

APPROVED
SEPTEMBER 16, 2024

**CITY OF WIXOM
49045 PONTIAC TRAIL
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MONDAY, AUGUST 19, 2024**

This meeting was called to order by Chairman Day of the Planning Commission at 7:05 p.m. at which time allegiance was pledged to the American flag.

PRESENT: William Day (Chairman), Cheryl Tacy (Vice Chairperson), Commissioners: Todd Buck; Sandro Grossi (arrived 7:21 p.m.); Mike Dornan

ABSENT: Excused: Mark Lada; Vanessa Willett

OTHERS: Matteo Passalacqua (Carlisle Wortman Associates), Drew Benson, Assistant City Manager; and Mona Freiburger (Recording Secretary)

Determination of a Quorum:

A quorum of the Planning Commission was present for this meeting.

Changes or Additions to the Agenda:

None

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION made and seconded by Commissioner Dornan and Vice Chair Tacy to approve the August 5, 2024, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes, as submitted.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

Correspondence:

- 1) City Manager Report – July 17, 2024
- 2) City Manager Report – August 13, 2024

Call to the Public: (Limited to 5 minutes per speakers, addressing Agenda items on Agenda only)

No public comments.

Old Business:

1. Public Hearing to Consider Text Amendments to the City of Wixom Zoning Ordinance Chapter 18.16, Signs, Sections 18.16.020 and 18.16.070. These amendments will clarify and update definitions; sign design standards, prohibited signs; and appeals and variances specifically in the Village Center Area (VCA) zoning districts.

Discussion:

The changes are summarized in a Memo dated August 14, 2024 from Douglas Lewan and Matteo Passalacqua, Community Planners, Carlisle Wortman Associates (CWA) to the Planning Commission. Those changes are:

- Revision to the definition of box sign to help clarify this definition.
- New definition of Raceway Channel Sign. It is the intention to prohibit this type of sign in the VCA District, with language provided regarding wall signs.
- Illumination standards have been added that address the requirement for external sign lighting, with the exception of individual letter lighting.
- The prohibition of electronic message center signs in the VCA District.
- The design and material section of the regulations have been expanded and photographic examples have been provided for the use of business owners to ensure that they know what the City is looking for in the VCA District.
- The prohibition of the “flat one-dimensional signs” has been added.
- Color coordination between the proposed sign, building, and other elements including awnings has been added.
- An expanded section on Planning Commission waivers is proposed.

Mr. Passalacqua commented the Planning Commission reviewed the sign ordinance language in the VCA with some proposed edits. Mr. Passalacqua indicated he received a good reception and good notes.

Based on the feedback from the Commissioners, the changes related to the definition of box signs, raceway channels and reinforcing raceway is prohibited; illumination standards; the prohibition of electric message centers; there were design clarifications and better pictures exempting the requirements; prohibition of flat, one-dimensional signs; color coordination be a part of consideration for awnings or building materials relating to the sign, itself. Then the applicant's ability to appear in front of the Planning Commission, and the Planning Commission's ability to waive certain requirements, if they felt the sign being proposed met the intent of the signs of the District.

Mr. Passalacqua provided a clean copy for the Commission in the packet; and red lined copy was second.

Vice Chair Tacy had a question on Page 2 while looking at the clean copy. She indicated under C, number 2, internally lit signs shall only be permitted pursuant to Section 18.16.070.c.5 below. Vice Chair Tacy asked if it is only permitted pursuant to that section, going down three elements, it states no, why not state that from the beginning? Vice Chair Tacy thought this was a holdover from previous language and needs to become more concise. Wall signs shall not be internally illuminated with the exception of individual letters, logos or other message components. Vice Chair Tacy stated to take it out of 2; have 5 and 6 standalones; 2 would read: in keeping with the character of the VCA district, external sign lighting is required. The source of external sign lighting shall not be visible from any adjacent property line. The second sentence goes away because it is covered in 5. Mr. Passalacqua indicated this is a fair clarification.

Chairman Day indicated it would make sense to reference C.6 instead of C.5 because then it would say walls signs shall not be internally illuminated with the exception of...

