



Meeting Minutes
Beloit City Plan Commission
Wednesday, December 19, 2018 at 7:00 PM
The Forum
Beloit City Hall
100 State Street, Beloit

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairperson Faragher called the meeting to order at 7:02pm. Commissioners Weeden, Johnson, Faragher, Finnegan, Robson, and City Councilor Prueschl were present. Commissioners Haynes and Ruster were absent.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the December 5, 2018 Meeting

Commissioner Robson moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Weeden seconded the motion. The motion passed, voice vote.

3. Consideration of a Zoning Map Amendment to change the zoning from C-1, Office District, to PLI, Public Lands and Institutions District, for the property located at 916 Bushnell Street

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

Commissioner Faragher asked Ms. Christensen what the sign requirements were in the C-1 zoning district. Ms. Christensen stated that properties zoned C-1 are not allowed to have electronic message signs. However, properties in the PLI zoning district can have electronic message signs. Because this property is across the street from a residential zoning district, the sign ordinance states that the hours of use are from 6:00AM – 10:00PM. Commissioner Faragher asked if there is a limitation on brightness of the electronic sign. Ms. Christensen explained that there were some brightness restrictions in the ordinance.

Chairman Faragher opened the public hearing.

Shawn Gillen, 905 Bushnell, explained that he lives across the street from Rock County Christian School and is located in the historic district. Mr. Gillen stated that the sign Rock County Christian School currently has lights up the first floor of the home due to the brightness and was curious if the school could move the sign down the street away from the residential neighborhood. Commissioner Johnson asked Mr. Gillen if the hour

restrictions on the signage make a difference in the home. Mr. Gillen stated that the sign is brighter when it is dark, so at this time of year, the sign is bright at 4:00PM. He indicated that having the sign shut off at 10:00 PM will really not make a difference.

Tim Befus, 3549 Eagles Ridge Drive, representing Rock County Christian School, stated that money is tight and they fundraised for the \$20,000 for the sign itself. Mr. Befus said that Olson Signs indicated that it would cost approximately \$15,000 to move the sign down the street.

Commissioner Johnson asked Jeff Olson, Olson Signs, if it possible that the brightness of the sign could be adjusted during night hours. Commissioner Weeden asked if the neighbors and the owner of Rock County Christian School could come to an agreement on a location or dimness of the sign. Mr. Befus state the school will be years away from being able to afford to move the sign.

Mary Hansen, 620 Park Avenue, stated that the school has been good neighbors with them for many years. Ms. Hansen questioned what benefit will the sign bring to the community or school and asked what the size, brightness, placement, and the hours of the sign will be.

Jeff Olson, 14632 Whispering Way, owner of Olson Signs, mentioned that he lived near the South Beloit High School football field and that the sign is so bright that it lights up their home. This is due to South Beloit not having any brightness standards in their ordinances. Mr. Olson explained why the school wanted an electronic sign that right now, anytime Mr. Befus wants to change his sign he has to go out to the sign a change the letters. An electronic message sign would allow the school to provide information to the community on events going on at the school. An electronic message sign would allow changes to be made more easily.

Commissioner Robson asked Mr. Olson how much it would cost to move the sign down the street. Mr. Olson explained that his estimate to Mr. Befus was based on the last time he had to hire someone to dig holes. However, he can research this and get estimates from an electrician.

Commissioners Johnson and Finnegan indicated that the item before the Commission is the change in zoning from C-1 to PLI that the Commission is not here to vote on the sign.

Commissioner Weeden said that it seems like the neighbors and the applicant could come up with some compromise. He asked if the neighbors and applicant would be willing to meet and try to come up with some agreement on the sign. Commissioners Robson and Weeden stated they would be comfortable with laying the item, so that the neighbors and applicant can come to an agreement.

Chairman Faragher closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Robson moved to lay the item over. Commissioner Weeden seconded the motion.

Motion passed to lay the item over, voice vote. Commissioners Johnson and Finnegan voted against the motion.

4. **Consideration of a Permanent Limited Easement over a portion of the property located at 1859 Northgate Drive for the placement of traffic signal vehicle detection**

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

Commissioner Johnson asked how moving the driveway for the School to the intersection would impact the parking lot. Jason Dupuis, Project Engineer for the City, said that the City is working with the School District on this issue.

Commissioner Robson asked Mr. Dupuis why the City is make this change to the intersection. Mr. Dupuis stated the City is doing a reconstruction project on Prairie Ave from Cranston Road to Huebbe Parkway. As part of the project, the City has been looking at multiple sites to fix some of these current issues along this corridor. Mr. Dupuis stated that this easement will allow the City to put vehicle detection in the driveway at Aldrich Intermediate School.

Commissioner Johnson moved to approve the easement, Commissioner Finnegan seconded the motion. The motion passed, voice vote.

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

Julie Christensen explained that the City Council approved the annexation for Froebel Drive, and the Comprehensive Plan Amendment review by Plan Commission has not yet been acted on by City Council. There is a 30-day public review following the Plan Commission recommendation, so City Council will see this item in January. Following the article in the Beloit Daily News on this issue, the Councilors have heard from a few residents who are opposed to the multifamily proposal.

6. **Adjournment**

Commissioner Robson moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Weeden seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Amber DesRoberts.