

MINUTES OF THE PLAN COMMISSION
February 25, 2013

The regular meeting of the Plan Commission was called to order by Chairman Mark Moore at 7:03 p.m. at the Village Hall.

Members present: Chairman Mark Moore, William Cotey, Scott Adams, Walter Oakley, Kurt Schultz, and David Semmelman.

Members absent: Dan Donahue.

A quorum was established.

Commissioner Schultz moved, seconded by Commissioner Adams, to approve the January 14, 2013, Plan Commission meeting minutes.

Motion carried 6 - 0.

Village Staff present: John Spoden, Director of Community Development; and Johanna Bye, Associate Planner.

OLD BUSINESS:

**PC 13-05 Bridge Development Partners, LLC, Applicant
804 East Park Avenue**

Request is for a Special Use Permit for Planned Development in order to construct a warehousing and distribution facility on approximately 21 acres of land for property located in an I-3, General Industrial District.

**PC 13-06 Bridge Development Partners, LLC, Applicant
804 East Park Avenue**

Request is for a Planned Development Concept Plan in order to construct a warehousing and distribution facility on approximately 21 acres of land for property located in an I-3, General Industrial District.

**PC 13-07 Bridge Development Partners, LLC, Applicant
804 East Park Avenue**

Request is for a Special Use Permit for Warehousing and Storage in order to construct a warehousing and distribution facility on approximately 21 acres of land for property located in an I-3, General Industrial District.

**PC 13-08 Bridge Development Partners, LLC, Applicant
804 East Park Avenue**

Minutes of the February 25, 2013, Plan Commission Meeting
Page 2 of 6

Request is for a Preliminary Plat of Subdivision in order to construct a warehousing and distribution facility on approximately 21 acres of land for property located in an I-3, General Industrial District.

The applicant requested that the meeting be continued to the March 18, 2013, Plan Commission meeting.

Mr. John Spoden, Director of Community Development, stated that the applicant is in the process of re-submitting documents.

In the matters of PC 13-05 thru PC 13-08, Commissioner Adams moved, seconded by Commissioner Oakley, to continue these items to the March 18, 2013, Plan Commission meeting.

Motion carried 6 - 0.

Ayes: Moore, Adams, Cotey, Oakley, Schultz, Semmelman

Nays: None

Absent: Donahue

NEW BUSINESS: None.

WORKSHOP DISCUSSION - ARTICLE 11 OF THE LIBERTYVILLE ZONING CODE

Commissioner Moore stated that there are no new cases and that this meeting will be a workshop in regards to signage.

Ms. Johanna Bye, Associate Planner, stated that a new section at the beginning of Chapter 11 establishes design standards for all signs in all districts. She stated that this new section states that sign design must be consistent with the architecture of the building it belongs to.

Ms. Bye stated that the proposed Sign Code limits each sign to two sign faces and no longer allows v-shape signs. She stated that only projecting, freestanding and marquee signs can have two faces.

Ms. Bye stated that the proposed standards on illumination are taken from what is currently allowed in the C-1 District. She stated that the background must be opaque so that at night, only the copy is illuminated.

Mr. John Spoden, Director of Community Development, stated that an issue has come up with multi-tenant signs, and that the intention is not to have new tenant panels look different than the old ones. He stated that new panels should look like the old ones to maintain consistency, but that a new multi-tenant sign should abide by the proposed standards.

Minutes of the February 25, 2013, Plan Commission Meeting
Page 3 of 6

Commissioner Schultz asked about LED rope illumination and how we can monitor it. He stated that LED lights are being used to outline window frames, and that while this may be considered a decoration, it makes a business stand out like a sign does.

Commissioner Adams asked if the current Sign Code addresses window display lighting. He stated that Staff could look into this and possibly work with MainStreet Libertyville to set standards.

Ms. Bye stated that time and temperature displays have been removed from flashing light exemptions. Mr. Spoden stated that there is no reason to have them flashing, though they can change faster than other electronic signs.

Ms. Bye stated that the proposed Sign Code establishes standards for the illumination of temporary signage. Mr. Spoden stated that people have been illuminating their temporary signs and that while there are no issues at present, he wants to make sure there are not any in the future.

