

**CITY OF SAINT PAUL**      **Deadline for Action:** December 12, 2021  
**BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS RESOLUTION**  
**ZONING FILE NUMBER: 21-313398**  
**DATE: November 15, 2021**

WHEREAS, Tumble Fresh (Steve Linn) has applied for a variance from the strict application of the provisions of Section 64.503 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code pertaining to the requirement that dynamic display signs be monochromatic. The applicant is proposing a full-color dynamic display to be installed on a freestanding sign in the T2 zoning district at 1855 Suburban Avenue PIN: 352922330016; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Board of Zoning Appeals conducted a public hearing on November 15, 2021 pursuant to said application in accordance with the requirements of Section 61.601 of the Legislative Code; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Board of Zoning Appeals based upon evidence presented at the public hearing, as substantially reflected in the minutes, made the following findings of fact:

1. *The variance is in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the zoning code.*

The T2 traditional neighborhood district is designed for use in existing or potential pedestrian and transit nodes. Its intent is to foster and support compact, pedestrian-oriented commercial and residential development that, in turn, can support and increase transit usage.

The applicant is proposing to install a full-color dynamic display panel on a freestanding sign on this property. The T2 zoning district has specific standards for dynamic display signs: they must be monochromatic and shall not change their displays faster than every 20 minutes. The applicant is proposing to install a full-color dynamic display. This request aligns with Section 64.101 of the sign code to protect the right of information transmittal.

This request conforms to the provisions of Section 64.207, the findings necessary for sign variances, as follows:

- a. The variance is due to unusual conditions pertaining to sign needs for a specific building or lot.***

This Tumble Fresh laundromat location is a new development, and it is important to provide signage that is clear and readable from the roadways while blending with the existing signage in the neighborhood in relation to size and clarity. **This finding is met.**

***b. The sign would not create a hazard.***

The sign would be professionally designed and installed. In addition, the applicant is proposing to comply with the 20-minute display frequency and would not change the message or image faster than this time period. It would not create a hazard. **This finding is met.**

***c. The sign would not be objectionable to adjacent property owners.***

No objections to this request have been raised from adjacent property owners. **This finding is met.**

***d. The sign would not adversely affect residential property through excessive glare and lighting.***

This property is not adjacent to residential properties. The applicant indicated that the sign will be on a dimmer switch, so the brightness can be adjusted. **This finding is met.**

***e. The sign is in keeping with the general character of the surrounding area.***

There are several buildings with identification signs nearby and the proposed freestanding sign and display would match the scale of the building. **This finding is met.**

**This finding is met.**

2. *The variance is consistent with the comprehensive plan.*

The proposed full-color dynamic display sign would provide greater visibility for a new laundromat. This request is in keeping with the goals of the comprehensive plan policy LU-6 to facilitate business creation, attraction, retention, and expansion. **This finding is met.**

3. *The applicant has established that there are practical difficulties in complying with the provision, that the property owner proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner not permitted by the provision. Economic considerations alone do not constitute practical difficulties.*

The applicant runs a chain of laundromat locations and has graphics that are utilized for many stores. They state that it would be a large cost to re-create this content for a monochromatic display. The applicant also states that full-color images will be easier especially during the winter months at night. **This finding is met.**

4. *The plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner.*

This is a new development, and a monochromatic dynamic display could be installed by the applicant. The plight of the landowner is due to a circumstance they created, as there is nothing particularly unique about this parcel that warrants permitting a full-color dynamic display. **This finding is not met.**

5. *The variance will not permit any use that is not allowed in the zoning district where the affected land is located.*

Dynamic display signs are permitted in the T2 zoning district. Granting this variance would not permit a use that is not allowed. **This finding is met**

6. *The variance will not alter the essential character of the surrounding area.*

There are multiple business signs fronting Suburban Avenue. Granting this variance would not alter the essential character of the surrounding area. **This finding is met.**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Saint Paul Board of Zoning Appeals that the request to waive the provisions of Section 64.503 to allow the installation of a full-color freestanding dynamic display on property located at 1855 Suburban Avenue PIN: 352922330016; and legally described as Registered Land Survey 276 Subj To Rds; That Pt Of Tract C Lying Wly Of A L Desc As Comm At Sw Cor Sd Tract C Th N Along W L Of Sd Tract C 40 Ft Th Ely Para To S L Of Sd Tract C 223.13 Ft To Pob Th N 0 Deg 32 Min 40 Sec W 395.42 Ft To The N L Of Sd Tract; in accordance with the application for variance and the site plan on file with the Zoning Administrator, **IS HEREBY DENIED.**

**MOVED BY:** Trout-Oertel  
**SECONDED BY:** Porter  
**IN FAVOR:** 4  
**AGAINST:** 0

**MAILED: November 16, 2021**

**TIME LIMIT:** No decision of the zoning or planning administrator, planning commission, board of zoning appeals or city council approving a site plan, permit, variance, or other zoning approval shall be valid for a period longer than two (2) years, unless a building permit is obtained within such period and the erection or alteration of a building is proceeding under the terms of the decision, or the use is established within such period by actual operation pursuant to the applicable conditions and requirements of the approval, unless the zoning or planning administrator grants an extension not to exceed one (1) year.

**APPEAL:** Decisions of the Board of Zoning Appeals are final subject to appeal to the City Council within 10 days by anyone affected by the decision. Building permits shall not be issued after an appeal has been filed. If permits have been issued before an appeal has been filed, then the permits are suspended and construction shall cease until the City Council has made a final determination of the appeal.

**CERTIFICATION:** I, the undersigned Secretary to the Board of Zoning Appeals for the City of Saint Paul, Minnesota, do hereby certify that I have compared the foregoing copy with the original record in my office; and find the same to be a true and correct copy of said original and of the whole thereof, as based on approved minutes of the Saint Paul Board of Zoning Appeals meeting held on November 15, 2021 and on record in the Department of Safety and Inspections, 375 Jackson Street, Saint Paul, Minnesota.

**SAINT PAUL BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS**

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**Maxine Linston  
Secretary to the Board**