

23 August 2004

Board of Zoning Appeals  
Coleman A. Young Municipal Center  
Two Woodward Ave. – Suite 212  
Detroit, MI 48226

Dear Board of Zoning Appeals Members:

Cityscape Detroit is formally requesting that all of the Petitions to be heard on Tuesday 24 August 2004 by the Board of Zoning Appeals by US Advertising Inc. be denied. These requests in no way conform to the Official Zoning Ordinance of the City of Detroit, and the petitioner is requesting variances that are far beyond what have been allowable through the BZA process.

The petitioner will not be able to provide sufficient reason as to why Section 130.0222 should be violated, especially by signs that greatly exceed the maximum square footage permitted for advertising signs. These large of signs would have a terrible impact upon the urban fabric within core of the City of Detroit, which Section 130.0222 is trying to protect. If these petitions are permitted, this section of the ordinance would in effect become null and void. Other sign companies would inevitably request variances as well. Due to the changes brought about by casino gaming, this downtown core would be flooded with advertising for these three businesses.

Request to approve these signs under a hardship would not be permissible either. Any hardship arguments can not be granted to the sign company that is requesting permission to affix signs to buildings. Only the building owners would be able to claim an economic hardship, not the sign companies.

Request for Use Variances must fulfill all three requirements found under Section 62.0403, and in all instances, the buildings are occupied structures with their own revenue streams. The property owners are not in a plight situation. New signage approved in the downtown core will have a detrimental affect upon the urban character and quality of the district, and authorizing this grossly over scaled signage will significantly alter the essential character of the downtown district. Currently, this core district is not over whelmed by large-scale commercial signage. Approval of theses signs will alter the downtown's character drastically.

Cityscape Detroit is an organization that advocates for improving Detroit's quality of life through exceptional architecture, urban planning, urban design, and historic preservation.

Again, we strongly urge the Board of Zoning Appeals to deny the petitions of US Advertising Inc. Their requests clearly violate not only the letter but the intent of the Detroit Zoning Ordinance.

Sincerely yours,

Arthur F. Mullen  
President