

MINUTES
PLAN COMMISSION
City Hall Forum - 100 State Street, Beloit, WI 53511
7:00 PM
Wednesday, May 19, 2021

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM. Chairman Weeden, Commissioners Toral, Robson, Ramsden, Ruster, and Anderson were present. Commissioner Finnegan and Councilor Preuschl were absent.

2. MINUTES

2.a. Consideration of the minutes of the May 5, 2021 Plan Commission meeting

Motion was made by Commissioner Robson, seconded by Commissioner Ruster to approve the minutes. Motion carried, roll call vote.

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS

3.a. Consideration of an exception to Section 30.40(2)(c) of the Outdoor Sign Regulations (the "Sign Ordinance") to allow one secondary, on-premises sign exceeding 30 square feet for the property located at 2901 Milwaukee Rd

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

Commissioner Weeden asked Ms. Christensen if the fourth sign listed under the request details was 27.68 square feet larger than is allowed by code. Ms. Christensen stated that is correct. Commissioner Weeden noted that the first sign listed, the pole sign, could be 69 square feet larger than proposed, and their overall sign package is less than what they are allowed in the Sign Ordinance. He asked if it is possible to provide an incentive for them to go ahead and increase their secondary sign based on the reductions in overall signage and the primary pole sign. Ms. Christensen stated that staff reviewed the criteria, and staff does not feel that Jiffy Lube met the criteria for an Exception.

Commissioner Weeden asked how hard it would be to set up a credit system where if the overall square footage package or pole sign square footage was less than code, they could use 20 percent of the reduction to apply to offset 28 additional square feet. He indicated that he feels like we are encouraging larger pole signs, which he thought everyone could agree causes the sign pollution on Milwaukee Road. Ms. Christensen stated they were just going through the criteria and since the site did not meet the criteria, staff recommended denial.

Commissioner Weeden opened the public hearing.

Bob Carlson, 250 S 70th St, New Berlin, Wisconsin, explained that their intent is to be consistent nationally with their signs, and their package is not extravagant. It is the minimum required to meet their needs. They are just asking for a slight increase in the secondary sign.

Commissioner Weeden closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Ramsden stated that he supports Commissioner Weeden's recommendation for a credit system. Ms. Christensen stated she will talk with the City Attorney about the suggestion. The City Attorney was looking for a stopgap amendment that would get us through until we can do a complete rewrite of the Ordinance. Commissioner Ramsden also indicated that he supported staff's recommendation for denial.

Commissioner Anderson indicated that if someone is driving past this location that the only time you would be seeing the pole sign would be when you are looking directly at the building. Commissioner Toral also stated he was in favor of the credit system too and asked that we consider credits for better environmental practices or for additional landscaping.

Motion was made by Commissioner Ramsden, seconded by Commissioner Robson to deny the exception request. Motion carried, roll call vote (3-2).

3.b. **Consideration of an exception to Section 30.42(2)(c) of the Outdoor Sign Regulations (the "Sign Ordinance") to allow two secondary, on-premises signs exceeding 30 square feet in area for the property located at 2746 Milwaukee Rd**

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

Commissioner Weeden opened the public hearing.

Shawn Smith, 6001 Nimitz Parkway, South Bend, Indiana, explained that Mavis Discount Tires and Brakes is in the process of rebranding this facility. Mr. Smith stated this is not a self-created hardship and that it is an existing condition that already exists. They just wanted to match the branding standards for the company. Mr. Smith stated this building is on the frontage road, and there is cross access with neighbors next door. Mr. Smith stated they are asking for slight increase on secondary sign by the entry of only 1.5 square feet that is minor in nature.

Commissioner Weeden closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Anderson asked Ms. Christensen if the ordinance allows three secondary signs. Ms. Christensen said yes it does. Commissioner Anderson asked if it would be possible to break up the Mavis sign into two parts, so that perhaps the Mavis part of the sign would be less than the 30 square feet allowed by code. Also, maybe they could scale down the remainder of the sign. Ms. Christensen stated they could consider the Mavis part one sign and the tires and brakes at discount prices as a second sign.

Mr. Smith stated the Mavis part of the sign is less than 30 square feet, and the tires and brakes itself would be 50-60 square feet and that sign states what they do there.

Commissioner Weeden asked Ms. Christensen if the staff took into account the frontage road issue and the distance from Milwaukee Road itself. He also asked if the distance to Milwaukee Road is a fair counter to the conclusion that the hardship was not self-created. Ms. Christensen explained that the denial was based on the fact that this site does not have unique conditions.

Commissioner Anderson asked if the setback is based on the frontage road or Milwaukee Road. Ms. Christensen said it would be from the frontage road not Milwaukee Road. Commissioner Anderson stated that customers would not be deciding to go there from the frontage road.

The Commission was undecided as to what to recommend, so staff indicated that if they wanted staff to work with the sign contractor to come up with an alternate solution, they could lay the item over until the next meeting.

Motion was made by Commissioner Ruster, seconded by Commissioner Anderson to lay over the item. Motion carried, roll call vote (5-0).

4. STATUS REPORT ON PRIOR PLAN COMMISSION ITEMS

Ms. Christensen provided the following updates: City Council held a public hearing and laid them over under the rules for the transitional living facility ordinance and the Zoning Map Amendment for 1945 Prairie. City Council will take action on the items on June 7, 2021. The next Plan Commission meeting is scheduled for June 9, 2021.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Commissioner Ramsden, and seconded by Commissioner Robson to adjourn. Motion carried, roll call vote (5-0). Meeting was adjourned at 7:45 PM.