



**MINUTES
PLAN COMMISSION
City Hall Forum - 100 State Street, Beloit, WI 53511
7:00 PM
Wednesday, February 8, 2023**

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Vice-Chairperson Ramsden called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Commissioners Ramsden, Flesch, Janke, Jacobsen, Anderson, Toral, Elliot, and Councilor Dunkin were present.

2. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

2.a. Election of Chairperson

Commissioner Jacobsen made a motion to nominate Commissioner Ramsden as Chairperson, seconded by Commissioner Janke. Motion prevailed, voice vote (7-0).

2.b. Election of Vice-Chairperson

Commissioner Janke made a motion to nominate Commissioner Anderson as Vice Chairperson, seconded by Commissioner Jacobsen. Motion prevailed, voice vote (7-0).

3. MINUTES

3.a. Consideration of the minutes of January 18, 2023 Plan Commission meeting

Motion was made by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Flesch to approve the minutes. Motion prevailed, voice vote (7-0).

4. REPORTS

4.a. Consideration of Resolution 2023-005 approving a two-lot Certified Survey Map for the properties located at 1800 Gateway Boulevard and 1751 Apex Drive in the City of Beloit
Julie Christensen, Community Development Director, presented the staff report and recommendation.

Commissioner Janke moved to approve the resolution for the two-lot CSM, seconded by Commissioner Anderson. Motion approved, voice vote (7-0).

4.b. Consideration of Resolution 2023-006 approving a one-lot Extraterritorial Certified Survey Map for Parcel Number 6-2-60 in the Town of Beloit

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

Commissioner Flesch moved to approved the resolution for the one-lot CSM, seconded by Commissioner Jacobsen. Motion approved, voice vote (7-0).

4.c. **Consideration of Resolution 2023-007 approving a two-lot Extraterritorial Certified Survey Map for Parcel Number 6-2-2069.1 in the Town of Beloit**

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

Commissioner Anderson moved to approve the resolution for the two-lot CSM, seconded by Commissioner Flesch. Motion approved, voice vote (7-0).

4.d. **Consideration of a request to purchase the property located at 80-100 East Grand Avenue for slum clearance**

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

Chairperson Ramsden asked when the transfer of ownership will take place. Ms. Christensen said by May 1st, 2023, and demolition of the buildings are required to be completed by September 1, 2024. Chairperson Ramsden asked if the reason for the transfer is because Hendricks could not apply for the two grants, that only the municipality had to apply for it. Ms. Christensen indicated that was correct.

Commissioner Janke said he wanted to compliment City staff, the City, and the developer. Commissioner Janke said this building has been sitting vacant for a long time, and it is great that there is a grant being provided by the state.

Commissioner Flesch moved to approve the request for purchase of the property at 80-100 East Grand Avenue, seconded by Commissioner Jacobsen. Motion approved, voice vote (7-0).

5. **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

5.a. **Consideration of Planned Unit Development (PUD) Master Land Use Plan for the property located at 625 Third St**

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

Commissioner Flesch asked what would happen if the four-foot fence for the outdoor seating area was required to be increased in height by the Alcohol Beverage License Control Committee. Ms. Christensen said it would be a minor change and could be approved by City staff.

Chairperson Ramsden opened the public hearing.

Rick Dexter, 604 Pleasant Street, said he was concerned about the potential for noise from the establishment at Heritage View. Mr. Dexter said that he reviewed the noise ordinance, and he indicated that there are requirements related to live music. Mr. Dexter also said that the sign is too large and out of character for the property.

Joe Stadelman, 2431 E Ridge Rd, President of Angus Young Associates, Architect for the project, explained that this project will offer options for people after going out to dinner downtown or going to the Farmer's Market. He also indicated that there is not an offering like this in the community that attracts people for miles away. Mr. Stadelman said the rooftop feature is a sign but also functions as a piece of art. Mr. Stadelman said that they will follow the noise ordinance and continue to work on addressing this issue.

Commissioner Elliot asked what they have in place to allow for a wide variety of music. Mr. Stadelman said that they are not the operators, and he cannot speak on behalf of them. Ms. Christensen said that Plan Commission does not have the ability to approve how the business operates related to something like music. They have authority over liquor licenses, but otherwise, businesses have the ability to operate the business as they see fit.

Commissioner Jacobsen asked how tall the building is, and how big the letters will be. Mr. Stadelman said that the outside wall is 30 feet tall, and the letters are 5 feet tall. Mr. Stadelman said the letters are a small percentage of the building height, and will be sitting on an 8-foot-high frame with LED neon strip inserted in. Commissioner Flesch asked if the sign will be dusk to dawn. Mr. Stadelman said that it is on a timer and it can be dimmed, and it is not able to have auto-dimming.

Commissioner Anderson asked how they test out the lighting. Mr. Stadelman said that they plan to have a sample letter constructed with the lighting in it, put it on the building, and see how it looks. Councilor Dunkin asked about the name for the business, and how does that fit in downtown. Mr. Stadelman said that the name for the sign on top of the building is the name of the first person to operate a bowling alley in downtown Beloit.

Commissioner Toral asked if the noise will project off the wall or will the wall absorb the sound. Mr. Stadelman said the wall and windows are hard surfaces and will project sound off of them, and they are evaluating where to put the band so that the sound does not bounce off the walls.

