



**Meeting Minutes  
Beloit City Plan Commission  
Wednesday, July 18, 2018 at 7:00 PM  
The Forum  
Beloit City Hall  
100 State Street, Beloit**

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm. Commissioners Haynes, Weeden, Johnson, Faragher, Ruster, Robson and City Councilor Preuschl were present. Commissioner Finnegan was absent.

**2. Approval of the Minutes of the June 20, 2018 Meeting**

Commissioner Weeden made a motion to approve the minutes, subject to a correction to include the opening and closing of the public hearing for item 3. Commissioner Ruster seconded the motion. The motion passed, voice vote.

**3. Consideration of an Exception to Section 30.40(2)(c) of the Outdoor Sign Regulations (the "Sign Ordinance") for the property located at 2750 Cranston Road**

Community Development Director, Julie Christensen, presented the staff report and recommendation.

Commissioner Robson discussed with staff the existing signage on the property and indicated that the property currently does not have any pole signs. Ms. Christensen discussed that there are other signs under design that staff has not seen. Commissioner Ruster asked staff about the total number of signs for the building. Ms. Christensen indicated that the building will have one primary and three secondary signs.

Chairperson Faragher opened the public hearing. Lance Schaefer, spoke on behalf of Beloit Hotel Group located at 2750 Cranston Rd. Commissioner Haynes asked Mr. Schaefer if the monument sign placed by Cranston Road will be elevated or on the ground. Mr. Schaefer indicated that the monument sign will be on the ground, around 5 feet tall, and similar to the Hampton's monument sign.

Ms. Christensen discussed that Drew Pennington, Director of Planning and Building Services for the City of Beloit had indicated in the Staff Report that a pole sign will be part of the sign package apart from the monument sign. Mr. Schaefer added that the pole sign will not be located on the Home2 Suites property and will be installed on the Hampton Inn property. Commissioner Johnson asked Mr. Schaefer if there was a current pole sign on

the Hampton Inn property. Mr. Schaefer indicated that there was not a current pole sign on the property but there was a shared pole sign between the hotel and Jersey's Bar and Grill which will be relocated to the restaurant's property. Mr. Schaefer also discussed the existence of an easement agreement allowing the pole sign on the Hampton Inn property. Ms. Christensen asked Mr. Schaefer if the intent was to install one pole sign for both hotels. Mr. Schaefer agreed and confirmed that there will be one pole sign for both hotels.

Commissioner Ruster asked Mr. Schaefer about the number of signs currently at the Hampton Inn. Mr. Schaefer indicated that there currently were two signs on the building, a ground monument sign and a cabinet sign on the high-rise pole. Commissioner Haynes asked Mr. Schaefer if the number of proposed signs for the Home2 Suites will match those of the Hampton Inn. Mr. Schaefer confirmed and indicated that the proposed signs will be smaller than current signage on the Hampton Inn.

Ms. Christensen asked Mr. Schaefer about the difference in size between the two buildings. Mr. Schaefer indicated that the Home2 building will be 10,000 square feet larger than the Hampton Inn. Exterior surface of the new building will also be greater than the Hampton Inn. In addition, the orientation of the Home2 Suites building will be different.

Mr. Schaefer discussed the firm's consistent branding requirements that include certain signature elements (signage). Ms. Christensen asked Mr. Schaefer to elaborate on the plans for the current pole sign (shared with Jersey's) and whether a secondary pole sign will be installed. Mr. Schaefer explained that the Hampton Inn will take the opportunity to perform sign updates, confirming that there will be a total of 2 pole signs, one relocated to the Jersey's property (for Jersey's signage only) and one in the Hampton Inn property which will include signage for the Home2 Suites Hotel and Hampton Inn.

Commissioner Weeden asked Mr. Schaefer if the approval for up to 175 square feet in wall signs will be sufficient to meet the firm's sign requirements. Mr. Schaefer agreed and discussed the organizational process for deviating from the brand mandated signs. Commissioner Haynes discussed the appropriateness in proportions between signage and the building size and recommended similar wordage to be added when revising the city's Outdoor Sign Regulations or Ordinance. Commissioner Robson mentioned that in her opinion, changes to Hilton's signature logo and the costs of those changes to comply with the city's ordinance showed an example of an economic need.

Chairperson Faragher closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Weeden made a motion to amend the first condition in the Resolution to allow one 75 square-foot wall sign and one 100 square-foot channel letter wall sign. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed, voice vote.

Commissioner Haynes moved to approve the Resolution as amended. Commissioner Weeden seconded the motion. The motion passed, voice vote.

