

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLAN COMMISSION HELD ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2009, AT THE VILLAGE HALL, 7760 QUINCY STREET, WILLOWBROOK, DUPAGE COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Kopp called the meeting to order at the hour of 7:30 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Those present at roll call were Commissioners James Baker, Robert DelSarto, Joseph Heery, William Remkus, Vice-Chairman Wagner and Chairman Kopp. Also present were Acting Village Administrator Ed Konstanty, Planner Sara Hage and Secretary Joanne Prible. ABSENT: Commissioner James Soukup.

3. OMNIBUS VOTE AGENDA

The items on the Omnibus Vote Agenda were as follows:

- a. Waive Reading of Minutes (APPROVE)
- b. Minutes – Regular Meeting September 2, 2009 (APPROVE)
- c. Minutes – Village Board Meetings – August 24 and September 14, 2009 (RECEIVE)

MOTION: Made by Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Remkus, to approve the Omnibus Vote Agenda.

UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE

MOTION DECLARED CARRIED

4. DISCUSSION – Sketch Plan Review – Hinsdale Lake Commons – Amendment to a Planned Unit Development for a Use Exception – Regency Centers and Goodwill

Planner Hage stated that on several occasions staff asked for feedback from the Plan Commission and the Village Board on Goodwill. Currently Goodwill is prohibited from operating within the Hinsdale Lake Commons shopping center due to a restriction in the Village's general business provisions that require that all retail businesses sell primarily new goods. She added Goodwill and Regency centers are here to speak to the Commission about their request for a PUD amendment that would remove the restriction from the provisions of the shopping center.

Regency Center Owner Mike Streit stated that the former Murray's Party Time 22,426 square foot space has been vacant since they left three years ago. That corner of the shopping center has lost the draw and, as a result, Curves has closed and the UPS Store has closed. There are several tenants in there now that are operating on a month to month basis.

Goodwill is a first class organization that has gone through changes in the past years. Based on company reports for stores in the Chicago area, the annual sales tax that could be generated by Goodwill is estimated between \$30,000 and \$40,000.

Chairman Kopp asked if Goodwill is a non-for-profit organization and if the clothes are donated where do the profits go.

Renee Bowerman, a representative from Goodwill answered that the profits from Goodwill go to helping individuals with disabilities.

Chairman Kopp asked Regency if Dominick's is fine with the project.

Mike Streit answered that he met with Dominick's and they were positive about this project.

Chairman Kopp asked where the donated items are received.

Ms. Bowerman answered at this location there will be a drive up for the donated items. There will be a separate entrance specifically labeled for donations and staff is there to help bring the donations into the store.

Mike Streit added that it was a concern because the last thing they want is for any donations left in the parking lot.

Commissioner Baker asked if the store will sell any new clothing.

Ms. Bowerman answered that Goodwill does have relationships with retailers where they receive their first run merchandise.

Commissioner Heery asked does Goodwill distinguish between what they want to take and what they do not want to take.

Ms. Bowerman said that Goodwill has a great recycling program: Goodwill determines what goes in the store and recycles as much merchandise as possible.

Commissioner Heery asked at your other location (Carol Stream), what kind of increased traffic has there been at the Dominick's.

Mike Streit said that the sales in Carol Stream did increase last year. But he cannot say that was absolutely Goodwill versus something that Dominick's was doing. That shopping center went from 80% leased to 98% leased now.

Vice-Chairman Wagner asked who you would anticipate leasing to because Goodwill is in the shopping center.

Mike Streit answered from a visual perspective the space is dead. There are not many windows and the interior has a mezzanine that covers half the space with low ceilings. In order for Goodwill to open, it will cost about \$1.6 million. He added that there is a significant investment on Regency and Goodwill's part just to get the space to the quality that they are happy with. Our goal is to attract neighborhood retailers and that is what we expect to fill the spaces with.

Chairman Kopp and the Commissioners, with the exception of Commission Heery, stated that they are in favor of the project. Commissioner Heery said that he will need to see more information.

5. DISCUSSION – Willowbrook Sign Regulations

Chairman Kopp said the next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Sign Regulations.

