

**Minutes
Plan Commission Meeting
August 8, 2016
7:00pm**

Chair Busse called the meeting of the City of Monona Plan Commission to order at 7:00pm.

Present: Chair Alder Jim Busse, Mr. Grif Dorschel, Ms. Susan Fox, Mr. Chris Homburg, Ms. Kathy Thomas, Alder Brian Holmquist, Mr. Dale Ganser, and Mr. Robert Stein

Also present: City Planner & Economic Development Director Sonja Reichertz

Approval of Minutes

A motion by Ms. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Holmquist, to approve the minutes of June 27, 2016 carried without corrections.

New Business

A. Public Hearing on a Sign Permit Request for the Monona Grove School District Offices at 5301 Monona Drive Represented by Kenneth Jahn of Two Rivers Signs. (S-022-2016)

Ms. Fox abstained from this item.

Kenneth Jahn of Two Rivers Signs presented plans for two proposed signs including a replacement landscape ground sign and a directional sign near the office entrances. The ground sign is a metal sign off Monona Drive that utilizes the existing steel frame and brick. The sign is non-illuminated.

B. Consideration of Action on a Sign Permit Request for Monona Grove School District Offices at 5301 Monona Drive. (S-022-2016)

Planner Reichertz stated that the proposed signs met all the requirements of the code.

The Commission discussed the need for including the street address on the directional sign since pedestrians will have already parked and know what address they are at.

Alder Holmquist expressed concern about the look and feel of the sign given that the building is a Monona landmark. The old sign has a particular look that incorporates the property as a whole and he stated that a new sign should tie in with the historic aspect of the property. Alder Holmquist asked if the burgundy color of the sign is the same color as the building addition. Mr. Jahn said yes.

Ms. Thomas said the sign itself is not a landmark and the new sign design ties in with the colors of the newer building addition.

Alder Holmquist clarified that the existing sign metal letters match the "Nichols School" wall sign and that the proposed sign does not connect with the old part of the building. Mr. Ganser explained that when one is designing a sign for a building that is a landmark it should match the historic aesthetics. Mr. Stein agreed with Alder Holmquist and even though the proposed sign meets the requirements, he likes the existing sign better.

Staff then listen the six points of guidance the code provides for obtaining a sign permit including, "compatibility with the building characteristics". However, the code offers no specific direction or design guidelines. Mr. Homburg stated that neither sign is particularly tied into the building and that

the sign design is a matter of taste. Mr. Dorschel said it seemed to integrate the right colors and is within the acceptable parameters.

A motion was made by Ms. Thomas and seconded by Mr. Homburg to approve the sign as proposed.

The motion carried with Alder Holmquist and Mr. Stein voting against.

Unfinished Business

A. Plan Commission Review and Recommendation to City Council on Recodification Summary by General Code Regarding Land Use Legislation Sections of the Monona Municipal Code of Ordinances.

Planner Reichertz explained there were four remaining sections in the recodification work that needed clarification including the Access Management Guidelines for new driveways. Staff sent it to Strand Associates for further review. Strand omitted sections and ensured the standards were modernized. The guidelines no longer apply only to Monona Drive, but can be used for review of any new driveway for commercial development projects including Broadway.

The Commission discussed circumstances when it would be reasonable to have more than one driveway. Mr. Homburg said the 300' lot width requirement for an additional driveway is too restrictive. He said curb flares should be allowed instead of only the curb radius recommendations. Mr. Homburg said these should remain as guidelines to allow flexibility as appropriate. Discussion continued regarding the difference between guidelines and ordinances. Reichertz clarified that these have always been labeled as guidelines and been reviewed on a case-by-case basis and there is no intention to change that, but rather clean-up the section and modernize it. After discussion, the changes below were agreed upon:

- (b) Frequency:
 - (1) Consolidated access is encouraged whenever properties are assembled under one purpose
 - (2) More than one driveway may be authorized by the Plan Commission
 - (3) Adjustments may be authorized by the Plan Commission after demonstration of due cause by the applicant.
- (c) Width:
 - (1) Minimum 24 feet Low traffic generator; less than 750 vpd (residential)
 - (2) Maximum 30 feet Medium traffic generator; 750 to 1,500 vpd (commercial)
 - (3) Additional width may be required for high traffic generators or under special circumstances
- (d) Curb Radius or Flare:
 - (1) 14 foot minimum
 - (2) 20 foot desirable

Staff summarized previous discussion regarding earth station dish antennas. There was consensus that all dish antennas over two feet in diameter in residential districts would be prohibited. In any other districts, a dish over two feet in diameter would require approval of a Conditional Use Permit by the Plan Commission.