4. **Consideration of an Exception to Section 30.35(2)(e) of the Outdoor Sign Regulations (the “Sign Ordinance”) for the property located at 701 Third Street.**

Community Development Director, Julie Christensen, presented the staff report and recommendation.

Commissioner Robson asked staff about sign regulations in the Riverfront Conservation District and to discuss the definition of a Billboard Sign. Ms. Christensen defined a billboard as an off-premise sign that advertises a business and these types of signs were not allowed in the mentioned district.

Commissioner Johnson discussed his concerns regarding lighting and how it will impact the Heritage View condominium building near the location of the proposed sign.

Commissioner Weeden asked staff if the sign ordinance controlled the placement of signs placed on the “Spine Road” located in the Ironworks Office Campus. Ms. Christensen indicated that the sign ordinance governed sign placement on the exterior of all businesses.

Commissioner Faragher asked staff about other options if the sign exception was not granted, specifically the size of the sign and proportions. Ms. Christensen indicated that an Architectural Review application was submitted in which aesthetics and proportions can be reviewed.

Commissioner Robson suggested the substitution of a monument sign over a wall sign. Ms. Christensen explained the rationale for having a wall sign, specifically that the bank is not leasing the land which surrounds the building they will be occupying.

Commissioner Faragher opened the public Hearing. Mike Johnson residing at 9204 Packer Dr. in Wausau, WI and representing sign contractor Graphic House spoke during the public hearing. Mr. Johnson addressed concerns regarding lighting and explained that the signs will be illuminated with halo lights which will project a silhouette of the letters. Mr. Johnson specified the reasons for having two signs as they will serve as an indicator to the directed public (from main bank branch) and only one sign will be visible from the road at a time.

Commissioner Robson suggested the business installs a blade sign similar to those of the other building tenants. Mr. Johnson explained that a sign such as the one mentioned would not be appropriate for the bank sign.

Commissioner Weeden asked Mr. Johnson if visitors would be able to locate the building with only the sign facing the “Spine Road”. Mr. Johnson indicated that visitors will only be able to see the sign from the “Spine Road”.

Commissioner Robson asked Mr. Johnson to explain the economic hardship for which the variance should be granted. Mr. Johnson believes that economic hardship was something that could not be proven when referring to signage and was subjective.

Commissioner Weeden suggested reducing wording of the sign to comply with the ordinance. Mr. Johnson stated that Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) guidelines required institutions to list their full name if it was occupied by the entity. Ms. Christensen added that the name of the bank will be fully listed on one side of the building. Mr. Johnson believed that to be a gray area and did not know if it will be in compliance with FDIC rules.

Commissioner Johnson discussed the impacts of allowing the variance as future tenants of the building would also want a large sign. Mr. Johnson, the sign contractor, discussed that variances are on a case by case basis and although not representing the owners, Mr. Johnson believes that building owners will not allow that to happen.

Commissioner Faragher closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Haynes moved to lay-over the requested sign exception. Commissioner Weeden seconded the motion. The motion passed, voice vote.

Ms. Christensen indicated that staff could reach out to Hendricks Commercial Properties to see what they are proposing for signage throughout the campus.

**5. Consideration of the Final Plats known as Glen Hills No. 6 and Glen Hills No.7 in the Town of Beloit.**

Community Development Director, Julie Christensen, presented the staff report and recommendation.

Commissioner Johnson moved to approve the Final Plats known as Glen Hills #6 & #7. Commissioner Ruster seconded the motion. The motion passed, voice vote.

**6. Consideration of the proposed plans for a 5,280 square foot vehicle storage building at the City's Public Works Operations Facility**

Community Development Director, Julie Christensen, presented the staff report and recommendation.

Commissioner Johnson asked if the expanded gravel parking lot located in the rear of the existing building would be paved. Mike Flesch, Engineer for the City of Beloit indicated that there weren't plans to pave the parking lot at this time. Mr. Flesch discussed the possibilities of having an asphalt drive-lane and potential fencing but it has not been finalized.

Commissioner Robson asked Mr. Flesch if there were plans to have a buffer. Mr. Flesch indicated that there is currently a buffer of trees that will remain along the street.

Commissioner Weeden moved to approve the plans for the storage building. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed, voice vote.

7. **Status Report on Prior Plan Commission Items**

Public Hearing was held and laid-over for the re-zoning of the Knoll View properties and the rezoning request for Our Savior's Church was approved.

8. **Adjournment**

Commissioner Ruster moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed, voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Frank Fuerte.