Sandwich Board Signs

Planner Hage said that she wanted to discuss the items from the last meeting as there were a few things that were left hanging and the Plan Commission needed to confirm. Also, there was a request from the Plan Commission for additional information.

Planner Hage added that she provided the Commission with samples of commercially available sandwich board signs with the available sizes and materials along with prices. In addition, she included a handout on imitation wood construction.

Chairman Kopp stated that we are not Hinsdale or Clarendon Hills where the signs would be on the public sidewalk. These signs will be inside a shopping center 40 or 50 feet from the roadway and as long as the sign does not become an additional sign (viewable) from the roadway, Chairman Kopp said he thinks the shops should do what they want. He added that he does not think it is our business to tell the shop owners that they cannot have a sign.

Commissioners Remkus said that he feels the same way. He added that the only item he wants to see is a notation that the sign cannot be obstructive.

Planner Hage said that she provided a supplemental packet that included a page with photographs of sandwich boards in Willowbrook. She added that these are photos of signs that are out there (being used in Willowbrook) today.

Vice-Chairman Wagner said that he is concerned with the uniformity of the signs. He asked at what point is the sign too big and noted that the sign also needs to be reasonably stable.

Chairman Kopp added that he agrees there should be a size limitation.

Planner Hage asked the Commission if there is a consensus that there should be a limit on the size.

Commissioner Remkus said that he would like a three feet (3') by six feet (6') size, nothing taller than six feet (6').

Vice-Chairman Wagner added that the true sandwich board is about four feet (4') high so it can be seen over.

Chairman Kopp said that he thinks four feet (4') by three feet (3') or five feet (5') by three feet (3') is acceptable.

Planner Hage summarized the Plan Commission comments and confirmed the direction received from the Commission that sandwich board signs could be a maximum size of five feet (5') by three feet (3') or fifteen square feet (15 sq. ft.), they should be removed overnight on a daily basis and that the Village would not place a limitation on materials (or design).

Illuminated Window Signs

Planner Hage said at the last meeting the Commission agreed that the Village should allow one illuminated window sign. She further stated that in the last meeting a Commissioner asked about the size of the Jimmy John's sign and reported that the Jimmy John's sign is just over three square feet (3 sq. ft.) and the Quizno's sign is two and one half square feet (2 ½ sq. ft.).

Commissioner Remkus suggested that a backlit sign could be larger than a neon sign. The neon signs could be restricted to smaller sizes because they are brighter.

Vice-Chairman Wagner said that if the sign is neon the size should be limited.

Planner Hage said that she surveyed surrounding communities and those communities that do allow neon have similar shopping centers and with similar street relationships including Darien, Downers Grove, Glen Ellyn, Naperville, Westmont and Wheaton. Downers Grove and Wheaton restricted neon signs to interior window signs only.

Vice-Chairman Wagner said that he would like only interior (neon) signs limited to about four square feet (4 sq. ft.)

Chairman Kopp said that he does not find neon unattractive and that four square feet (4 sq. ft.) is acceptable.

Vice-Chairman Wagner stated one sign, four square feet (4 sq. ft.), inside only is acceptable.

Planner Hage confirmed with the Commission that they agree to one illuminated window sign (neon or other non-flashing illumination) that is four square feet (4 sq. ft.). The four square feet (4 sq. ft.) would count towards the total allowance of 40% sign coverage per window.

Leasing Signs

Planner Hage stated that at the last meeting Commissioner Wagner commented that thirty-two square feet (32 sq. ft.) was a generous allowance for leasing signs. She asked the commission to confirm that they do support allowing thirty-two square feet (32 sq. ft.) for Leasing Signs.

The Commission agreed that thirty-two square feet (32 sq. ft.) is acceptable.

Retail Ground Signs

Planner Hage reported that at the May workshop some of the comments received included "twenty feet is too high for a monument sign" and "shopping center owners should be required to fill a minimum amount of their blank panel spaces with tenant information". She asked the Commission to discuss these points.

Chairman Kopp said that some of the shopping center owners are not using the signage they already have for the benefit of their tenants.