Alder Mary O'Connor, 5103 Winnequah Road, made an appearance and summarized what she spoke about at the last Plan Commission meeting regarding concerns with single-family residential development standards. Planner Reichertz summarized the many issues that the Plan Commission could be trying to achieve from stormwater infiltration concerns, grading and height, preservation of

lake views and open space, and community character. She provided a range of solutions for discussion. She noted the simplest options would be adding a regulation for impervious surface maximum and a grading plan. Community character, architectural style, and building mass would be complicated to regulate.

Ms. Thomas stated that because of Monona's topography, issues of grading and runoff are complicated. She expressed the need for caution when creating standards because of unintended consequences. She also questioned how we will properly monitor the standards.

Mr. Homburg asked staff what the annual average is for new home construction. Staff said less than five homes per year. Mr. Homburg said there are ways to control drainage, and if the community feels strong enough about this issue then it seems reasonable to have the small number of new single-family homes be reviewed by Plan Commission.

Mr. Stein said there should be a height restriction for new homes that also considers building up of the natural grade. He said there is also merit in limiting how much you should be able to pave. Mr. Stein questioned whether Plan Commission review for new single-family homes is fair.

Alder Holmquist stated that the height definition goes into grading. If the standards go on a path with no Commission review, he wants height and grade to be tied in to each other. He also would like a guideline regarding impervious percentages and to look at the impacts of stormwater. Alder Holmquist expressed that he does not want the Commission to define community character, establish an architectural review board or adopt a form based code. As for establishing a neighborhood association, that should be left up to individual neighborhoods.

Mr. Ganser clarified that when communities are talking about impervious cover regulations, they are usually talking about new developments on what was previously farmland. He stated that it is virtually impossible to blanket it with a single percentage because all lots are different. He also explained that the development on Femrite is irrelevant because it was a PUD. He said he is okay with new housing construction coming to Plan Commission.

Ms. Fox stated that if you are going to raise the grade by a certain amount you need to come to Plan Commission and that the grade needs to be tied into the height. She liked the idea of 65% for impervious surfaces, and if a property needed more they should come to Plan Commission. Ms. Fox felt this kind of development will continue to occur on Tonyawatha. She added that regulating a specific architectural style is problematic.

Mr. Dorschel said he is against the complicated options and is in favor of a height definition that somehow regulates the change of grade. He agreed with having an impervious surface regulation and if anyone wanted to exceed it they need to come to Plan Commission and explain why they want a variance.

Ms. Thomas asked if the impervious regulations are more for aesthetic or water quality purposes. Alder Holmquist said that it could be both. Mr. Ganser stated that complains may come in over issues of water quality, but often, the real reason for complaint is often due to aesthetics. Ms. Fox said that the Commission should have some responsibility for managing water quality issues.

Ms. Thomas wanted clarification on if the city already has something in place for regulating storm water. Staff said that there is a fee for stormwater based on utility impact.

Staff added that if the Plan Commission does review new home construction, they need to define what a new home is; there could be confusion if foundations or partial walls remain. Staff stated for all variances from the single-family code, currently the applicant needs Zoning Board of Appeals

approval and needs to prove a hardship exists on their property and therefore they should be allowed to deviate from the rules. The Commission asked Staff to discuss with the City Attorney if the Plan Commission could review variance requests regarding only grading and impervious standards, with all other variance requests reviewed by ZBA.

Lastly, Planner Reichertz explained the request by City Council for clarification on how the city regulates short-term rentals like AirBnB or Vacation Rental By Owner. Staff explained her interpretation of a short-term rental, based on the definition of transient in the room tax ordinance of the Code. Transient is defined as a person residing for a continuous period of less than 30 consecutive days in a hotel, motel, or furnished accommodations available to the public. Staff listed some zoning issues with short-term rentals. Since this is a zoning use issue for single-family neighborhoods, this is a Plan Commission issue. There were no disagreements from the Commission. Chair Busse said bottom line they are prohibited. Ms. Thomas asked who is going to enforce this. Chair Busse clarified that if someone complains, then the regulations are enforced.

There was no further discussion. Staff will provide information for the next review of the single-family development standards based on Plan Commission discussion.

Reports of Staff and Commission Members

A. Staff Report Regarding Status of Development Project Proposals.

The August 22nd meeting is cancelled due to lack of agenda items.

B. Plan Commission Requests for Information Concerning Development Projects.

There were no requests for new information.

Adjournment

A motion by Mr. Dorschel, seconded by Mr. Stein to adjourn was carried. (8:38 pm)

Respectfully submitted by:
Sonja Reichertz, City Planner