

REGULAR MEETING OF THE WEST BRANCH PLANNING COMMISSION HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF CITY HALL, 121 NORTH FOURTH STREET, ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2017.

Chairman Mike Jackson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Members: Bob David, Heather Grace, Mike Jackson, June Longstreet, Lisa Saurer, and Dan Weiler.

Absent: Kara Faching, Jan Hasty, and Shirley McClenahen

Others officers in attendance: City Mayor Denise Lawrence

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

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As an addition to the agenda, Paul Lucynski presented site plans to change the building located at 300 W. Houghton Ave. to a restaurant. It was noted that it would not change the footprint of the building but that it has to be approved because it is a commercial plan. Mr. Lucynski noted that everything has been turned in to the County Building Department.

Chairman Jackson noted that restaurants are an approved use in that district and that since the building department will be looking at the building requirements, he could see no issues with it.

Mr. Lucynski also presented plans to install signs in the same location and would like to use the same size that the signs have always been for previous owners of the building. It was noted that those signs would be larger than what is allowed by ordinance in that district.

Manager Grace asked about having a Victorian element to the sign because it was in the downtown district. Mr. Lucynski noted that he would be using a font that was recommended in the sign ordinance for approved Victorian font.

**MOTION BY DAVID, SECOND BY WEILER, TO APPROVE THE SITE PLAN AS SUBMITTED BY PAUL LUCYNSKI CONTINGENT UPON THE OUTSIDE FOOTPRINT OF THE BUILDING NOT CHANGING AND APPROVAL BY THE OGEMAW BUILDING DEPARTMENT.**

**Motion carried**

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**MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY GRACE, TO APPROVE THE SIGN PERMIT VARIANCES AS SUBMITTED BY PAUL LUCYNSKI TO ALLOW FOR LARGER SIGNS THAN ALLOWED IN THAT ZONING DISTRICT DUE TO IT BEING THE SAME SIZE AS ALLOWED PREVIOUSLY FOR THAT BUILDING CONTINGENT UPON IT HAVING A VICTORIAN ELEMENT TO THE SIGN.**

**Motion carried**

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**MOTION BY GRACE, SECOND BY JACKSON, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES WITH CORRECTIONS FROM THE REGULAR MEETING HELD TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2017**

**Motion carried**

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Tom Amor and Jude Fonguh presented a sign variance for the Ogemaw Pharmacy to install a monument sign that had a total size of 18 square feet. It was noted that it was in the Office/Service District, which only allows a maximum of 12 square feet for monument signs.

Chairman Jackson noted that the zoning code allows for three different sizes of monument signs depending on what district you are in and that they may need to look into changing that.

Manager Grace noted that she agreed she was not in favor of having the different size requirements and noted that the lower size requirement was not indicative of what size the signs currently are in that district.

Mr. Fonguh noted that the smaller size does not allow him to adequately display his business name and have a corporate logo as well which would help with the cost of the sign and helps with advertising.

Manager Grace noted that she recently has received some guidance on new sign ordinances due to recent Supreme Court decisions and that they could look into changing the sizes allowed at the same time.

**MOTION BY DAVID, SECOND BY GRACE, TO APPROVE THE SIGN VARIANCE AS PRESENTED BY MR. FONGUH AND ALLOW THE SIGN TO BE UP TO 24 SQUARE FEET CONTINGENT UPON HAVING THE CHIEF OF POLICE OR THE DPW SUPERINTENDENT APPROVE THE LOCATION OF THE SIGN FOR SAFETY CONCERNS AND RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO AMEND A CHANGE TO THE SIGN ORDINANCE TO ALLOW A MAXIMUM OF 24' SQUARE FEET FOR MONUMENT SIGNS IN THE OFFICE/SERVICE DISTRICT.**

**Motion carried**

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**MOTION BY GRACE, SECOND BY DAVID, TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO HAVE THE CITY MANAGER DRAFT A PROPOSED ORDINANCE THAT WOULD REQUIRE THE CHIEF OF POLICE, THE DPW SUPERINTENDENT, OR ONE OF THEIR DELEGATED EMPLOYEES REVIEW ALL SIGNS PERMIT APPLICATIONS TO INSURE THE LOCATION DOES NOT INTERFERE WITH SAFETY CONCERNS DUE TO LINE OF SIGHT ISSUES.**

**Motion carried**

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A sign permit variance was submitted for Chemical Bank to allow a monument sign that would be 44 square feet. It was noted that it would be the exact same size as the sign that it is replacing. It was noted that it needed a variance because 24 square feet is the maximum allowed in the Central Business District.

Discussion centered on the fact that it was replacing a sign of the same size and they were not changing the location of the sign.

**MOTION BY WEILER, SECOND BY JACKSON, TO APPROVE THE SIGNS VARIANCE SUBMITTED BY CHEMICAL BANK AS PRESENTED AND ALLOW THE MONUMENT SIGN TO BE UP TO 44 SQUARE FEET CONTINGENT UPON THE CHIEF OF POLICE OR THE DPW SUPERINTENDENT APPROVING THE LOCATION FOR SAFETY CONCERNS.**

**Motion carried**

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Chairman Jackson requested submitting a letter to Foster Oil to request that their trucks use Houghton Ave. instead of using the local streets to go to and from the pumps on South Valley St. It was noted that those local streets that they have been seen driving on do have signs saying no trucks.

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Discussion took place to go over street designations within the City.

Discussion took place to go over sidewalks, parking, and striping issues throughout the City.

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**MOTION BY WEILER, SECOND BY JACKSON, TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO ELIMINATE PARKING IN FRONT OF RESIDENTIAL LOTS ON THE EAST SIDE OF SOUTH SECOND AND THE WEST SIDE OF SOUTH THIRD.**

**Motion carried**

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**MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY WEILER, TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO CHANGE HANSEN RD. AND PROGRESS ST. TO MAJOR STREETS.**

**Motion carried**

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**MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY SAURER, TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO CHANGE LINDSAY ST TO A ONE WAY STREET FROM FIRST ST. TO FIFTH ST. DUE TO SAFETY CONCERNS.**

**Motion carried**

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**MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY LONGSTREET, TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL TO DESIGNATE COLUMBUS STREET AS A TRUCK ROUTE.**

**Motion carried**

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Member Longstreet asked about Member McClenahen and the Commission discussed the procedure for replacing a member that is unable to continue due to health issues. It was noted that without a letter of resignation no changes could be until a member misses there meetings in a row. It was further noted that Carol Addair was interested in filling her term and that she would be more than willing to step back and let Member McClenahen take back her seat if her health returns and is able.

Member Saurer asked about the mobile stage and Manager Grace noted that the DDA has not met yet to discuss the possibility of selling the stage.

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Denise Lawrence addressed the Commission about putting up a sign in town. It was noted that she would have to fill out a sign permit application and turn it into GPSCR Coordinator Kelli Collins. It was further noted that if the sign met all requirements, then it could be approved administratively by Mrs. Collins.

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Member Jackson offered his thought and condolences on behalf of the Planning Commission to Planning Commission member Jan Hasty and their family on the passing of Jim Hasty.

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Chairman Jackson adjourned the meeting at 7:52 p.m.