Assistant City Manager Benson indicated he did want to make note that we are creating a scenario where there are specific design standards where the applicant is to meet. The idea is to promote that the applicant would consider that option to coordinate them to meet the two standards for the signs. Vice Chair Tacy stated the requirement to have dimension to the sign, itself, does not go away; that is always a given. The applicant can add other things to it and one of those other things could be an awning. She stated she was fine with this. Vice Chair Tacy stated this is the base layer, and addition to that, the sign must meet one or two of the other items. The goal is to give more concrete guidelines.

Assistant City Manager Benson stated from an implementation standpoint, it is a battle for administration to have, but it will be a challenge with applicants. Applicants have their preferences and/or desires. These guidelines would be easier to help administration to visually show applicants the ordinance and the intent. Often, the applicant doesn't read the ordinance thoroughly. This will be the due diligence on

administration's part to explain the intent, but it will be easier with the clearer definitions and standards to meet.

Vice Chair Tacy asked if a checklist could be created where administration would checkoff; then if an application is approved or denied, it could be shown where they meet or do not meet the requirements.

Commissioner Dornan commented that he had been studying the changes and formatting in the ordinance for quite some time. Mr. Passalacqua stated he has been looking at the edited version and he would have to see if the clean version correctly reflects the numbering.

No public comments.

Assistant City Manager Benson commented there have been some minor adjustments. The Commission's next step would be to recommend to City Council the text amendments to the City of Wixom Zoning Ordinance.

MOTION made and seconded by Vice Chair Tacy and Commissioner Grossi to approve and recommend adoption to City Council Text Amendments to the City of Wixom Zoning Ordinance Chapter 18.16, Signs, Sections 18.16.020 and 18.16.070; as clarified and updated.

VOTE:

MOTION CARRIED

All in favor.

New Business:

None

Call to the Public:

No public comments.

Staff Comments:

Assistant City Manager commented administration is implementing the new brand, and the City Council agenda was the structure for the new format. The nuisances were not updated for each Commission.

Mr. Passalacqua commented there are a handful of reviews approaching from an administrative standpoint. They may appear before the Commission. They relate to the Arby's on Grand River, who is looking to do parking layout adjustments and modify to a dual drive through. Zak's Car Wash on Grand River is looking to do some architectural updates and minor layout adjustments. They will go through an initial review process to see if it is possible to administrative approve, but if there are larger items that the ordinance outlines, then they will need to be brought before the Commission. Assistant City Manager Benson stated, at a minimum, they wanted to give you the heads up, but the ordinance does allow for a decent amount of administrative flexibility.

Assistant City Manager Benson stated that at the last meeting, the Commission went through the conditional rezoning in the condo project. As it relates to the conditional rezoning after the Commission's approval, the City Attorney did have some comments relating to better clarification of the conditions offered by the applicant. Those clarifications are that it will be a townhouse project. Multi-family is not permitted in VCA Transitional, but townhouses are permitted. The City Attorney made a request for clarifications and the applicant was agreeable to the clarifications and voluntarily provided updated conditions. Assistant City Manager Benson commented the intent is to break ground next Spring. He would expect to see the applicant later this Fall for their preliminary site condominium review.

Vice Chair Tacy commented why was the layout which included a nice park-like area through the middle shifted to rows of apartment looking buildings? She stated she liked the previous layout much better in terms of what the Commission is looking for as a high-end product. The garages were included but Vice Chair Tacy said she did not anticipate that it would go from the nice park-like setting to rows of townhouses. Assistant City Manager Benson stated he thought it related to being able to provide access to all the garages and every unit to include a garage. He indicated the Commission could continue to have a conversation about preferred layouts.

Vice Chair Tacy stated she was also conscientious of the amount of time and money that goes into the project when they are working with architects and engineers. She would like to ask upfront.

Commission Comments:

Vice Chair Tacy asked if 49250 West Road was going to do landscaping and lighting in the parking lot. The building was purchased months ago. Assistant City Manager Benson stated there is a tenant moving in. He was not sure where they are in the permitting process, but it is moving forward. They will be repaving the private access drive to the west, which is encouraging.

ADJOURNMENT:

City of Wixom
Planning Commission
Monday, August 19, 2024

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This meeting of the Planning Commission was motioned and adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Mona Freiburger
Recording Secretary