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July 8, 2021

Honorable Mayor and City Council
Kewanee City Hall
401 E. Third Street
Kewanee, Illinois 61443

RE: Report from Zoning Board of Appeals for July 7, 2021, Meeting.

The Zoning Board of Appeals convened at 5:00 p.m. on July 7, 2021, in the Council Chambers at Kewanee City Hall. ZBA members Bracket and Martinez were absent. For business, there was one variance petition application upon which to conduct a public hearing.

CASE ONE:

250 East St. South, Lyle School, Variance to allow the placement of an LED/flashing sign in an R-1 One-Family Dwelling District.

Background Information:

Jim Debord, from Zion Lutheran Church, contacted me to inquire about placing an LED sign at the church located at 250 East St. South. He was advised of the need for a variance to the zoning code as the Church exists within a Residential District. Debord filled out the variance petition.

The Subject Property:

Address: 250 East St. South.

Legal Description: W363 OF N586 OF S754 NE SEC 3 T14N R5E LANDS INCORP 87-37-242 CITY OF KEWANEE, County of Henry, State of Illinois.

Location: 200 Block of East St. South on the East side of the street.

Zoning: R-1 One-Family Dwelling District.

Dimensions: 586 feet North to South by 363 feet East to West., 212,718 Sq Ft area.

Existing Buildings or Uses: Church and Parsonage.

Existing Land Use Map: Institutional surrounded by Low Density Residential.

Proposed Land Use Map: Institutional surrounded by Low Density Residential.

The Surrounding Area:

Zoning District(s): Surrounding land is zoned R-1 One-Family Dwelling District with R-5 Multiple Family Dwelling District to the North.

Uses of Land:

The surrounding land contains single-family dwellings.

Variance Requested:

A variance to allow the placement of an LED/flashing sign to be constructed/replace the existing illuminated sign in an R-1 One-Family Dwelling District.

Additional Information:

The LED portion of the sign will measure approximately the same size as the dimensions of the existing sign currently in place.

The City has no argument against the variance being granted.

The Public Hearing:

At 5:00 p.m. July 7, 2021, the hearing on the variance request at 250 East St. South was held. Jim Debord was present to represent the petition.

- Edwards read the background information to the Zoning Board.
- Debord stated that the new LED sign will fit within the existing sign base and will be the same area as the existing illuminated sign. The sign can be operated from an app on the pastor's phone and can be dimmed and set on a timer if need be.
- Ensley stated that he walked the neighborhood and spoke to the neighbors. The only concern was the brightness of the sign during night hours.
- Debord stated that the church wants to be a good neighbor and will dim the sign and shut the sign off as needed to keep the neighbors happy.
- Mara Ahles-Iverson, who is the pastor of the church, also stated the church wishes to be a good neighbor and does not want to cause a problem for any of the neighboring residents. She also stated that they plan to have the timing on the sign messages to be long enough as to not cause a flashing type nuisance.
- Kuffle stated that she spoke with Police Chief Welgat who did not express any concerns over the variance request.
- Larry Verschage, who lives at 227 East St. South. spoke in opposition of the request. Verschage stated that there is a lot of light from the church already and that the LED light would be a distraction for drivers.
- Kuffle said she spoke with Dr. Sullens of Kewanee Schools and found that the Kewanee School District has not received any complaints on their signs.
- Peart stated that his parents live near one of the schools and has not had any problems with the LED sign near them.
- McIntyre agreed with the comments that were made and suggested that whatever restrictions had been placed on past LED signs in residential areas should be placed on this request as well. The rest of the board agreed.
- Edwards stated he would add those restrictions to the ordinance.

Recommendation:

After discussing the facts and testimony presented, the Zoning Board of Appeals recommends, based on the authority of §33.062 of the City Code, by a vote of 5 in favor of the application, none opposed and two absent, that the City Council grant the variance petition as filed.

Specifically, the Zoning Board of Appeals recommends the City Council grant the following variance to Zion Lutheran Church at 250 East St. South,

Variance to be recommended to the City Council:

A variance to allow the placement of an LED/flashing sign to be constructed/replace the existing illuminated sign in an R-1 One-Family Dwelling District.

Additionally, the Zoning Board of Appeals recommends by a vote of five in favor, none opposed and two absent that the following stipulation be placed on the variance request.

- Zion Lutheran Church agrees to adjust the sign operation accordingly should the City receive any complaints from the residents having direct view or are affected by the illumination of the sign. This includes adjusting the brightness, timing of messages, and shutting the sign off after a requested time at night.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:17 p.m.

Respectfully yours,



Jerry Thompson, Chairman