Chairperson Ramsden asked what they are doing with the art work that is currently on the outside walls. Dan Barkes, Hendricks Commercial Properties, 525 Third Street, Beloit, said that the art work that will be removed from the current walls, and they will put them in storage and utilize them on the campus to the North once that gets completed. Chairperson Ramsden said he wants to see the art work be present somewhere. Commissioner Anderson asked if Beloit College was notified about this project. Ms. Christensen said they were not notified, as they will not be directly impacted by this project because they are further away.

Commissioner Anderson said he will vote for the PUD and that the key issues were with the conditions 3, 5, and 6. The proposed sign seems to be the big issue; off street parking was resolved; and the applicant will provide what is best for Beloit.

Chairperson Ramsden closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Flesch moved to approve the PUD, seconded by Commissioner Jacobsen. Motion approved, voice vote (7-0).

5.b. **Consideration of an Ordinance amending the Zoning District Map for the City of Beloit for the property located at 625 Third Street**

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

Chairperson Ramsden opened and closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Jacobsen moved to approve the amendment to the Zoning District Map for the property located at 625 Third Street, seconded by Commissioner Janke. Motion approved, voice vote (7-0).

5.c. **Consideration of Resolution 2023-004 approving an Exception to Section 30.46(3) and 30.17(2)(b)(4) of the Sign Ordinance for the property located at 345 East Grand Avenue**

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

Commissioner Toral asked about the history of that part of the sidewalk. Ms. Christensen said that our photos only go back to 2002. The sign has gotten smaller over time. Commissioner Janke asked if this is in the public right-of-way. Ms. Christensen said that it is not in the right-of-way.

Chairperson Ramsden opened public hearing.

Ryan Coffey, 1 Parker Place, Janesville, Wisconsin, works with Elevated Identity wanted Ms. Christensen to elaborate on the enforcement of the EVM sign regulations. Ms. Christensen said when staff approved the EVM signs, they did not apply the definition of height in the Sign Ordinance. It says the height of EVM signs cannot be higher than 4 feet, and height is measured from grade. Ms. Christensen said that they came across this misinterpretation of the Ordinance last year, and now, staff is correctly enforcing the Sign Ordinance.

Mr. Coffey asked how many exceptions have been granted to the EVM standards because the Carom Sign was just installed. Ms. Christensen said that is how they found out that it was not enforced correctly. On a going forward basis, we will be enforcing the ordinance as it is written. Mr. Coffey said that all they are asking to do is to switch out what is currently there, like for like. Commissioner Toral asked what data does Mr. Coffey have to prove that this a case for hardship.

Theresa Wendhausen, 345 East Grand Avenue, representing First National Bank and Trust from the marketing department, stated that they are not able to get replacement parts for the sign so a lot of the lights are not lit all the time. Ms. Wendhausen said replacing the sign will improve Downtown Beloit and help draw more business to downtown.

Commissioner Toral said that without data, he cannot support the exception. He said that Plan Commission has been consistent on their denials of exception, and he intends to vote against this one as well.

Ms. Wendhausen said the monument sign has been there for over fifty years. Commissioner Flesch asked if the sign they are proposing is a video sign displaying time, date, and temperature. Mr. Coffey said it has video capability with a steady message. Ms. Christensen said that she does not think that they are going to just display time, temperature and date, that First National is going to put messages on there as well. Mr. Coffey said that this is much smaller in scale than the EVM's in the City of Beloit, and it will have messages.

Commissioner Jacobsen said that years back when the sign got updated with color for the bank and there was not an electric sign on top of it, and the community was mad about that. Commissioner Jacobsen said it did not have time and date on the sign back then. Mr. Coffey asked how many signs have come to Plan Commission and have been denied. Chairperson Ramsden said that Plan Commission tries to be consistent when they review exceptions, and not many have been received since we modified the ordinance a few years ago.

Ms. Christensen said that those exceptions were not EVM signs, and most of the sign exceptions were for having a larger secondary sign. Ms. Christensen stated that the Commission modified the Sign Ordinance to allow bonuses and more flexibility in design. Mr. Coffey indicated that he wanted Ms. Christensen to describe what the code says for EVM signs. Ms. Christensen said that date and time is a type of EVM sign, and then there are standard ones that are not date and time. Mr. Coffey asked if date and time had any height restriction. Ms. Christensen said it just does not have the four-foot height restriction.

Chairperson Ramsden closed the public hearing.

Council Dunkin asked if the applicant can come back later with a hardship argument. Ms. Christensen said if Plan Commission denies their sign, they can appeal to City Council.

Commissioner Janke moved to deny the Resolution approving an Exception to the Sign Ordinance, seconded by Commissioner Flesch. Motion was approved, roll call vote (5-1), with Commissioner Anderson abstaining and Commission Elliott voting no.

6. **STATUS REPORT ON PRIOR PLAN COMMISSION ITEMS**

There were no updates provided.

7. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Julie Christensen outlined the future agenda items.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Flesch moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Janke at 8:49PM. Motion carried, voice vote (7-0).

Mike Ramsden

Mike Ramsden, Chairperson