

# ARCADIA CENTRAL

Newsletter of the Arcadia Camelback Neighborhood Association

March 2024

## Digital Sign Litigation Resolved

In the spring of 2021, Bootz and Duke Sign Company secured a contract with The Camelback Church of Christ to build and install a digital sign along Camelback Road. Like many digital advertising installations, the goal of Bootz and Duke was to expand the allowance from a static message board to a Permit-Issued digital board providing the ability to flash multiple advertisements in rotations of 8-seconds each. The bright lights from digital billboards can be disruptive to nearby residents as well as distracting to passing motorists.

Always vigilant for potential threats to our neighborhood's quality of life, ACMNA took action when this item showed up on the City Planning calendar. Our first meetings did not go well as the sign company treated this zoning review not as a hearing but a formality. Much to their surprise, The Arcadia community responded in uproar and used the Arcadia Camelback Special Planning Districts Guidance as a rationale to deny the request and preserve the modest, low-light corridor for residents and motorists. Bootz and Duke then took the case to an appeal at the Board of Adjustment (BOA). The quasi-judicial hearing was like no other, with board members empathizing with the religious nature of the request, and surfing the internet mid-trial to do research, then making a case that this should be approved. ACMNA's rights for a fair trial had been stripped and the sign was now approved with the 8-second rotations allowed.

ACMNA relies on donations, and as such takes our fiscal responsibility to our community seriously—we know that engaging legal counsel is costly. However, fearing this digital allowance would result in additional digital board conversions, your ACMNA board decided this case was important enough to take to Superior Court. We also felt that the actions taken by the BOA led to an unfair trial. To keep similar action from being repeated, we filed suit with the Church and the City. In a deposition, the offending board

member admitted to wrongdoing and blamed the city for a lack of board training.

Fast forward three years later, and ACMNA has a friendly relationship with the church, in which they have agreed to display only one "static" message a day and to turn the sign off at 9 p.m. The city agreed to implement formal board training at the March 7th BOA meeting and to continue mandatory annual trainings. It's an excellent example of the work ACMNA does to protect our residential community and to inspire meaningful improvements in the city for all who are involved in the zoning process.

### Help Preserve Our Neighborhood

In November, you should have received a letter requesting your donation to support the work of the ACMNA. As highlighted by the above article, a majority of the ACMNA's expenses are for legal work, which is unfortunately necessary to preserve the Arcadia/Camelback Mountain area as a residential neighborhood, free from commercial intrusion and impact. We also publish this newsletter, organize the yearly neighborhood picnic, *Auto Rama* car show, and twice yearly litter pickup along Camelback Road. Less visible throughout the year, but vital for maintaining our residential character, your board writes an opinion letter for every zoning variance request in the ACMNA boundaries.

If you misplaced your donation letter and would like to donate, this QR code will take you to the webpage for online donations. If you prefer, you can donate by check, sending it to the address on page 2 of this newsletter. We genuinely appreciate your support. If you misplaced your donation letter and would like to donate, this QR code will take you to the webpage for online donations. If you prefer, you can donate by check, sending it to the address on page 2 of this newsletter. We genuinely appreciate your support.

