reconnaissance survey is below.

“One of the finest and most costly residences to be built in the Racine area in the 19th century, this cream brick Italianate house was designed by a Mr. Blythe of Cleveland, and its construction supervised by the local architect-builder, Lucas Bradley. Its cost in 1874 was \$30,000! In the early 1950's its porch was removed and replaced by an enclosed passageway from the church. Other minor alterations occurred at the time; however, the general integrity of the house has not been compromised, and George Murray's magnificent house in the historic Slausondale subdivision stands today very much as it was built in 1874-5.”

**Current Zoning District:** O/I Office/Institutional with Flex Development Overlay

**Purpose of Zone District:** The O-I office/institutional district is designed primarily to accommodate office buildings, civic and governmental structures, and educational and institutional buildings in a mutually compatible environment. Compatible apartment structures may be allowed by conditional use permit.

**Proposed Zoning:** No change proposed

**Existing Land Use:** Catering, event, banquet and lodging facility.

**Surrounding Zoning and Land Uses:**

<b>North</b>	R-4 General Residence	Multi-unit residential building
<b>East</b>	R-3 Limited General Residence	Single unit detached dwellings
<b>South</b>	R-3 Limited General Residence	Single unit detached dwellings
<b>West</b>	R-3 Limited General Residence	Single unit detached dwellings

**Operations:** changes in operations are not contemplated with this request.

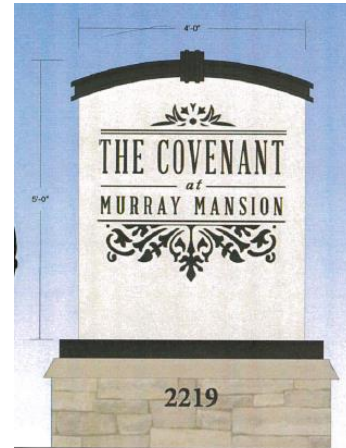
**ANALYSIS:**

Development Standards:

**Sign Regulations** (114-[Article X](#)): The proposed signage is shown at the top of the next page. This zone district allows for a maximum of 60 square feet and the proposed signage is 36.6 square feet. The signage also complies with the requirement for this zone district that signage be externally illuminated.



*Proposed monument signage*



*Proposed signage (NE portion of site)*

**Outdoor lighting, signs ([114-Sec. 742](#)):** The proposal to externally illuminate the signage is in compliance with the requirements of the sign portion of the ordinance as well as this section of the ordinance. The lights do need to be focused onto the signage to avoid disturbance of other properties, but this will be fine-tuned and achieved during the installation process.

## REQUIRED FINDINGS OF FACT:

CONDITIONAL USE FINDINGS (Sec. 114-154. – Standards.)

No Conditional Use shall be recommended by the Plan Commission unless it is found that:

- 1) **The establishment, maintenance, or operation of the conditional use will not be detrimental to, or endanger, the public health, safety, morals, comfort, or general welfare.**

Staff Comments: The updating of the signage is not anticipated to have any impact on the operational aspects of the property or alter the original intent of the development. This signage proposal is complimentary to the historic nature of the site and is not expected to be a detriment or endanger the public safety, morals or general welfare.

- 2) **The conditional use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted, nor substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood.**

Staff Comments: The proposed signage complies with all development standards outlined in the Municipal Code. The overall design concept for the signage is aesthetically congruent with the nature of the site. The proposed signage is not expected to impair or diminish property values, but

may show others that investment in the area is warranted and wise, spurring others to invest in maintenance, and enhanced investment.

- 3) The establishment of the conditional use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.**

Staff Comments: The changes contemplated with this minor amendment are not anticipated to impede or impact the ability for normal and orderly development of the area. The signage is complimentary to the site and in no way impacts the land use classification or operational aspects of the business enterprise on the site.

- 4) Adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and/or necessary facilities have been or are being provided.**

Staff Comments: The site plan submitted by the applicant does not propose any changes to the access, utilities or drainage for the site. The signage being updated in the current locations are not expected to impact the provision of utilities for the property or general area.

- 5) Adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide ingress and egress so designated as to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets.**

Staff Comments: Access is not contemplated to change as a result of this proposal. The site plan submitted by the applicant indicates the signage will remain in the existing locations. The proposed style, design and locations of the signage will not impact the safe flow of traffic past the site and ingress and egress to the site.

- 6) The proposed conditional use is not contrary to the objectives of the current land use plan for the city.**

Staff Comments: Operational aspects of the site will not change as a result of this proposed amendment. The overall concept and intent of the development will remain as previously approved; the signage contemplated in the proposal is not contrary to the objectives of the land use plan.

- 7) The conditional use shall, in all other respects, conform to the applicable regulations of the district in which it is located, except as such regulations may, in each instance, be modified pursuant to the recommendations of the plan commission.**

Staff Comments: The signage is in conformance with all development regulations and requirements. The signage is of a style and character which compliments the overall historic designation of the property. No exceptions are needed for this proposal.



