

Sign Code Variance Application for Public Hearing

Before the CDC / Design Review Commission



CDC Cal. No.

Fee Paid

Received by

Date

YOU MUST PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: IF ADDITIONAL SPACE IS NEEDED, ATTACH EXTRA PAGES TO THE PETITION.

Address/Location of Property in Question: 149 Forest Avenue, Oak Park, IL 60301

Name of Business in Question: Kribi Coffee Air Roastery

Property Identification Number(s)(PIN): _____

Name of Property Owner(s): Jacques Shalo

Address of Property Owner(s): 536 N Oak Park Ave, Oak Park, IL 60302

Name of Applicant(s): Juan Munoz

Applicant's Address: 303 N Marion St, Oak Park, IL 60302

Applicant's Phone Number: Office 507-440-0500 E-Mail juan.a.munoz10@gmail.com

Other: _____

Project Contact: (if Different than Applicant) _____

Contact's Address: _____

Contact's Phone Number: Office _____ E-Mail _____

Other: _____

Property Interest of Applicant: _____ Owner _____ Legal Representative _____ Contract Purchaser ☒ Other

(Describe Other): Investor & Representative on DTOP Board of Directors

Existing Zoning: _____ Sign Overlay District: _____

Type of Sign: ☐ Wall ☒ Window ☐ Free Standing ☒ A-Frame ☐ Banner
☐ Ground ☐ Projecting ☐ Awning or Canopy ☐ Other _____

The Applicant seeks a variance from the following requirement(s) of the Oak Park Sign Code:

Chapter 7, Article 7, Section(s): Section 7-7-13-B-1-D, Section 7-7-13-B-1-E and Section 7-7-15 C-1

Describe request: We are requesting a variance for three code violations. Please see the attached Variance

Justification letter.

Is the property in question currently in violation of the Zoning Ordinance? ☒ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, how? 2 A-frame signs, 1 not within 15 feet of the primary business entrance. Window signage exceeds 25% of total window area

Is the property in question presently subject to a Special Use or Planned Development? ☒ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, how? With Special Service Area #1 (SSA1)

If Yes, please provide Ordinance No.'s Ordinance 1973-O-87, reaffirmed by ordinances 1987-O-97 and 2007-O-62

Is the subject property located within any Historic District? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If Yes, which district: ☐ Frank Lloyd Wright ☐ Ridgeland/Oak Park ☐ Gunderson

Is the subject property located within any of the following Zoning Overlay Districts:

☐ Transit-Related Retail ☐ Perimeter ☐ Madison Street ☐ Roosevelt Road ☐ Marion Street
☒ Lake Street ☐ N/A

I (we) certify that all the above statements and the statements contained in any papers or plans submitted herewith are true to the best of my (our) knowledge and belief.

I (we) consent to the entry in or upon the premises described in this application by any authorized official of the Village of Oak Park for the purpose of securing information, posting, maintaining and removing such notices as may be required by law. Owner's signature must be notarized.

[Signature]
(Signature) Applicant

07/17/2025

Date

[Signature]
(Signature) Owner

07/17/2025
Date

Owner's Signature must be notarized

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO BEFORE ME THIS

17th DAY OF July, 2025



[Signature]
(Notary Public)

July 18, 2025

Dear Mr. Bruce

Kribi Coffee is requesting a variance for three code violations:

1. The use of two A-frame signs (instead of the one allowed under Section 7-7-13 Temporary Signs B(1)(d));
2. Placement of one A-frame more than 15 feet from our primary entrance (Section 7-7-13 B(1)(e)).
3. Permanent window signage exceeding the 25% are limit (Section 7-7-15 C-1)

Kribi Coffee operates at 149 Forest Avenue, located in a low-pedestrian side street off the main Lake Street corridor. Our storefront lacks visibility to the public walking along Lake Street, which serves as a commercial spine for Downtown Oak Park. To address this, we place:

- One A-frame sign directly in front of our Forest Avenue entrance, and
- A second A-frame sign at the Lake Street corner entrance of the Albion residential building.

This entrance serves as the primary lobby and offers the most available seating for patrons.

This second sign is essential for guiding pedestrian traffic from Lake Street into our business. Without it, we lose visibility and walk-in opportunity. These are challenges that previously impacted Dollop Coffee, a prominent Chicago brand that vacated the space before their lease ended. Our presence revitalizes the location to increase foot traffic and economic activity in this pocket of the district.

