

MINUTES
PLAN COMMISSION
City Hall Forum - 100 State Street, Beloit, WI 53511
7:00 PM
Wednesday, March 3, 2021

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. Chairman Weeden, Commissioners Robson, Toral, Finnegan, Ramsden, Ruster, and Councilor Preuschl were present.

2. MINUTES

2.a. Consideration of the minutes of the February 17, 2021 Plan Commission meeting

A motion was made by Commissioner Finnegan, seconded by Commissioner Ramsden to approve the minutes, as submitted. Motion carried, roll call vote.

3. REPORTS

3.a. Consideration of a Resolution approving a two-lot Certified Survey Map for the property located at 2225 W Creedy Road in the Town of Beloit

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

Motion was made by Commissioner Robson to approve the two-lot Certified Survey Map for 2225 W Creedy Road, seconded by Commissioner Ruster. Motion carried, roll call vote.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS

4.a. Consideration of a Zoning Map Amendment from C-1, Office District, to C-2, Neighborhood Commercial District, for the property located at 2315 Prairie Ave

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

Commission Weeden asked if the credit union wanted to change the zoning to give themselves more flexibility with the use of their property. Ms. Christensen explained that they were trying to gain additional flexibility. Commissioner Ruster asked how the Credit Union could use their greater flexibility by changing the zoning. Ms. Christensen stated that other commercial and retail uses would be allowed that are anticipated on a corridor like Prairie Ave. Additionally, drive-through uses are more fitting in C-2 districts.

Commissioner Weeden stated that there is an open lot to the south of the credit union between their building and the church that could be developed. Ms.

Christensen stated that it could be developed with other C-2, Neighborhood Commercial uses. Commissioner Ruster asked if the Credit Union owns that. Ms. Christensen stated that they do.

Commissioner Weeden opened and closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Ruster asked Ms. Christensen if she knew what the Credit Union was doing with the green space. Ms. Christensen stated that she did not know.

Motion was made by Commissioner Ramsden to approve the Zoning Map Amendment for 2315 Prairie Ave, seconded by Commissioner Finnegan. Motion carried, roll call vote.

4.b. **Consideration of a Resolution approving an Exception to Section 30.13(2)(a) of the Outdoor Sign Regulations to allow a temporary banner sign greater than 100 square feet on the Floor Arena (845 Pleasant Street)**

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

Commissioner Ramsden asked how long the Temporary Banner Sign will be up for. Ms. Christensen stated that the Temporary Banner Sign can only be up for thirty days. Commissioner Robson asked what the sign was going to say. Dan Schooff, 1955 Pebble Drive, the representative of Beloit College, stated that it will say “Black Lives Matter”, and they wanted to have it up until May 30th, 2021.

Ms. Christensen explained that the City Staff and Plan Commission cannot make sign decisions based on the content of the sign. Signs cannot be approved for longer than 30 days. Commissioner Ruster asked if this is in addition to the signs that installed on the pedestrian bridge. Mr. Schooff explained that they worked with City staff last fall on the pedestrian bridge signs. They are permitted up to three times a year for up to 60 days. Councilor Preuschl asked if this is in front of Plan Commission because of the size. Ms. Christensen stated yes that it is strictly because of the size.

Motion was made by Commissioner Robson, seconded by Commissioner Ruster to approve the Sign Ordinance Exception. Motion carried, roll call vote. Commissioner Toral works for Beloit College, so he abstained from the vote. (5, 0)

4.c. **Consideration of a Resolution authorizing an Exception to Section 30.40(2)(c) of the Outdoor Sign Regulations to allow two secondary, on premise signs larger than 30 square feet for the new Verizon store located at 2911 Milwaukee Road**

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

Commissioner Robson explained that the recommendation included a condition that no pole sign could be constructed and then asked what would happen if they decided they wanted a pole sign later. Ms. Christensen explained that they would have to amend their exception to modify the condition which indicated that they couldn't have a pole sign, and Plan Commission can decide whether or not they want to do approve it. Commissioner Weeden stated that anyone can come back to Plan Commission and ask for a pole sign; they would have to ask for an exception whether they want a pole sign or building sign. Commissioner Ruster expressed over the amount of exceptions that are being approved. Ms. Christensen stated that the City Staff approves many sign permits a year, but Plan Commission sees only a handful of exceptions.

Commissioner Weeden opened the public hearing.

Crystal Spencer, 508 27th St Rockford, Illinois, representing Signs Now, stated the Company has applied for the exception for the new Verizon store. Commissioner Weeden asked if other Verizon stores have pole signs; he asked whether corporate policy doesn't allow pole signs or if it is just for this location. Ms. Spencer stated she was not sure. Commissioner Ruster asked if Verizon had read the sign ordinance or was just choosing to go against it. Ms. Spencer stated that Verizon was the one who decided to opt for the exception. Corporate policy is requiring the sign package as presented. Commissioner Robson asked if any other communities that do not allow that kind of signage have rejected these. Ms. Spencer stated she cannot answer that because she is just a contractor for Verizon.

Commissioner Weeden closed the public hearing.

Motion was made by Commissioner Ramsden, seconded by Commissioner Finnegan to approve the Sign Ordinance Exception. Motion was not approved (3, 3).

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

Ms. Christensen stated that the City Council held the public hearing and first reading for the Comprehensive Plan Amendment for 3155 Prairie Ave and the Attachment Petition for 1945 Prairie. Both items will be before City Council for action at its March 15, 2021 meeting. The next Plan Commission meeting is scheduled for March 17, 2021.

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion made by Commissioner Robson, and seconded by Commissioner Ruster to adjourn.
Motion carried, roll call vote. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.