## **POSSIBLE ACTIONS FOR THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

1. Approve the request as submitted; or
2. Approve the request with conditions deemed necessary to mitigate any adverse impacts that could arise from the project; or
3. Deny the request; or
4. Defer the request to obtain more specific information about the request.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT IN THIS REPORT, THAT THE REQUEST FROM MICHAEL'S SIGNS, SEEKING A MINOR AMENDMENT TO AN EXISTING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO UPDATE AND REFACE SIGNAGE AT 2219 WASHINGTON AVENUE BE APPROVED, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

- a) That the plans presented to the Plan Commission on April 10, 2019 be approved subject to the conditions contained herein.
- b) That all codes and ordinances are complied with and required permits acquired.
- c) That no minor changes be made from the conditions of this permit without approval of the Plan Commission, and no major changes be made from the conditions of this permit without the approval of the Common Council.
- d) That this conditional use permit is subject to Plan Commission review for compliance with the listed conditions.

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

- 1) Property owner notification map indicating the subject property;
- 2) Aerial Photo indicating the subject property;
- 3) Zoning Map indicating the subject property;
- 4) Land Use Map from Comprehensive Plan, indicating the subject property;
- 5) Site photos of the property and general area; and
- 6) Submittal documents ([click to view](#)).



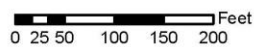
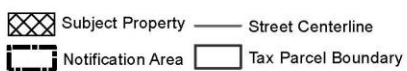
## Minor Amendment Request - 2219 Wahington Avenue







## Minor Amendment Request - 2219 Washington Avenue





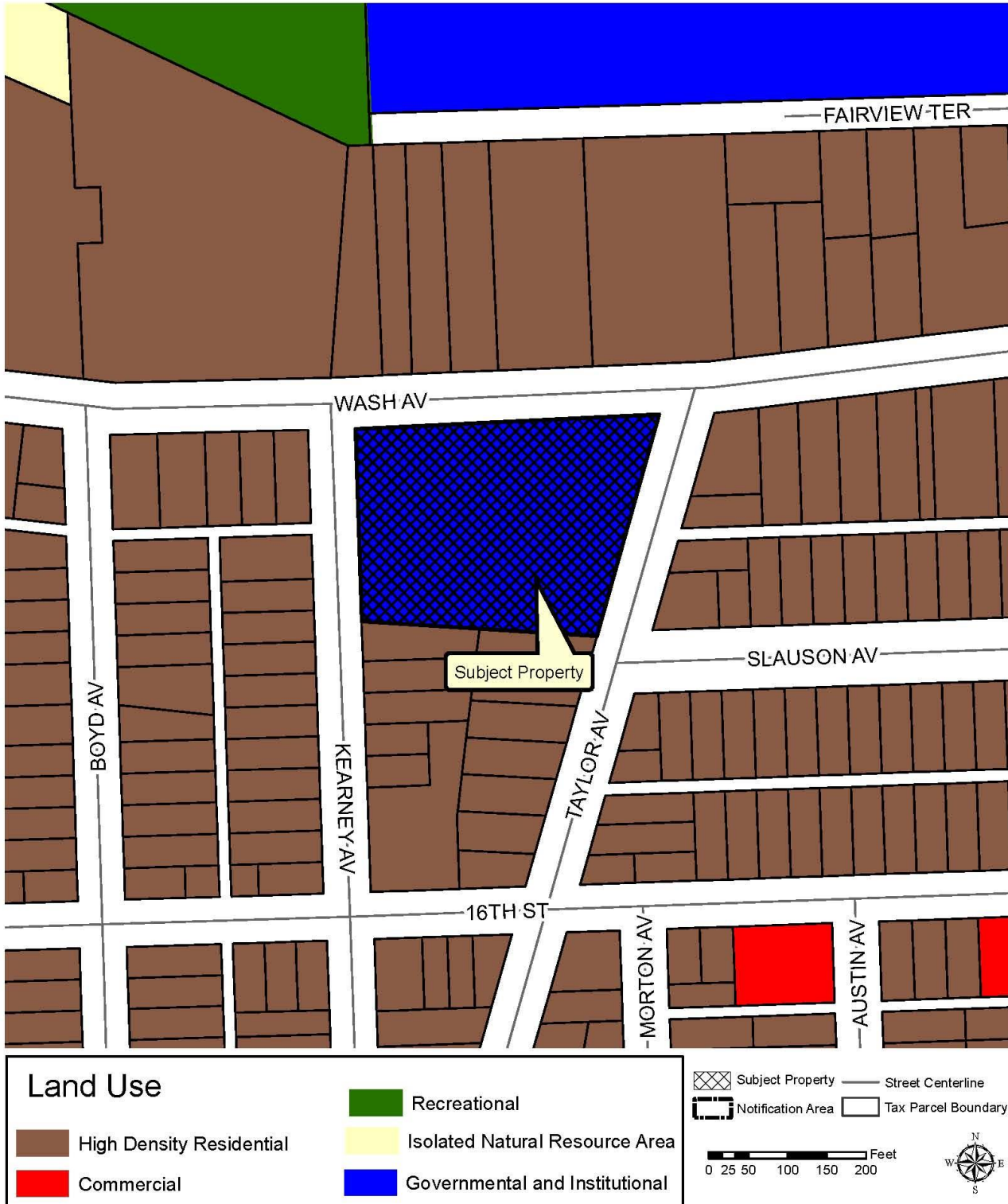


## Minor Amendment Request - 2219 Wahington Avenue





## Minor Amendment Request - 2219 Washington Avenue





## Site Photos



Looking east at site from Kearney Avenue



Looking southeast at the site from Kearney Avenue



Looking east along Washington Avenue



Looking southwest at site from Taylor Avenue



Looking south along Taylor Avenue



Looking west along Washington Avenue from subject property