Planner Hage added that Wingren has a place for each of the tenants but they have not filled the monument sign (with the names of their tenants).

Chairman Kopp said that President Napoli is frustrated because the owners of the shopping centers are not promoting their tenants using the signage that is available.

Planner Hage added that in Burr Ridge the shopping center wall signs are all white. Because they are all white it is less legible.

Vice-Chairman Wagner said that he disagrees because looking at the picture of the Darien sign (provided in the packet), he added there is no question what it says. He said even the smallest letters at the bottom are legible.

Planner Hage added that the colors (used in signage and tenant panels) can be limited, but currently we do not limit the colors.

Chairman Kopp asked is 20 feet too high?

Planner Hage explained the Town Center sign is twenty-four feet (24') tall but the actual sign surface area is only ten feet (10') by twenty feet (20') and that the sign is larger than the Darien sign.

Chairman Kopp asked how many shopping centers are we talking about.

Planner Hage said that we are discussing shopping centers that are ten (10) acres or more which would be Hinsdale Lake Commons, K-Mart and the Town Center. It does not include Wingren because is not more than ten (10) acres.

Chairman Kopp said that if we give it to the Town Center we should give it to the other ten-acre shopping centers.

Vice-Chairman Wagner said that the sign limits would be that of what is approved for the Town Center which is twenty-four feet (24') tall by fourteen feet (14') wide.

The Chairman and Commissioners agreed.

Chairman Kopp asked the Commission if the village should compel shopping center owners to fill a minimum amount of their blank spaces on monument signs with tenant information. The Commissioners all agreed that they did not want to compel shopping center owners to fill blank spaces.

Chairman Kopp asked if the Commission wanted a minimum tenant panel size.

The Commission agreed that they do not want to limit the number (or size) of tenant panels. The shopping center should have a legible space for all their tenants.

Chairman Kopp asked if the Commission wanted to specify the aesthetic appearance of signs and if they should be backlit or not.

Commissioner Wagner said that he has seen a lot of good signs that are backlit. He said that it depends on how it is backlit and if it is tasteful.

Chairman Kopp asked if the Wingren Sign is backlit.

Planner Hage answered that yes the Wingren Sign is backlit.

Planner Hage said that (currently) the Village requires the sign be of like material so if the shopping center is brick the sign should have that material.

Commissioner Wagner said that is good guidance.

Planner Hage asked if the Commission wanted to take it further by requiring that the Village require natural stone or cultured stone, asking the Commission if they essentially want high end signs.

Commissioner Wagner asked if most signs need to be reviewed by the Plan Commission. Planner Hage responded that is the case only in some situations – for example if it is a new shopping center with a PUD, but a shopping center does not necessarily need to come to us if their sign complies with our regulations.

Commissioner Wagner asked about the possibility of changing the regulations to require that all signs come for review before the Plan Commission or perhaps all signs for shopping centers come before the Plan Commission.

Chairman Kopp said that he does not want to do that. He said that the Village should have rules that people can read and follow and as long as they comply with the rules it should be their discretion. He further stated that the issue is more negotiable when there is a PUD as that kind of project requires a give and take and is more of a negotiation.

The Commission asked if they had come to a consensus. Planner Hage stated that it appeared their consensus was to maintain the status quo for the aesthetic appearance of signs in that we would keep our current standards of sign materials and lighting.

Chairman Kopp confirmed that was the direction.

Chairman Kopp said that he assumes no one wants digital signs. The Commission agreed.

Chairman Kopp said that because it is late, we will continue the discussion on signage until the next meeting when we will talk about the Retail Wall Signs and paper window signs.

6. VISITOR'S BUSINESS

None.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

Planner Hage asked the Plan Commission if they would like a meeting in December to continue with the sign discussion. The Plan Commission agreed for a December meeting and asked if the Plan Commission can meet at 7:00.

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Made by Commissioner Heery, seconded by Commissioner DeSarto, to adjourn the regular meeting of the Plan Commission at the hour of 9:15 p.m.

UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE

MOTION DECLARED CARRIED

PRESENTED, READ AND APPROVED,

_____, 2009

Minutes transcribed by Joanne Prible.

Chairman