



MINUTES

MEETING OF VILLAGE OF FRANKFORT PLAN COMMISSION / ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

February 23, 2023 –VILLAGE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

432 W. NEBRASKA STREET

- Call to Order:** Chair Rigoni called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM
- Commissioners Present:** Chair Maura Rigoni, Brian James, Dan Knieriem, Will Markunas, Nichole Schaeffer
- Commissioners Absent:** David Hogan, Jessica Jakubowski
- Staff Present:** Director of Community and Economic Development Mike Schwarz, Senior Planner Chris Gruba, Planner Drew Duffin
- Elected Officials Present:** Trustee Michael Leddin

A. Re-Approval of the Minutes from January 26th, 2023

Chair Rigoni asked staff to explain the changes made to the minutes.

Mike Schwarz explained that staff found a handful of typos and missing words in the minutes from January 26th after they were originally approved on February 9th. He gave a brief overview of the corrections made.

Motion (#1): To re-approve the minutes from January 26th, 2023.

Motion by: Markunas Seconded by: Schaeffer

Approved: (5-0)

B. Approval of the Minutes from February 9th, 2023

Motion (#2): To approve the minutes from February 9th, 2023.

Motion by: Markunas Seconded by: Schaeffer

Approved: (5-0)

C. Workshop: Village of Frankfort Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment

Chris Gruba presented the staff report.

Chair Rigoni suggested that the discussion begin with the proposed changes to sections which did not relate to specific uses.

There was some discussion on whether the proposed change to the provision regulating loudspeakers should be relocated to another section of the Zoning Ordinance or left in place. Chair Rigoni suggested that the provision be moved to a section which listed general regulations.

Chair Rigoni turned the discussion to the table of parking regulations in the staff report. She suggested that it would be helpful for future discussions if staff could illustrate how the proposed changes would impact parking requirements at more locations within the Village.

Commissioner Knieriem clarified that they were looking for staff to compare the proposed changes to the parking regulations to the existing regulations with more real-life examples.

Chair Rigoni suggested Starbucks as an example, which according to the staff report required 41 parking spaces per the Zoning Ordinance, but only 28 under the proposed regulations. She noted that it was a big change. She stated that she wanted to also further research and compare the proposed parking changes between multi-tenant spaces and single-tenant spaces.

Chris Gruba responded that staff recommended 1 parking space per 100 square feet of gross floor area in the example for fast-food restaurants, however they could instead make the regulation stricter by requiring 1 parking space per 75 square feet.

Commissioner James suggested that the commercial development at the southwest corner of Wolf Road and Laraway Road could make a good case study, since it was currently built, but unoccupied.

Chris Gruba agreed that staff could do that, though he stated he was unsure how parking was calculated for that site initially because none of the tenants were noted at that time, nor are they known today.

Chair Rigoni suggested looking at the building plans, as they often listed the parking standards their lots were designed to, typically 7 or 8 parking spaces per 1000 SF.

Commissioner Knieriem suggested that the other members of the Plan Commission could think of a couple of buildings for staff to use as examples.

Chair Rigoni said that Multack Eye Care would be a good example to look at for medical uses. The example chiropractic use presented by staff within the Butera plaza requires 11

parking spaces under the current regulations but would be reduced to 4 parking spaces under the proposed changes. She suggested staff look at Brookside Commons, since staff and the Plan Commission were aware that there was a parking problem there.

Chair Rigoni proceeded to list other buildings for staff to give as examples showcasing the proposed changes to the parking regulations.

Commissioner Knieriem suggested the sports complex on Laraway Road.

Chair Rigoni agreed that it could be a good example.

Commissioner Knieriem asked if there was a specific parking requirement for an indoor athletic space.

Chair Rigoni explained that those uses were categorized as indoor recreation. She added that it would be good to look at buildings which were recently approved for indoor recreation.

Commissioner Knieriem suggested looking at the retirement home on Wolf Road. Chair Rigoni asked if he was referring to Cedarhurst. Chris Gruba asked if he was referring to Oasis Senior Living. Chair Rigoni suggested that looking at both properties could work.

Chair Rigoni said that she was hesitant about changing Frankfort's regulations by only looking at the regulations used in other communities. That approach might not account for changes the other communities made over time, as well as in cases where the standard parking regulations did not always apply, as with Planned Unit Developments (PUDs).

Chris Gruba stated that the ITE manual, which staff also referred to, was also included in the staff report, which is the industry standard for parking requirements. He said that the ITE Manual is likely more reliable than other communities' regulations.