We also request a variance for our window signage, which currently exceeds the 25% maximum coverage. The signage helps with brand visibility, wayfinding, and communicating key offerings. It is professionally designed to maintain visual harmony with the building's architecture and to enhance, not distract from, the streetscape.

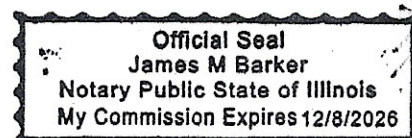
Importantly, Kribi Coffee is located within Special Service Area #1 (SSA 1), a special taxing district established by Village Ordinance 1973-0-87 (December 17, 1973) to support marketing, business attraction, and pedestrian activity in Downtown Oak Park. The placement of both the A-frame signs and the window signage directly supports the goals of SSA1 by increasing public engagement in a low-traffic part of the district. This signage strategy also has the full support of the Executive Director of Downtown Oak Park (DTOP), who recognizes the need for visibility improvements in this area. We believe the requested variances serve the public interest by contributing to placemaking, promoting economic vitality, and aligning with the long-term vision of SSA1 and the Village of Oak Park.

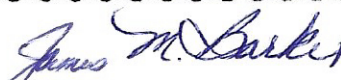
Sincerely,



Jacques Shalo
CEO & Co-Founder

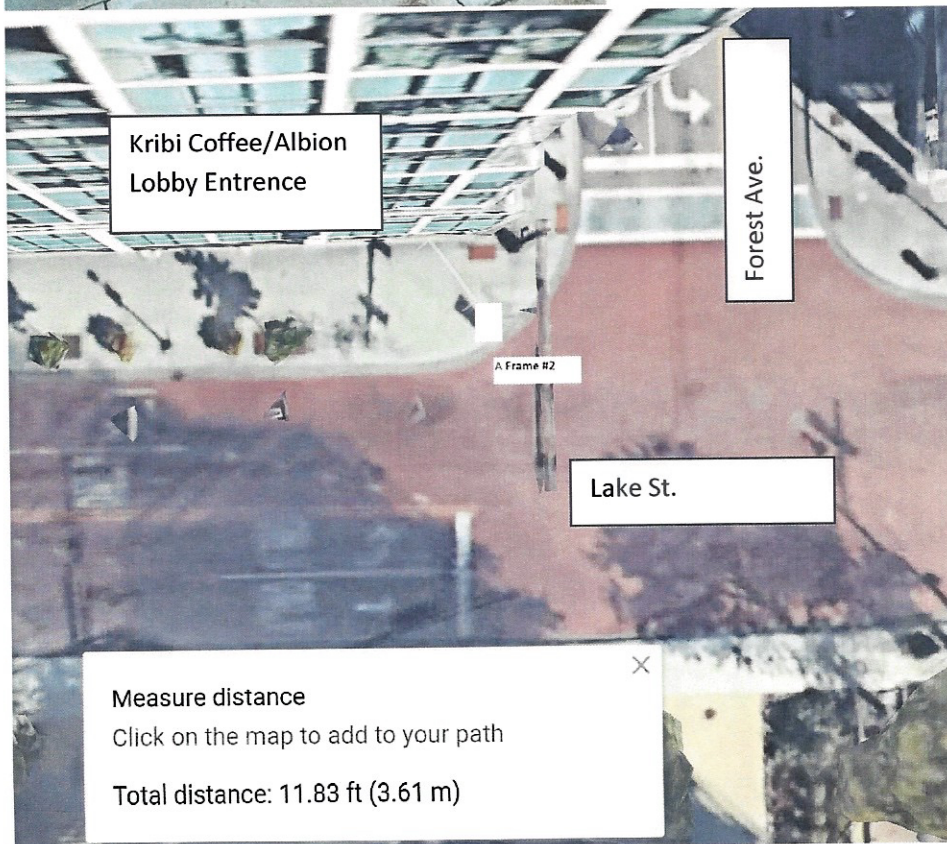
Juan Munoz
Shareholder





Corporate HQ	Albion Cafe	Buzz Cafe	Crossfunction Cafe	Forest Park Cafe	Wholesale Roasting Hub
708 288 9545	708 613 5094	708 524 2899	708 434 0314	708 689 8896	630 501 0913
536 N. Oak Park Ave	149 Forest Ave.	905 S Lombard Ave.	1033 South Blvd,	7324 Madison St.	770 N. Church Rd., Ste. E
Oak Park, IL 60302	Oak Park, IL 60301	Oak Park, IL 60304	Oak Park, IL 60302	Forest Park, IL 60130	Elmhurst, IL 60126