Ms. Bye stated that the proposed Sign Code limits how we measure sign area. She stated that the option to measure around each letter and the spaces in between has been removed.

Ms. Bye stated that under Classification of Signs, time and temperature display has been removed from the definition of flashing sign, and search and strobe lights have been added. She stated that definition of portable sidewalk signs has been added to this section as well.

Commissioner Schultz asked about regulation of inflatables. Mr. Spoden stated that the Village can dictate location, but that it is hard to regulate size. Commissioner Schultz requested that height be negotiated.

Ms. Bye stated that blade sign has been added to Structural Types in the proposed Sign Code. Mr. Spoden stated that this type of signage is meant for pedestrians only, and is to be placed under a projecting façade in a shopping center. He stated that blade signs will only be permitted in C-4 Districts.

Ms. Bye stated that the allowable square footage for professional directory signs has decreased from 30 to 15 square feet.

Ms. Bye stated that the size of residential real estate signs has decreased from six to four square feet for single-family homes and 12 to six square feet for multi-family homes.

Commissioner Semmelman stated that the current description of residential real estate signs appears to limit them to open house signs, but asked if this type of signage includes for sale signs as well. Mr. Spoden stated that both open house and for sale signs are permitted as residential real estate signs, but that Staff needs to clarify this in the description wording.

Commissioner Schultz asked about going out of business signs. Mr. Spoden stated that they are addressed under temporary signage and permitted for 30 days. He stated that advertisements on a

Minutes of the February 25, 2013, Plan Commission Meeting
Page 4 of 6

moving car cannot be considered signage nor can the signs held by people in the public right of way. Mr. Spoden stated that if a store is going out of business, they have to file with the municipality and document their inventory to keep it from becoming a perpetual going out of business sale.

Ms. Bye stated that the maximum size of temporary signs has been limited to 16 square feet. She stated that under the current code, the size of temporary signs is based on what is allowed for permanent signage. She stated that inflatables have been listed as an exclusion to this rule.

Ms. Bye stated that construction signs have been reduced in size from 32 to 4 square feet in residential districts and from 64 to 16 square feet in non-residential districts, and reduced in height from 8 to 6 feet. Commissioner Schultz questioned the proposed size of residential construction signs, and stated that this limit may be a burden to some contractors who already have signs made. He recommended increasing the allowable size from 4 to 6 square feet.

Ms. Bye stated that new development announcement signs will be limited to 16 square feet under the proposed changes.

Ms. Bye stated that a section on menu board signs has been added to the Sign Code, which are only allowed with a Special Use Permit for a drive through use.

Ms. Bye stated that a section on portable sidewalk signs has been added to the Sign Code. She stated that interested businesses would need a yearly permit for this type of signage. She stated that they would be able to put up a sidewalk sign between May 1 and November 1 each year. She stated that if a business had a sidewalk sign permit, they would not be allowed temporary signage throughout the year.

Ms. Bye stated that though they are not currently permitted, businesses have been using sidewalk signs. She stated that one issue with these signs is their look, and that many businesses have been using sidewalk signs with undesirable white plastic frames. Ms. Bye stated that the new limitations regulate the appearance of sidewalk signs in the C-1 and C-2 Districts, stating that they need to have a wood frame and a chalkboard face. Ms. Bye stated that there are no design regulations in the C-3 and C-4 Districts.

Ms. Bye stated that an additional issue is the placement of sidewalk signs. She stated that currently, many businesses are placing the signs next to their front facade, but in the pedestrian walkway. Ms. Bye stated that a better location for sidewalk signs may be away from store entrance and in line with the trees and street furniture, where they do not impede pedestrian traffic. She stated that the proposed code states that the sidewalk sign needs to be within ten feet of the store entrance, but cannot reduce the sidewalk to less than four feet.

Commissioner Adams asked if there will be too much going on if we allow sidewalk signs, projecting signs and wall signs. He stated that when the trees are in full bloom, signs become less visible and cannot be seen on the front of buildings. He stated that for this reason, projecting signs are important at the pedestrian level.

Minutes of the February 25, 2013, Plan Commission Meeting
Page 5 of 6

Commissioner Oakley brought up the issue of parking. He stated that people need to easily get in out of their cars, and that this may be hindered by the placement of sidewalk signs. Ms. Bye stated that Staff will require a site plan with the application that shows the exact location of the sidewalk sign.