Chair Rigoni said she had been to some of the communities referenced. She had seen cases in those communities where properties have their own parking issues.

Commissioner Schaeffer stated she would like to go line-by-line through the table at the end of the text amendment process, for the sake of being thorough.

Commissioner Markunas agreed.

Chair Rigoni suggested staff not prioritize looking at certain regulations, such as schools, colleges, libraries, and hospitals since it was unlikely that Frankfort would see any of those developed in the near future. She suggested staff instead focus on the regulations for uses staff and the Plan Commission were likely to come up frequently. For example, she suggested staff look at those uses the Plan Commission had seen had recently, such as offices.

Other members of the Plan Commission also suggested restaurants, daycares, and businesses.

Chris Gruba noted that in some recent cases, the parking regulations were relatively strict.

Chair Rigoni agreed, and suggested that staff look at those cases to determine where the regulations were too strict, and why.

Commissioner Markunas noted that most PUDs were overparked.

The members of the Plan Commission listed the uses from the table they believed staff ought to prioritize in their research.

Chair Rigoni stated that in the case of the general business regulations, she wanted to see a comparison between existing and proposed regulations. She understood that staff was proposing to drop employee counts from the regulations, which would result in less required parking.

Chris Gruba said staff could get more data.

Chair Rigoni also noted that gas stations were incorporating more uses into their business models recently, including convenient store and restaurant uses. She then asked what the definition for repair services was.

Chris Gruba stated that there was no definition given in the parking regulations, and he had assumed that the repair service use referred to for appliance, phone, or shoe repairs.

Chair Rigoni asked if there was a definition in the Zoning Ordinance, such as for indoor business sales and indoor business services.

Chris Gruba stated that he was unsure if there was a definition for indoor business services. He looked through the Zoning Ordinance and stated that there were definitions for retail sales, and personal services, which included shoe shine and repair.

Commissioner Schaeffer suggested that if staff was going to look at the parking regulations for taverns, then they should look at microbreweries, too.

Chair Rigoni agreed.

Chris Gruba added that there were currently no parking requirements for distribution centers or truck terminals, and that they might be worth considering. He asked the Plan Commission to go through the list of parking regulations again and call out which they felt were most important to address.

The Plan Commission called out the uses they wished for staff to look at, including:

- Assisted living facilities
- Nursing homes
- Preschools or daycares
- Health and athletic clubs
- Other indoor recreation
- Business establishments
- Automobile fueling stations
- Financial institutions
- Personal services
- Restaurants (all types)
- Night clubs/taverns
- Microbreweries
- Offices
- Health Clinics/Offices

Chair Rigoni asked staff to either remove or visually separate the uses that had no proposed changes.

Commissioner Knieriem asked if the discussion should turn to focus on the new uses which staff had suggested.

Chair Rigoni said that it should.

Commissioner Knieriem asked what was meant by private clubs.

Commissioner Schaeffer suggested private clubs included organizations like the Stonemasons.

Chair Rigoni suggested that if any proposed regulation required a Special Use Permit, staff could wait to determine parking at a later time, such as during a Plan Commission meeting. She recalled that there was a provision in the parking regulations that stated the Plan Commission could set parking requirements for any uses which did not fit into the list preceding it.

Discussion turned to recent cases which were heard and voted on by the Plan Commission. During the discussion, the Plan Commission asked whether Facen4Ward was open for business yet. Staff said that they believed the business was still working with the Building Department to get permits to build out their space.

Chair Rigoni stated that she believed staff should still ask applicants for floorplans for new buildings, as a way to determine if applicants were serious about operating in the Village or not.

Chris Gruba said that staff would still ask applicants for floorplans, but that parking was calculated for all types of uses, regardless of whether they are special uses or permitted uses. He believed that having a calculation to determine the required parking for a proposed business or development would be smoother for staff and for applicants.

Commissioner Schaeffer asked if it was possible to have language in certain parking regulations which had “either/or” language.

Chris Gruba replied that “either/or” language in parking regulations was typically followed with the phrase “whichever is greater,” which would lead to more calculations for staff to do, some of which are difficult to determine, such as those that involve employee counts.

Chair Rigoni stated that serious businesses would know the number of employees they would need to hire in order to succeed. She suggested it might be in the Village’s best interest to keep the employee count language in certain cases.

Mike Schwarz said that Frankfort was unique with including employee counts in the parking regulations. Mariano’s was a good example. The business was now owned by Kroger, which has a different staffing model than Mariano’s which operated there previously. After the site was initially developed, the Mariano’s requested a Major Change to the PUD to have extra parking built on the north side of Market Street behind the store. Today, that same lot typically is unused. In his opinion, using employee counts in parking regulations was not useful.

