

Black Bear Diner

9.10.2025

5005 Commercial St. SE

Salem, OR 97306

Written Statement - Class 2 Adjustment

The sign code is to “improve the neat, clean, orderly, and attractive appearance of the community...”; our proposal does this. The proposed improvements are appropriate for the development and complement the surrounding landscaping, ensuring consistency with the overall site character.

In this proposal, there are 2 sets of bear statues. The first is a family of three separate bears while the other is a single bear that stands 10’ tall. I am not sure if the 4 bear statues constitutes 1 or 4 adjustments, but I wanted to make sure we are all on the same page. In the application, I filled in that we are requesting 4, as the instructions on the portal did not articulate this issue.

Our bear statues are hand carved from Ponderosa Pine trees. Two of the bears are 5’ tall and the smaller one is 3’ tall. As you can see from the site map, the family of 3 bears is towards the back of the building. They are not visible from the street during business hours as the cars in the parking lot, the raised retaining wall, and their location in the landscaping island block them from being seen. Local code defines signs as “any structure, board, poster, placard, or device that is intended to attract the attention of the public.” Our contention here is that if they can’t be seen from the road, then by definition, they can’t be signs.

Our “Welcome Bear “ stands 10’ tall, has an average diameter of 20” to 30” and holds a 2’ tall X 6’ long sign that reads “Welcome”. There is no contention here. We recognize that we want people driving by to see the statue. We think the property should be adjusted to accommodate the statue. The property is a corner lot surrounded by 3 streets: Boone Rd. SE, Commercial St SE, and Kuebler Blvd.

The purpose of the sign code is also to improve the effectiveness of signs in identifying and advertising businesses as well as to improve the neat, clean, orderly, and attractive appearance of the community. Our bear statues do all of those things. They are classy, look great, and the community loves them. The city and community all around will benefit

from the statues as they help to bring in tax revenue as well as bring the property to life that all will love and enjoy.