Commissioner Cotey stated that merchants may not like the May through November restrictions. He stated that the Holidays are important to retailers and that businesses may want signage during this time. Ms. Bye suggested that sidewalk signs could possibly be allowed all year, but not during times of inclement weather. She stated that if sidewalk signs were to be allowed all year, no temporary signage would be permitted.

Chairman Moore asked Staff to look into eliminating incidental informational signs, since their purpose is unclear.

Ms. Bye stated that the proposed Sign Code will allow a business name or logo on private traffic direction signs, but that the name or logo may not cover more than 20% of the sign. Commissioner Cotey stated that he would like these signs to be included in the total sign area permitted per business. He stated that he would like the size for private traffic direction signs to be reduced from four square feet to two.

Ms. Bye stated that freestanding signs have been eliminated from the C-1 District under the proposed Sign Code, except for multi-tenant signs. She stated that either one wall sign or one awning sign would be permitted per facade, and that projecting signs would be permitted on Milwaukee. Commissioner Semmelman asked if a combination of wall and awning signs would be permitted on different facades. Mr. Spoden stated yes and that Staff would clarify in the wording that a business could mix and match with wall and awning signs, but that only one would be permitted per facade.

Ms. Bye stated that the size of projecting signs has been reduced from four to three square feet and that projection has been reduced from 48 inches to 36 inches. She stated that that wall signs will not be permitted to exceed 40 square feet in the C-1 District. She stated that the maximum height for projecting signs will change from 8 feet to 80 inches.

Ms. Bye asked if we should restrict the design of projecting signs. Commissioner Schultz stated no, that we want to maintain diversity and allow each sign to match the architecture of its building.

Commissioner Schultz asked if there is a maximum height proposed for projecting signs. Commissioner Semmelman stated that they are not to exceed the roofline. Commissioner Schultz asked if we can require all signs to align at the minimum height. He stated that this would create consistency, but still allow for variations among signs based on their heights. He stated that the architecture of different buildings might not allow for this though.

Commissioner Moore suggested that each projecting sign needs to completely fit within a minimum of 80 inches from the ground and a maximum of 120 inches. He stated that this might

Minutes of the February 25, 2013, Plan Commission Meeting
Page 6 of 6

not be the magic number for height, but at least the minimum and maximum create some kind of zone. Mr. Spoden stated that Staff will do more research on the height minimums and limits.

Ms. Bye stated that the C-2 District now has its own section in the Sign Code. She stated that in the current code, the C-2 District is included with the C-3 and C-4 Districts. She stated that freestanding signs are no longer permitted in the C-2 District. She stated that either one wall sign or one awning sign would be permitted per facade.

Mr. Spoden stated that the height restrictions need clarification and that the intent is to not allow a second floor tenant to have a wall sign.

Ms. Bye stated that multi-tenant freestanding signs can now identify up to ten tenants, and increase from six. She stated that the proposed Sign Code establishes guidelines for gasoline station signage in the C-2 District.

Ms. Bye stated that in the C-3 and C-4 Districts, the proposed Sign Code states that the size of a wall sign is no longer related to the square footage of a business occupancy, but instead the size of linear frontage.

Mr. Spoden stated that we need to clarify that this measurement is corner to corner, not the entire length of multiple facades, if a business has more than one.

Ms. Bye stated that the maximum size of multi-tenant signs has decreased from 250 to 150 square feet, and that that number of tenant names allowed has increased from six to ten. She stated that blade signs have been added to permitted types, and that the description states that each blade sign must be mounted perpendicular to the walkway.

Ms. Bye stated that in the C-5 District, the proposed Sign Code allows for one freestanding sign for each accessory used vehicle sales/leasing in addition to the one for each vehicle manufacturer. She stated that it also allows for one wall sign for accessory service in addition to one for each vehicle manufacturer.

COMMUNICATIONS AND DISCUSSION: None.

Commissioner Donahue moved, seconded by Commissioner Schultz, to adjourn the Plan Commission meeting.

Motion carried 6 - 0.

Meeting adjourned at 9:27 p.m.