Chair Rigoni said that she didn’t disagree, but that it was important to look at where the code would be changed, what the impacts of those changes would be, and then use that information to determine the Plan Commission was comfortable with those changes. The Plan Commission would need to understand how moving away from employee counts would impact parking, to make sure it was not negatively impacting parking.

Commissioner Schaeffer stated that she liked the data-driven approach staff had used, but that it sounded like the other members of the Plan Commission wanted to use on-the-ground examples too.

Chair Rigoni suggested staff take a look at the Buona Beef development, for example.

Commissioner Markunas suggested staff look at the strip mall where Buenas Nachos was located.

Chair Rigoni added that businesses had been denied requests recently because of real, observable parking issues. She wanted to make sure they would not be permitted to operate due to the changes to parking regulations.

Commissioner Schaeffer suggested staff look at Brookside Commons as an example.

Chris Gruba suggested the outlots of the Emagine Theater development, such as Steak & Shake.

Commissioner Schaeffer said having comparisons of those locations would be helpful.

Chair Rigoni added that creating a side-by-side table would be helpful as well.

Commissioner Knieriem suggested looking at the Dancing Marlin as an example of a restaurant with indoor and outdoor dining.

Chris Gruba noted that staff is most concerned with getting away from using employee counts when determining parking. He summarized the discussion up to that point to confirm he understood what the Plan Commission was asking for. He recalled that staff shouldn't look at all the uses listed in the parking regulations, and instead focus on the ones listed by the Plan Commission, and to remove those uses which would remain unchanged.

Commissioner Markunas said that the Plan Commission would look at all the listed uses, but that staff should prioritize looking at the ones they listed.

Commissioner Knieriem said that there was no immediate urgency to revamp the parking requirements as soon as possible, and suggested that much of research suggested by the PC/ZBA could be good work for a seasonal intern.

Chair Rigoni agreed, recalling that there were big projects coming to the Plan Commission soon, and asked staff to be sure they focused on those. The changes could wait if needed.

Chris Gruba noted that the Plan Commission often discussed parking, though, which made even those larger projects more complex. He added that changing the parking regulations was at the top of the list of text amendments staff wanted to make.

Chair Rigoni stated that parking is more an art than science.

Mike Schwarz said that some communities were changing their regulations, and were instead enforcing parking maximums rather than requiring parking minimums. He agreed that parking was more art than science. The changes staff was suggesting were an attempt to right-size the existing requirements, rather than trying to remove parking requirements. He wanted to avoid being Frankfort being perceived as an outlier in regard to parking regulations. He did not want parking problems in the lot or parking problems overflowing into the street.

Chair Rigoni agreed, and added that lots of national chains had their own requirements which they had to meet. She asked staff if they felt they had received enough direction.

Chris Gruba said that he had, and thanked the Plan Commission

Commissioner Schaeffer thanked Chris for his work.

D. Public Comments

There were no members of the public present, and so there were no public comments.

E. Village Board & Committee Updates

Mike Schwarz noted that the Village Board approved the following items at their meeting on February 21st, 2023, which had previously appeared before the Plan Commission:

- 700 Birchwood Road – Markunas Residence: Variance to reduce the rear yard setback from 30 feet to 23 feet – Ordinance was approved.

F. Other Business

Mike Schwarz explained that the Committee-of-the-Whole heard a request from a business owner in the industrial area to change the code to allow the business to sublease some space to a chiropractor's office. Based on the discussion at that meeting, there was no desire to make such a change from the Committee-of-the-Whole.

Chair Rigoni remarked that the Committee seemed unanimous on that matter.

Commissioner Knieriem asked if there was any news on the Homestead Commercial development, and if staff knew which businesses would move in.

Mike Schwarz stated that staff was unaware of which businesses would open in the development, though he had sent some prospects to the property owner.

Chair Rigoni suggested that those prospects could serve as examples in future parking discussions.

Mike Schwarz also made the Plan Commission aware that the applicant for Sparks Coffee had asked the Village Board to remand their case back to the Plan Commission for further discussion.

G. Attendance Confirmation (February 23rd, 2023)

Chair Rigoni asked the members of the Plan Commission to notify staff if they know they would not be able to attend the March 9th meeting.

Motion (#6): Adjournment 7:37 P.M.

Motion by: Schaeffer

Seconded by: James

The motion was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Approved April 13th, 2023

As Presented x As Amended

Maura A. Rigoni /s/ Maura Rigoni, Chair

Drew Duff /s/ Secretary