Sign Code Variance Application Checklist and Guidelines

This is a general checklist. Other items of information pertaining to your case may be deemed necessary by the Community Design Commission or Zoning Administrator at any time during the processing of hearing of this case. Applications will not be accepted for processing until all of the submittal items are received by the Zoning Administrator. Please review the attached section 7-7-5 Sign Code.

Y All submittals, excluding the application and fee, must be tabbed and labeled with an Exhibit Number and presented in a folder.

Y **Sixteen (16) preliminary** complete and collated packets must be submitted for a staff review and approved prior to being scheduled for a public hearing before the Community Design Commission as the Design Review Commission. **Fourteen (14) final** complete (including any required revisions) packets shall be submitted for the public hearing process. The packet shall consist of the following documents which shall be drawn to scale:

- Drawings which shall include plans, elevations, plat of survey and site plan
- Landscape and screening plans (when appropriate)
- Renderings and specifications of sign(s)
- A statement as to kind, color, and texture of materials

Y Application Fee [\$200.00]

The general application process and hearing timeline is established by the Community Design Commission Secretary with the following guidelines. Please note that special conditions such as holidays or case load of the CDC may affect the exact schedule.

Upon receipt of the *preliminary* completed application packets a meeting will be scheduled with the Project Review Team [PRT], a staff group consisting of various representatives from a variety of disciplines, to review the variation request. The PRT meetings are generally held on the first and third Mondays of each month. Feedback from that meeting will be forwarded in writing to the applicant for their consideration and use in preparing the final application packets. Provided the PRT determines no need to revise the application information, the case will be scheduled for the next available public hearing before the Community Design Commission upon receipt of the *final* set of application packets.

The Community Design Commission meets each second Monday of each month. All information must be complete and submitted at least two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting date in order to be placed on the CDC agenda. Incomplete applications will be returned without processing.

If after reviewing this information, the application or sign regulations, you have additional questions about this process, please contact Michael Bruce, Zoning Administrator at 708/358-5449 or by email at bruce@oak-park.us.

Sign Variance Standards

After hearing and considering the materials presented, the Zoning Board of Appeals shall grant a variance if it finds that:

1. The applicant's plans are substantially consistent with the design criteria of this Code.

Our plans were developed to align with the Village's design criteria: the graphics are scaled to the three window bays, use restrained colors, minimal text, and no exposed light source; and the materials/lettering integrate with the storefront architecture. The images also serve as a privacy screen of a conference room for 2 of the windows. Overall, the signs maintain good proportion and read as an integral part of the building design.

2. The proposed exterior design features of the sign are suitable and compatible with the character of neighboring buildings and structures existing or under construction and with the character of the neighborhood and the applicable zoning district, and enhance the environment of the Village.

We coordinated with the building's original design firm to ensure the graphics complement existing storefronts and materials in the district. The composition keeps text to a minimum and emphasizes brand identity through simple, high-quality imagery.

The Albion is a high-rise building, and Kribi Coffee is the only retail storefront along its east-facing side. We are also the only retail/sales-producing business along that portion of Forest Park Avenue, serving nearby residents as well as those visiting Austin Gardens. In this context, our signage is proportionate to the building's size and provides needed visibility in a low-traffic location, without intruding on residents' enjoyment of the area or the park.

3. The exterior design features of the sign will not be detrimental to the harmonious and orderly growth of the Village.

The non-illuminated window graphics avoid glare or spillover light, maintain sidewalk sightlines, and are consistent with a high-quality retail corridor.

This stretch of Forest Park Avenue has historically struggled to support retail tenants; the prior coffee shop was not successful. By providing appropriately scaled signage in a low-traffic area, our design supports business viability while remaining minimally intrusive to the surrounding neighborhood.

4. The exterior design features of the sign will not cause a substantial depreciation in the property values in the neighborhood.

The professional, cohesive storefront treatment enhances curb appeal and signals ongoing investment in the corridor. Rather, we expect the strengthened retail presence to provide a community amenity and contribute positively to property values.