

**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
CITY OF FORT ATKINSON
DECEMBER 13, 2016
973RD MEETING**

CALL TO ORDER.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Trebatoski in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building at 4:00 pm.

ROLL CALL.

Present: Commissioners Frame, Gehred, Greenhalgh, Highfield, Scherer, City Engineer Andy Selle and City Manager Matt Trebatoski. Also present: City Attorney Chris Rogers, Building Inspector Brian Juarez and City Clerk/Treasurer Michelle Ebbert.

Excused absence: None.

APPROVE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 25, 2016 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING.

Cm. Highfield motioned, seconded by Cm. Frame to approve the minutes of the October 25, 2016 Planning Commission meeting. Motion carried.

REVIEW AND APPROVE MOBILE MERCHANT LICENSE FOR RABL'S CHRISTMAS TREES TO SELL CHRISTMAS TREES IN THE PARKING LOT AT SHOPKO, 1425 JANESVILLE AVENUE

Clerk Ebbert reviewed the application submitted by Norman Rabl of Rabl's Christmas trees. Mr. Rabl and Shopko were unfamiliar with the requirement of the permit and applied upon receiving notification. Ebbert spoke with Rabl and Shopko who confirmed an agreement for Rabl to set up in their parking lot. Rabl applied for a six month license as a daily license would not be cost effective. Application requirements were met, a successful background check conducted and Department did not express any concerns.

Cm. Frame moved to approve the mobile merchant license application for Rabl's, Cm. Greenhalgh seconded the motion and carried.

REVIEW AND APPROVE REQUEST FOR NEW SIGN INCLUDING ELECTRONIC MESSAGE BOARD AT MCDONALD'S AT 225 NORTH MAIN STREET

Engineer Selle reviewed the submittal for a new sign placement at McDonald's. The sign would be placed where an existing sign is located on N. Main Street by the entrance of the parking lot. The proposed sign is slightly taller than the code allows. The requested sign would have an eight foot pole and a ten foot sign. Departments reviewed the request and provided that the sign does not exactly match the aesthetics of the downtown. Manager Trebatoski did note similar signs are located throughout the city on Madison Avenue and Main Street.

Cm. Greenhalgh commented on Main Street corridor and how it reflects a historic district. She recollected similar discussion and Commission review when the Methodist Church on the south end of Main Street requested a monument sign. She stated it does not feel as though the sign fits the intent of the downtown area. She suggested postponing this sign approval until redevelopment of the McDonald's takes place and then submitting a sign that fits into the design. She does not feel the sign fits into the downtown district.

Manager Trebatoski agreed on the discussion of the Methodist Church sign and how it did not fit the zoning code statement of intent. They encouraged the sign to be attractive and integrate with the design of the church. The final sign is aesthetically pleasing and was designed to match the structure and material of the church.

Cm. Frame discussed the signage at the south end of Main Street, specifically the corporate gas station signs. He added he supports the downtown historic district and signage but the sign proposed is a corporate sign also. He does not want to see a sign too large for the area and he would also like to see how the sign could be incorporated with a redevelopment of the existing McDonalds.

Cm. Greenhalgh added she is not in favor of a message board in the downtown. Cm. Frame agreed, he is not a fan of a flashing sign.

Manager Trebatoski pointed out the message board is not in question. It is the aesthetics of the sign the Commission would review.

Cm. Highfield stated that the business has worked hard for their business branding and she wants to see them incorporate the 'golden arches' into a remodel. Where they want the sign seems to be disjointed from the actual restaurant.

Paul Essock, an Agent for McDonald's spoke on the request. He shared appreciation for all of the items of discussion. The business wants to do the right thing. The current location does not have a sign as they traded the rights for a sign to install the playland. The proposed sign is fairly new however they do not want to install something of poor taste. Their current reader sign is affixed to poles stuck in the ground with hand changeable letters that attract individuals to rearrange the message. A message sign would be displayed for 30 seconds before the message would change. It would not blink and they would not change that feature. He added a monument sign is not out of the question, but not a preferred option at this point. They will be doing a remodel within the next two years. Their intention is to incorporate the arches into the project. The sign cannot go closer to the building. He added they can wait and construct the sign at time of the remodel.

Manager Trebatoski asked if they intend to use a black pole for the sign. Essock confirmed the pole is similar to a pole that is adjacent to the parking lot.

Cm. Greenhalgh asked how much the signage would differ from a highway intersection when attracting cars from a distance as to when attracting cars in a downtown setting. Essock added the more visible the sign is, the more customers they will attract. Their theory is to be visible from traffic on Hwy. 89, Hwy. 12, from the hospital and from Hwy. 106.

Cm. Frame questioned Inspector Juarez on DOT sign limitations with a sign this close to the roadway versus highway sign. Juarez replied that DOT limitations exist but he is unsure how they would effect this sign location. Essock added that he believes the sign meets DOT requirements.

Inspector Juarez spoke to Greenhalgh's question on corporate signs and confirmed he has seen monument signs that are very attractive.

Cm. Greenhalgh added she understands the sign is available but there has to be a different version of the sign when moving at 25 mph versus a highway or interstate. She would like to be presented with other options and how it can be incorporated into the downtown with traffic at a lower speed than a

highway. This particular sign presented served a purpose to attract traffic from a highway versus local traffic.

Mr. Essock stated he will take back the comments and suggestions. They have no intention on placing a sign in near future as weather approaches. The comments give direction. His insertion of the extra two feet was to avoid youth touching or hitting sign. The message board is separate entity of the sign and can be installed separately.

Inspector Juarez stated from his prospective, he does not believe this sign could physically be used, but incorporated into a monument sign or another way. Cm. Scherer asked if they were to look at a monument sign, would it interfere with the vision triangle. Juarez pointed out where a monument sign would have to be located to not interfere.

Inspector Juarez added if it will be some time before the redevelopment, they could possibly take no action and address this with the site plan when submitted.

Manager Trebatoski asked if it the consensus of the Commission to take no action at this time. The Commission agreed to take no action.

Mr. Essock was comfortable without action and will return in the future with another submission.

No action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

Cm. Greenhalgh moved, Cm. Frame seconded the motion to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 4:29 pm. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Ebbert
City Clerk/Treasurer