

REGULAR MEETING OF THE WEST BRANCH PLANNING COMMISSION HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF CITY HALL, 121 NORTH FOURTH STREET, ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2016.

Vice Chariman Mike Jackson called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

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

Absent: Kara Faching, Shirley McClenahan, and Tim Schaiberger

Others officers in attendance: City Clerk/Treasurer John Dantzer

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Manager Grace noted that Tim Schaiberger was unable to attend the meeting because he was getting sworn in as the President of Kiwanis and that Kara Faching was unable to attend because she was on her way to the MML conference.

**MOTION BY DAVID, SECOND BY HASTY, TO EXCUSE TIM SCHAIBERGER FROM THE MEETING DUE TO HIM BEING SWORN IN AS PRESIDENT OF KIWANIS AND KARA FACHTING DUE TO HER ATTENDING THE MML CONFERENCE.**

**Motion carried**

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**MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY DAVID, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR MEETING HELD TUESDAY, JULY 12, 2016.**

**Motion carried**

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**MOTION BY GRACE, SECOND BY WEILER, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES WITH CORRECTIONS FROM THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD MONDAY, AUGUST 15, 2016.**

**Motion carried**

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Site plans were submitted by Kelli Jones for an auto detailing business with living space above it to be located at 127 North Eight St. which is located in the Central Business District.

Member Longstreet asked if DPW has looked at it yet. Scott Bell of Lapham Engineering, on behalf of Kelli Jones, noted they did meet with DPW Superintendent Dennis Jameson and that they did plan to run

the water and sewer from the supply lines going to the existing building on the site. Member Weiler noted that he also talked with DPW Superintendent Jameson and confirmed that the plan was approved by him.

Member David questioned the living space on the second floor above the commercial work area and was concerned that it would be a building violation. Ms. Jones noted that originally she was looking to build in Ogemaw Township but that their zoning did not allow it but the City zoning did allow it in that district. Scott Bell noted that it was allowed in the building code and that they did have to abide by strict fire stopping requirements.

Manager Grace noted that there would be two buildings on one parcel and asked if both of them would still be used. Ms. Jones noted that she thought about tearing the existing building down but structurally it was in good shape so she is currently planning on leaving it up. Mr. Bell noted that the original building approval use was as a professional service office and that they may use that building as the office for the new business and not have an office in the new building so; therefore, the use would not change. It was noted that if they change the use of the building then they would have to look into splitting the parcels.

Manager Grace noted that Zoning administrator Kelli Collins submitted her approval that she did not see any issues.

**MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY WEILER, TO APPROVE THE SITE PLAN FOR KELLI JONES AS SUBMITTED.**

**Motion carried**

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Site plans were submitted by Jude Fonguh for a pharmacy on 700 Columbus Dr. which is in the Office/Service district. Member Jackson noted that Mr. Fonguh was at the last meeting but needed some more detailed plans before a determination could be issued.

Member Grace questioned the plans that showed the original building being noted as unchanged as asked if that building would remain the same. Mr. Fonguh noted that the building itself would stay the same and that they would be changing the parking lot and adding the drive in window where a window currently is located.

Manager Grace noted that Zoning administrator Kelli Collins noted that there was adequate standard and ADA parking and submitted her approval that she did not see any issues.

Member Grace questioned the fenced in area in the back of the building. Mr. Fonguh noted that the area would be used to house his garbage dumpster.

**MOTION BY DAVID, SECOND BY JACKSON, TO APPROVE THE SITE PLAN FOR JUDE FONGUH AS SUBMITTED.**

**Motion carried**

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A sign variance was submitted by Rich Heavlin on behalf of Options Resource to put in a new monument sign due to the fact that the sign is 80 square feet and 12 square feet is the largest allowed in the Office/Service District.

Member Jackson noted that even though it is replacing a similar sized sign, a variance is still needed because it is larger than what is allowed in that district.

Member David asked if the sign would be replaced in entirety. Mr. Heavlin noted that he would be replacing the board backer with new treated plywood but the existing posts would stay. He also noted that the old sign was 7x10 and would now be 8x10.

Manager Grace noted that they do have a precedence of allowing this type of variance when the sign is replacing a previously approved sign.

Member Jackson noted that it would be similar to other signs that are in the area and is not out of character.

Member David noted that there are several businesses in the building which could require a need for a larger size.

**MOTION BY WEILER, SECOND BY DAVID, TO APPROVE THE SIZE VARIANCE REQUEST BY OPTIONS RESOURCE TO ALLOW THE 8X10 SIGN AS PRESENTED.**

**Motion carried**

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A sign variance was submitted by Rich Heavlin on behalf of Bay Eye Care to put in a new monument sign due to the fact that the proposed sign is 32 square feet and 12 square feet is the largest allowed in the Office/Service District.

Member David noted that currently the building does have several window signs. Mr. Heavlin noted that they would like to have a larger sign and they would like to incorporate their company logo onto the sign.

Manager Grace noted that since the sign looks like it is going in the road right of way, it be passed with a contingency that if the City needed to do something in the road right of way, the sign may have to come down. She also recommended they have DPW Superintendent Jameson and Chief Walters check the location of the sign to verify that it does not interfere with driving safety.

Mr. Heavlin noted that the double sided sign would be in a V design.

Member David questioned if that would still be considered one sign or two. Member Jackson noted that since it is sharing a post then it would be considered one sign.

**MOTION BY JACKSON, SECOND BY WEILER, TO APPROVE THE SIZE VARIANCE FOR BAY EYE CARE TO ALLOW THE 4X8 V-STYLE SIGN AS PRESENTED CONTINGENT UPON APPROVAL OF THE SAFETY SETBACKS AND WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT IF ANYTHING IS NEEDED TO BE DONE IN THE ROAD RIGHT OF WAY, THE SIGN MAY HAVE TO BE REMOVED.**

**Motion carried**

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Member Longstreet noted that the parking lines throughout the City are getting worn and the City should look into getting them repainted. Manager Grace noted that they are looking into becoming part of a State program that would offer these services at reduced costs.

Manager Grace noted that Zoning Administrator Kelli Collins is attending a webinar on the new requirements of sign ordinances and that we would be using that information to make recommendations for changes to our current ordinance.

Member Weiler noted that the new City Hall sign looks very nice and commented on how nice the concert over the Labor Day weekend was.

Member David commended DPW for their cleanup of the brush from the last storm and noted there was still a big branch on N. Seventh St. that may have to be removed.

Member David also questioned the blight issues. Manager Grace updated the Commission on the new blight policy.

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Vice Chairman Jackson adjourned the meeting at 6:45 p.m.