

**City of South Lyon
Planning Commission Meeting**

December 11, 2008

Chairman Weipert called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

PRESENT: Commissioners Mosier, Tartaglia, Culbertson, Weipert, Kurtzweil, Leimbach, Subotich, and Lanam. Commissioners Bradley and Lanam were excused.

Also present were Ben Tallerico (Planning Consultant), Joe Veltri, Building and Zoning Official and Kristen Delaney.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion by Mosier, supported by Culbertson

To approve the Agenda for December 11, 2008.

VOTE

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Culbertson, supported by Leimbach

To approve the Minutes for October 23, 2008 as amended.

VOTE

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PUBLIC COMMENT

Veltri introduced Kristen Delaney who is filling the role that Kristen Cunningham held. Ms. Delaney stated she looked forward to working with the Commission.

OLD BUSINESS

Dwelling Unit Density

Weipert stated it went to City Council but was sent back. In August the city administrators asked for a change to the dwelling unit density definition. The Planning Commission approved the change but the City Council had concerns regarding the exclusion of wetlands from the calculations. Council did keep two

of the changes but Councilperson Kivell in particular did not like the wetlands being excluded. After conversations with several people the city's attorney has taken the position that with less than five acres the wording was acceptable. For those with more than five acres each case would be reviewed independently. Tallerico asked this was being sent back as a point of clarification. Wepiert noted it was back because it was not what the Commissioners had provided to Council.

Glenn Kivell, 235 West Lake, South Lyon, MI

Mr. Kivell stated it was not displeasure with the language it was the concern with the wetlands. He did not want the language to hurt the city.

Culbertson asked if the city had anything with five acres or less. Kivell noted it would protect properties with more than five acres. Weipert added the city may not have anything with less than five now but that could change. Kivell hoped the Commission would not look to any specific situation but only consider potential problems. Weipert noted looking at the useable space calculations they could end up with a very high density of units on small useable land. Kivell agreed the change in language would pretty well cover that problem. Kivell added this had only become an issue because the Planning Commission had approved something different than what the City Council saw.

Tartaglia asked what the end effect would be. Veltri answered the developer would only get so much density on a small property with wetlands. The net effect would be minimal.

There was a general discussion about how to word the changes. Veltri stated he would make the changes and bring it back for review. He added no other public hearing would be necessary.

NEW BUSINESS

Public Hearing – Sandwich Board Signs

Chairperson Weipert called the public hearing open at 7:30pm.

Lean Kolinsky, 101 S. Lafayette

Ms. Tolinsky stated everyone knew she has been in favor of having this passed. She believes it is important for small business to advertise what the stores offer. She did not want to deter from the appearance of downtown. She knows they can be charming and like an invitation; they help people feel like they would like to get out of their car and see what was happening. She does not have a big corporation behind her to help with advertising and it could be the difference between her business being visible or not.

Diane Tollhouse

Ms. Stahlhouse stated she has owned her flower shop for eighteen years. They used to put signs out because the shop is in the back of a building and it did help

and she believes it would benefit downtown businesses. She was not trying to sell anything other than a viable downtown and she hoped the Commission considered it.

Mary Kabisa, 129 N. Lafayette, South Lyon, MI

Ms. Kabisa stated she was in Northville before coming to South Lyon and the signs in Northville were great. Her business sits back so anything that would bring the in to see her would be helpful. She would like there to be some provisions to assist with special needs like hers. The signs would be done tastefully and would work.

Ms. Tolinski stated she forgot to add that she did not learn about this meeting until the day before but wished she had known sooner so she could have invited some of her customers to come. They were in support.

Cheryl Wickham, Divine Yoga and Massage, South Lyon, MI

Ms. Wickham stated her business was below street level and were allowed a sign in the window. It would be really nice to pull in more people off the street with a better sign. It would be wonderful exposure.

Jan Eldon, Jan's Skin Spa, South Lyon, MI

Ms. Eldon stated her business was upstairs and no one knows they were there. A window sign could not be seen from the street and they were not allowed to have a lit sign. The sidewalk sign would be a great invitation to her business.

