

# FRG Enterprises

Presentation to the Board of Trustees of Pittsfield Township  
Regarding Necessity of Sign for Marco's Pizza

January 13, 2020



# Background

Board Members,

I am Robbin Flis and one of the owners of FRG Enterprises, which is under a franchise agreement to operate a Marco's Pizza at 3238 Ann Arbor Saline Rd in Pittsfield Township (part of the Uptown Ann Arbor development).

As a quick background about the company, Marco's Pizza is a quick service Italian-cuisine restaurant that operates by selling pizza and other food items to the general public. Marco's is dedicated to fresh, authentic Italian ingredients and as a company has the same family values and commitments to excellence as our own family business. It is the fastest growing pizza brand in the United States and we are very excited for the opportunity to work with them.

I am a CPA and have previous small business ownership experience. I have two partners in this business, who are also two of my sons. Mark, an experienced food service professional, will be the operator of the store and Andrew is a CPA who works for PricewaterhouseCoopers. As a recent widow, I undertook this rather large and expensive endeavor with them because we believe we have the requisite skills, knowledge, and determination to succeed and are committed to providing excellence in service.

When we partnered with Marco's and agreed to be a franchisee, we had some flexibility on where we would locate our store. After much research and deliberation, we decided on opening the store in Pittsfield Township. We are very excited to be at this location and to be a proud supporter of the community. We expect to have in excess of 30 employees working at our store,

As you can imagine, the road to beginning operation of our store has been full of obstacles not the least of which has been COVID-19. However we are nearing completion of the store and hope to be ready for full operations in the coming days.

We really appreciate your diligence in reviewing this report, and look forward to working more with you.

Best,

Robbin Flis



# Sign Moratorium

We understand the purpose of the moratorium in light of the Supreme Court decision (Reed v Town of Gilbert) and similar litigation occurring over sign ordinances. However, we believe the lack of a clear and present sign will preclude us from obtaining the necessary and sustaining operations of our business. Outdoor signage is arguably one of the most important steps in opening a retail business because it is what gets customers in the door - the largest hurdle to overcome when establishing a relationship with a potential customer.

We base this belief on the following:

- Based on the terms of our lease and FRG's franchise agreement, the leased space cannot operate as anything other than Marco's Pizza. Given the lease commitments and other construction costs, opening a fully functional store is the only viable economic use of this space.
- To date, all of the employees that we have attempted to hire have expressed significant concerns regarding the ability to find the location. Even though we are not yet open, we are finding it difficult to attract the necessary employees and appropriately advertise to our future customers.
- We have worked closely with Marco's corporate marketing team, who has expressed grave concern on our ability to operate without a Marco's sign. In fact, to all current Marco's employees' knowledge, a Marco's has never been opened without a sign.
- Without a sign, other similar food establishments in the township would have a clear and unfair advantage in their ability to attract and serve customers.



# Market Research

Market research has repeatedly and consistently shown the necessity of a clear and present sign for retail businesses. We want to share just a few examples with you:

- According to a 2016 Study carried out by the Economic center of the University of Cincinnati, 76 percent of customers said they had entered a store or business they had never visited before based simply on its signs. Although a basic form, this was the single highest form of advertising noted in the study.
- Another 2017 survey conducted by a business marketing solutions firm found around 75 percent of its respondents were encouraged to visit stores because of their signage. In the same survey, 68% admitted the signage of a certain shop indicated to them the quality of its merchandise.
- Additionally, almost 60 percent of those asked said the absence of signage prevents them from going inside stores.
- Both these and other studies highlighted a basic fact that signage is truly the only form of marketing that can be deployed 24/7, 365 days a year.



# Our Sign

- The sign we are requesting permits for was designed by Marco's Pizza and in line with their nation-wide sign policy.
- The sign was also approved by Beztak, the developers of the leased property, who have worked extensively in Pittsfield Township and are familiar with local ordinances.
- We believe the sign meets the Pittsfield Township sign ordinance in place prior to the moratorium.



Street Facing Sign



Parking Lot Facing Sign



# Thank you

- We appreciate your time looking into this matter. Please let us know if you have any questions. You can contact us at the following:

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