

CITY PLAN COMMISSION
Wednesday, December 18, 2013

A meeting of the City Plan Commission was called to order at 7:20 p.m. by Chairperson Dan Wiegand in Council Chambers, City Hall, 421 Michigan Street.

Roll call: Members Steve Parent, Rick Wiesner, Dan Wiegand, and Laurel Brooks, were present. Members excused: Jeff Norland, Dennis Statz, and Mike Gilson. Also present were Community Development Director Marty Olejniczak and Community Development Secretary Cheryl Nault.

Adoption of agenda: Moved by Ms. Brooks, seconded by Mr. Wiesner to adopt the following agenda, with the removal of item #6:

1. Roll call.
2. Adoption of agenda.
3. Approval of minutes from October 16, 2013.
4. Public comment on non-agenda items.
5. Consideration of: Sign code amendment to allow electronic message signs in residential districts for churches.
- ~~6. Consideration of: Setback from navigable water.~~
7. Adjourn.

Carried.

Approval of minutes from October 16, 2013: Moved by Mr. Wiesner, seconded by Mr. Parent to approve the minutes from October 16, 2013. Carried.

Public comment on non-agenda items: No one spoke during public comment.

Consideration of: Sign code amendment to allow electronic message signs in residential districts for churches: Mr. Olejniczak stated that he has received correspondence from several churches regarding sign regulations related to electronic message signs. Currently, electronic message signs are not allowed in the residential district where most of the churches are located. They are requesting the City to revise the sign code to include electronic message signs.

Mr. Olejniczak went over the current regulations for the electronic message signs, including a maximum size of 32 sq. ft. that is counted toward the maximum size of the overall sign. Only static messages can be displayed with no scrolling, flashing, or animation permitted. Each message must be displayed for a maximum of six seconds, and the signs must be equipped with equipment that automatically can adjust the brightness and contrast based upon ambient conditions.

Since most of the churches are located along arterial or collector streets, having an electronic message sign may not have a significant impact with heavier traffic and mixture of nonresidential uses. The requirement of the static message being displayed for at least 6 seconds will help prevent the signs from detracting from the residential character of the neighborhoods.

Steve Heinz, 211 N. 17th Dr., representing Bay View Lutheran Church, stated that they may have enough funds to purchase an electronic message board. They want to share

events happening in the church, as well as community events. Currently, different signs are used for different messages. The sign they are looking at installing is the same size as the Sturgeon Bay High School. The same brickwork would be used as what is on the church. The size of the message center is 6 feet in length and 2 ½ feet high. The cost of the sign is approximately \$9,000 - \$10,000 without the brickwork.

Charles Stratton, 1066 Bonnie View Dr., also representing Bay View Lutheran Church, stated that they had sent out letters to the neighbors in regard to possibly installing an electronic message sign. There was only one neighbor that had concerns of distraction for cars going by.

Mr. Wiegand felt an electronic message sign in a residential neighborhood should be dealt with on a case by case basis.

Mr. Parent added that churches have a lot of information to get to the public. Equipment could be set up to adjust the brightness at night. The maximum 32 sq. ft. may be too large of a size in a residential district. Mr. Heinz commented that the sign would probably be shut off around 9:00 p.m. every evening.

After further discussion, it was the consensus of the Commission to have Mr. Olejniczak consult with the City Attorney regarding legal issues pertaining to case by case review of proposed electronic message centers and whether rules could be tailored just for churches. Mr. Olejniczak will draft language for case by case applications. One other option is to allow the electronic message sign for churches only.

Adjourn: Moved by Mr. Wiesner, seconded by Mr. Parent to adjourn. Carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Nault
Community Development Secretary