Ms. Stahlhouse spoke again on behalf of Lake Street Mercantile. She stated people come into her shop daily to find the quilt shop, which had been recognized in magazines as one of the ten best quilt shops. People have been bused in to see her shop.

Chairperson Weipert called the public hearing closed at 7:44pm.

Culbertson stated that if moveable letter were not allowed it would exclude anyone wanting to change the sign to advertise daily items. He would like to see businesses be able to change the signs. Weipert stated she read that as an electronic sign, not interchangeable. Kabisa noted if they could attach something to the sign that would work also. She did not think anyone would make the sign ugly. Stahlhouse added she did not understand the objection to balloons because business owners would not want to block the signs. Culbertson stated there were too many objections. Culbertson also stated he was in support of making this citywide and not just downtown. Kabisa noted at the last meeting it was stated the downtown would be first as a trial. Weipert stated there would be different restrictions in different areas. Subotich stated no one objected to the ordinance but there would be different limitations for different areas. What worked in one area would not necessarily work in another. Leimbach stated outside of downtown might want bigger signs. Downtown was limited especially

those with multiple businesses in one building. Leimbach also noted that in looking at other ordinances there were not a lot that allowed things tied to the signs. The intent was to keep a similarity to area architecture but still let people know about the businesses.

Kurtzweil stated she was frustrated that it has taken this long to get a sign ordinance and asked what could be done to get this set in motion. She had a problem with item three because she did not understand why there could not be multiple signs. No one knows how this would work out but it could always be changed. Nothing was more boring than seeing nineteen white signs. They should be encouraging the artistic, creative side of these businesses. Advising with signs was only one part of the solution but the city should help develop enthusiasm and creativity. In addition the DDA should be strengthened.

Tallerico stated this was the work of the Planning Commission. Changes could be made and the ordinance had been sent to everyone. He noted he did not see where the business owners could not be creative. The limit is the size of the sign. Kurtzweil stated number five set limits. Veltri stated the ordinance was sent out to fast track the process. He also noted this was for the DDA overlay district, not just the downtown.

Leimbach stated the sign had a maximum of six-feet but nowhere did it say it had to be square. Kabisa stated the attachments were a problem. There was a general conversation regarding attachments and the wording under item number five.

Tallerico stated they could not make a perfect sign ordinance. Most communities use this language. This was the Planning Commission's ordinance. Anything they would like to make changes or extensions they could.

There was a general conversation regarding moveable letters.

Culbertson stated he felt this was too restrictive. Tallerico stated this had been in front of the Commission for months. They could not make everyone happy but everyone wanted the business owners to have the signs. He believed it would be easier to open it back up later because it was harder to scale back. He recommended moving forward as is since it would be easier to add in then to take out.

Motion by Leimbach supported by Tartaglia

To recommend approval of the Sandwich Board Sign Ordinance to the City Council.

VOTE

MOTION CARRIED – SIX YEA and TWO NAY

Movie/Public Gathering Ordinance – Discussion

Veltri stated the city would like to get ahead of the curve by creating an ordinance that would protect the city with permits, guidelines, and costs. The amounts noted in the packets were not official and would need to be properly calculated to cover the city's costs. They figures were the only missing items.

Veltri stated they were more interested in the movie section of Plymouth and not their public gathering portion. Novi could strengthen what was missing in Plymouth's.

Culbertson asked how this would affect what the city already did. Weipert asked what the city wanted to accomplish with this. Veltri stated event that go on today were already covered. The public gathering sections were not of interest. Leimbach asked if Mr. Veltri could pull out just the movie portions and get it back for a discussion.

STAFF REPORTS

Veltri provided an update on Charleston Park that came in as a consent judgment. The Commission would need to make a recommendation to Council on a proposed change. There was a general conversation regarding the basics of the request and the process.

There was a general conversation regarding foreclosures in the city.

The next meeting would be January 8, 2009.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Culbertson supported by Leimbach

To adjourn the meeting at 8:51 p.m.

VOTE

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Pam Weipert, Chairperson

Jennifer Knapp, Recording Secretary

Keith Bradley, Secretary