

## REPORT OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Date of Meeting: June 7, 2021

Report #1

The Planning Commission met at 4:00 p.m. on June 7, 2021 in the Council Chambers at City Hall and via remote audioconferencing. Members present included Chairperson Shane Blaser, Ryan Austin, Shane Burkart, Ben Goodreau, Susan Feith and Eric Daven. Lee Thao was excused. Others attending the meeting were Kyle Kearns, Jennifer Gossick, Dean Veneman, Mathew Graf, Ron Naab, Dan Drexler, Dean Ramsden, JR Siewert, Anita Gjerde, Charissa Lager, Sharon Johnson, and two other unidentified persons on audioconferencing.

The meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m.

**1. Approval of the reports from the May 3, 2021 Plan Commission meeting**

Motion by Feith to approve the reports from the May 3, 2021 Plan Commission meeting, second by Daven.

Motion carried (6 – 0)

**2. PLAN-21-0492; Mathew Graf** – request for Certified Survey Map approval to create two lots at 2620 Gaynor Ave (Parcel ID 3404367)

Motion by Burkart to approve the request for Certified Survey Map approval to create two lots at 2620 Gaynor Ave (Parcel ID 3404367), second by Goodreau.

Motion carried (6 – 0)

**3. PLAN-21-0522; City of Wisconsin Rapids** – request for Certified Survey Map approval for one lot and to dedicate it as right-of-way at the end of Grove Avenue, east of 16<sup>th</sup> Street South (Parcel ID 3414800)

Motion by Austin to approve the request for Certified Survey Map approval for one lot and to dedicate it as right-of-way at the end of Grove Avenue, east of 16<sup>th</sup> Street South, second by Daven.

Motion carried (6 – 0)

**4. PLAN-21-0507; Wisconsin State Firefighters Memorial** – request for site plan approval to construct a shed within Ben Hansen Park, 2031 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South (Parcel ID 3404746)

Commissioner Feith lost video connection to meeting.

Motion by Blaser to approve the request to construct a shed within Ben Hansen Park, 2031 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South, subject to the following conditions:

- a) Applicable zoning requirements, including setbacks, shall be met.
- b) Applicable permits through the City shall be obtained.
- c) Community development staff shall have the authority to approve minor modifications to the plans.

Second by Goodreau.

Motion carried (5 – 0)

Commissioner Feith rejoins the meeting virtually.

5. **PLAN-21-0436; Bring's Cycling and Fitness** – request for a sign exception to reduce the setback for an existing nonconforming sign and install an electronic message center at 1630 & 1710 8<sup>th</sup> Street South (Parcel ID's 3411717 & 3411718)

Motion by Daven to approve the request for a sign exception to reduce the setback for an existing nonconforming sign and install an electronic message center at 1630 & 1710 8<sup>th</sup> Street South, second by Feith.

Electronic message center setbacks, scrolling, blinking, timing, and potential distractions were discussed by commission members, staff, Dan Drexler of Stratford Sign Company, and Charissa Lager of MediaWorks. Further conversations took place to clarify the details of the sign and how it is regulated under the current sign code and proposed code.

Daven and Feith withdrew their original motion: to approve the request for a sign exception to reduce the setback for an existing nonconforming sign and install an electronic message center at 1630 & 1710 8<sup>th</sup> Street South.

Motion by Daven to approve the request for a sign exception to reduce the setback for an existing nonconforming sign and install an electronic message center at 1630 & 1710 8<sup>th</sup> Street South, subject to the following conditions:

- a) The electronic message center sign shall maintain a clearance of 10 feet above the grade of the adjacent right-of-way.
- b) The exception shall not permit a setback from the property line less than 3.75 feet.
- c) The applicant shall obtain all necessary sign and building permits through the Community Development Department.
- d) All applicable building and zoning standards shall be met regarding the proposed signage.
- e) An electronic message display must be equipped with technology for automatic dimming based upon ambient light conditions or controls that the sign owner can use to program lighting levels to comply with the lighting standards in this section.
- f) Except for time and temperature displays, the message shall remain static at least 5 seconds before the next message appears.
- g) No part of the message shall give the appearance of movement.
- h) There shall be no animated, traveling, scrolling or flashing transitions.
- i) Lighting levels shall not exceed 0.3 footcandles over ambient lighting conditions when measured at the specified distance in the table below, based on the size of the display. However, lighting levels shall not exceed 0.1 footcandles over ambient lighting conditions at the property boundary line of a residential property or 0.2 footcandles over ambient lighting

conditions at the property boundary line of a commercial, industrial, or institutional property.

Sign Area (square feet)	Measurement Distance (feet)
10	32
15	39
20	45
25	50
30	55

Note: The sign areas listed in this table are for illustration only. The City's sign regulations may not allow the sign areas listed. For signs areas not listed, the measurement distance is calculated with the following formula:

$$\text{Measurement Distance} = \sqrt{\text{Area of Sign Sq. Ft.} \times 100}$$

- j) The message on an electronic message display shall only relate to the premises on which it is located, except for public service announcements.
- k) Except for in the General Commercial (B-2) district, the electronic message display shall be turned off by 11:00 p.m. each day or one hour after the close of the business on the premises whichever is later and shall remain off until 5:00 a.m. the following day.
- l) An electronic message display shall be located on no more than one sign per road frontage.

Second by Feith.

Motion carried (6 – 0)

**6. PLAN-21-0508; Connexus Credit Union** – request for site plan review and architectural review to construct a new façade and perform other improvements at 1930 8<sup>th</sup> Street South (Parcel ID 3411731)

Motion by Daven to approve the request for site plan review and architectural review to construct a new façade and perform other improvements at 1930 8<sup>th</sup> Street South, subject to the following conditions:

- a) The impervious surface ratio shall not be increased on the site.
- b) A landscaping plan shall be submitted for review and approval by the Community Development Department.
- c) Cut-off lighting fixtures be used for the east elevation façade.
- d) Light from the business shall not exceed 0.2 foot-candles at a neighboring commercial property line.
- e) Applicable permits through the City shall be obtained.
- f) Community development staff shall have the authority to approve minor modifications to the plans.

Second by Goodreau.

Motion carried (6 – 0)

Shane Burkart left the meeting

**7. PLAN-21-0938; Community Development** – Public hearing and action on a request to replace Chapter 46, Sign Code, of the City’s Municipal Code, with the new Sign Code

Public hearing opened at 4:46 p.m.

Speaking in favor: Anita Gjerde of US Veterans Administration spoke in favor of a sign variance process.

Speaking against: Business owner JR Siewert, Sharon Johnson of CLT Signs, Dean Ramsden of 3021 8th Street South.

Mr. Siewert felt that the new Sign Code was over-reaching had too great of an unintended impact on local businesses. He referenced various parts of the new Sign Code, but noted his primary concern was pertaining to electronic message center movement, fading, and timing. Sharon Johnson commented on sign display transitions, awnings, and window graphics, and provided examples of sign displays. Business owner Dean Ramsden expressed concerns regarding costs for businesses and how too many restrictions may be burdensome.

Public hearing closed at 5:10 p.m.

Commission members continued discussions and advised staff to bring back a finalized document addressing a sign variance process, electronic message center changes, window graphic changes and other minor changes.

Motion by Goodreau to postpone approval of PLAN-21-0938 in order to finalize the Sign Code, second by Austin.

Motion carried (5 – 0)

**8. Adjourn**

Motion by Blaser to adjourn, second by Austin

Motion carried (5 – 0)

Meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Erika Esser, Secretary