



**CITY OF LONG LAKE
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 10, 2013**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Erickson.

Present: Commission Members Adams, Erickson, Hughes, Jerde, and Stephenson; City Administrator, Terry Post; City Planning Consultant Addison Lewis; and City Councilmember Chillstrom.

Absent: None.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVE AGENDA

Commissioner Adams moved to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Ayes: all.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes of the November 12, 2013 Planning Commission Meeting

Commissioner Jerde moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Commissioner Stephenson seconded. Ayes: all.

OPEN CORRESPONDENCE

None.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Case #2013-05/Long Lake Chiro Center, 1865 W Wayzata Boulevard, Variance to Allow for a Wall Sign that Exceeds the Maximum Area and Height Permitted in the B-2 General Business District (Revised Sign Plan)

City Planning Consultant Lewis reported that the application for Long Lake Chiro Center is back before the Commission. He advised that at the November 12th Planning Commission the Commission recommended approval of the request, however the City Council expressed concern with the proposed sign and precedent that could be set by approving a sign almost double the allotted dimensions. He noted that there was also concern over the illumination of a sign of that size. He advised that the Council directed the applicant to amend the sign

and to bring the request back through the Planning Commission. He reported that the proposed sign is now 3.67 feet by 14.17 feet, which is a total of 52 square feet and is down from 72 square feet. He noted that the border around the sign has been removed.

Commissioner Jerde stated that she was in favor of the previously proposed sign and would also be in favor of this size.

Commissioner Hughes stated that he was also in favor of the previously proposed sign and found it strange that the comments of the Planning Commission were simply disregarded, as the Planning Commission is meant to be an advisory body to the Council.

Commissioner Adams confirmed specific information about the sign and proposed inlaid pentagon.

Councilmember Chillstrom stated that he believes the proposed sign to be quite a bit smaller than the originally proposed sign and is much more comfortable with the newly proposed sign. He also expressed concern over precedent that could be set in allowing a sign of the originally proposed size.

City Planning Consultant Lewis provided additional information from the sign ordinance and how the square footage of a sign is measured.

Commissioner Stephenson noted that it might be a good idea to have signage along Highway 12 to allow businesses to advertise to those customers driving by.

Commissioner Hughes stated that in regard to precedent the request should be considered on its own and not based on other requests. He noted that the previous request from another business owner is located in a different zoning district. He noted the concern of illumination from the Council and questioned what happened with that and whether the sign would be shut off at a certain time.

Michael Schwartz, the applicant, stated that the streetlights in that area are brighter than the proposed illumination for the sign, but noted that could be an option if needed to move forward.

City Planning Consultant Lewis provided additional information in regard to the uniqueness of the property, noting that the signage for the other businesses are found on the other side of the building and there is no allowable space for additional signs on that side of the building.

Commissioner Hughes stated that the criteria for the variance have been met and believed the proposed sign looks great.

Councilmember Chillstrom suggested that the square footage of the illuminated portion of the sign and a letter from the other tenants in support of the request be brought to the Council meeting.

Commissioner Stephenson believed that it is the job of the Planning Commission and City Council to help the businesses in the City. He explained that in this case, the applicant

would own this side of the building and therefore other tenants could not advertise on that side of the building.

Mr. Schwartz stated that he spoke with the other tenants in the building and they do not have interest in additional signage.

Chair Erickson believed that the proposed sign is of high quality and although it will cost the applicant a bit more, the sign will look great.

Commissioner Stephenson stated that he is considering the sign as a method for advertising to those that do not live in Long Lake who are coming for service and then may frequent additional businesses within the city.

Commissioner Hughes stated that it was made clear that the Council was going to deny this request before it was even heard. He did not believe that there was sufficient discussion by the Council to even consider the recommendation from the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Stephenson stated that this is not the first time that the Planning Commission has made a unanimous recommendation for the approval and the Council simply denies the request point blank.

Chair Erickson noted that precedent only becomes an issue when the circumstances are identical and when different factors come into play the issue of precedent disappears.

It was the consensus of the Commission that the illumination should be allowed on during the night.

Commissioner Adams moved to recommend that the City Council adopt a resolution to approve variances for a commercial wall sign in the B-2 General Business zoning district that exceeds the maximum area and height permitted for property located at 1865 West Wayzata Boulevard with the findings of fact noted in the Staff Report dated November 12, 2013 and expressed by the Planning Commission. Commissioner Jerde seconded. Ayes: all.

OTHER BUSINESS

Council Liaison Report

Councilmember Chillstrom reported that a new City Administrator has been hired and will begin January 7, 2014. He provided some information on the new staff member who will be coming from Clarkfield.

Commission Member Business

Chair Erickson stated that he is hoping to continue the communications with Metro Transit regarding additional signage into 2014, and believed the new City Administrator should be a part of that. He acknowledged that the positions of Chair and Chair Pro-tem are appointed to a one-year term and confirmed that the item would be included on the January agenda.

Commissioner Adams asked for additional information regarding the high water ordinance.

Councilmember Chillstrom noted that the item is moving forward and requires the approval of Orono as well.

Commissioner Adams confirmed that he and Chair Erickson attended the Highway 12 turnback open forum recently held by the City Council.

Staff Business

City Planning Consultant Lewis questioned if the Commission established a Work Plan at the beginning of 2013.

Chair Erickson confirmed that a Work Plan was approved and believed he had a copy of the document.

Councilmember Chillstrom stated that the Council will hold a planning session in the beginning of the year and will make recommendations to the Commission for their Work Plan.

City Planning Consultant Lewis noted that staff has identified a few ordinances that could use amending.

The Commission discussed the rowing club location and noted that all of the conditions and criteria were not met while the organization used the location. It was noted that the temporary permit will expire at the end of the year and if no proposal comes forward all equipment would need to be removed from the site prior to January 1, 2014.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Adams moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m. Commissioner Hughes seconded. Ayes: all.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Post
City Administrator