

**Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division Report**

Variance Request  
BZZ-3916

**Date:** February 7, 2008

**Applicant:** John Meldahl

**Address of Property:** 822 West Lake Street

**Contact Person and Phone:** John Meldahl, 612-374-1538

**Planning Staff and Phone:** Molly McCartney, 612-673-5811

**Date Application Deemed Complete:** January 7, 2008

**Publication Date:** February 1, 2008

**Hearing Date:** February 7, 2008

**Appeal Period Expiration:** February 19, 2008

**End of 60 Day Decision Period:** March 8, 2008

**Ward:** 10      **Neighborhood Organization:** Lowry Hill East (also adjacent to CARAG)

**Existing Zoning:** C2 Neighborhood Corridor Commercial District, PO Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District.

**Proposed Use:** Establish new coffee shop/restaurant in existing retail space

**Proposed Variance:** A variance to decrease the required parking from 8 spaces to 0 spaces for a coffee shop/restaurant at 822 West Lake Street in the C2 Neighborhood Corridor Community District and PO Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District.

**Zoning code section authorizing the requested variance:** 525.520 (7)

**Background:** The subject property is a commercial two-story building at West Lake Street and Bryant Avenue South. The building current has a two first floor tenants, the Bryant Lake Bowl (restaurant and bowling alley) and a video store. The proposed parking variance is to divide the video store space into two establishments and add a new coffee shop/restaurant while retaining the video store

The site currently has 22 parking spaces located in a parking lot to the north of the building. These parking spaces contribute to the off-street parking requirement of Bryant Lake Bowl and the video store.

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The applicants are requesting a parking variance to eliminate the parking for the proposed coffee shop/restaurant.

The site is also served by transit and pedestrian activity. There is midday bus service along Lake Street (#21, 53) as well as Bryant and Lyndale Avenue (#4, 113/115) and the site is served with pedestrian activity from nearby multi-family and commercial neighborhoods. The site is also in a PO Pedestrian Oriented Overly District which places limits on off-street parking requirements and encourage pedestrian character of commercial areas. The applicants are proposing to add twelve (12) new bike racks.

### Findings Required by the Minneapolis Zoning Code:

- 1. The property cannot be put to a reasonable use under the conditions allowed by the official controls and strict adherence to the regulations of this zoning ordinance would cause undue hardship.**

Strict adherence to the zoning code prevents the proposed internal expansion for the commercial spaces. The off-street parking can not be added to the site for the coffee shop/restaurant because there is no additional space on the lot for parking. The proposed expansion is a reasonable uses of the property.

- 2. The circumstances are unique to the parcel of land for which the variance is sought and have not been created by any persons presently having an interest in the property. Economic considerations alone shall not constitute an undue hardship if reasonable use for the property exists under the terms of the ordinance.**

The parking variance to allow the new coffee shop/restaurant is required because of the expansion of the coffee shop has a higher parking requirement than the previous retail space. The building was constructed prior to the off-street parking requirements in the zoning code. The property is unique in that it is an older multi-tenant building without the sufficient parking to meet the current parking requirement. This is not a circumstance created by the applicant.

- 3. The granting of the variance will be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance and will not alter the essential character of the locality or be injurious to the use or enjoyment of other property in the vicinity.**

Granting the variance will be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance. The expansion is internal to the establishment and the building footprint will not expand. Metro Transit routes run on West Lake Street, as well as Bryant and Lyndale Avenues. The site is surrounded by high density uses, such as multi-family apartments which provide pedestrian activity near the site. The applicant is proposing to add additional bike parking to allow more patrons to arrive by bicycle.

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- 4. The proposed variance will not substantially increase the congestion of the public streets, or increase the danger of fire, or be detrimental to the public welfare or endanger the public safety.**

The parking variance will have little impact on congestion of area streets or fire safety, nor would the parking variance be detrimental to the public welfare or endanger the public safety.

### **Recommendation of the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development Planning Division:**

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development Planning Division recommends that the Board of Adjustment adopt the findings above and **approve** the variance to decrease the required parking from 8 spaces to 0 spaces for a coffee shop/restaurant at 822 West Lake Street in the C2 Neighborhood Corridor Community District and PO Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District, subject to the following conditions:

1. CPED-Planning review and approve final site plans, floor plans and elevations.