

**Minutes
Plan Commission Meeting
March 28, 2016
7:00pm**

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

Present: Chair Aldm. Jim Busse, Mr. Grif Dorschel, Mr. Robert Stein, Mr. Dale Ganser, Aldm. Brian Holmquist, Mr. Chris Homburg
Excused: Mr. Dennis Kugle
Also present: City Planner & Economic Development Director Sonja Reichertz

Approval of Minutes

A motion by Mr. Stein, seconded by Mr. Ganser, to approve the minutes of January 25, 2016 carried with no corrections.

Appearances

There were no appearances.

Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

New Business

A. Consideration of Action on Landscape Ground Sign Permit Request for Watertower Plaza, 6000 Monona Drive.

Dan Yoder, Sign Art Studio, presented plans for a new landscape ground sign and one new directional sign for the property at 6000 Monona Drive. Staff reported that the sign meets all the minimum requirements in the Code, and that approval is recommended with three conditions of approval regarding verification of the location, deadline for planting landscaping, and requirements for electrical permits.

Mr. Homburg said the directional sign is certainly warranted due to the office entrance locations in the back and he has no problem with it being next to the Subway directional sign.

A motion was made by Mr. Homburg, seconded by Mr. Dorschel to approve a landscape ground sign permit for 6000 Monona Drive according to Sec. 13-1-220 of the Monona Municipal Zoning Code with the following conditions of approval:

1. The sign shall be a minimum of 15' setback from the curb on Monona Drive and the location shall be verified by the zoning administrator prior to the sign's installation.
2. Landscaping is required to be planted with the sign's installation as shown on the approved materials.
3. Applicant shall obtain all required electrical permits.

The motion carried.

B. Consideration of Action on Sign Permit Request for the City's Radio Station, 98.7 FM WVMO, Requested by the Community Media Committee to be located on the City Hall Building at 5211 Schluter Road.

Lindsay Wood Davis, member of the Monona Community Media Committee, presented plans for signage for the City's radio station, WVMO on the City Hall building at 5211 Schluter Road. Mr. Davis explained that the sign is intended to be a piece of art as well as promotion and identification for the radio station. He said it may be turned off at night and that it is smaller than the etched word "Monona" on the building.

Staff reported that a neon sign is not typically expected in a single family or governmental district and the sign is unique due to its location on City Hall; therefore Plan Commission recommendation and interpretation is requested.

Mr. Homburg said his interpretation is that this is not a wall sign and it does not require Plan Commission approval. He added that Walgreens has a similar sign installed behind a window which was not considered a wall sign because it meets the definition of a window sign instead. Window signs do not require Plan Commission approval. He added that City Council should weigh in because it is proposed for the City Hall building.

Mr. Stein asked about the lighting. Mr. Davis said it will not be obtrusive.

Mr. Ganser suggested that a location on the ground sign might be more appropriate for promotion of the radio station.

A motion was made by Mr. Homburg and seconded by Mr. Holmquist with the determination that the request is not a wall sign and it does not require Plan Commission approval, and that it should be referred to Council for any action the Council deems necessary.

The motion carried.

C. Consideration of Action on Sign Permit Requests for the Gordon Flesch Building and Site at 2501 Kilgust Road, including two wall signs and a landscape ground sign, as requested by Zingg Design, Inc.

Final plans were not submitted.

A motion was made by Mr. Dorschel, seconded by Mr. Ganser to table the request. The motion carried.

D. Discussion of UniverCity Year (UCY) Housing Projects.

Jason Vargo, UCY Program Director, presented an overview of the UCY partnership between UW-Madison and the City of Monona beginning this year. The program includes matching of priority city projects with existing courses and faculty on campus to conduct research and complete projects for the city's use. Each course will develop a formal Scope of Work for a city project which will serve as a formal document with deliverables that each party agrees upon. He said one of the topics the city has put forward for this project is housing. There will be three or four courses paired with the housing topic.

Kurt Paulsen, Associate Professor of Urban and Regional Planning (URPL), appeared to present his involvement in the partnership and to be available for Plan Commission questions and comments. Professor Paulsen will direct the URPL department workshop course in the fall with teams dedicated

to housing and transportation. He also teaches a spring course on Housing Policy. Some suggested deliverables include updated maps and data for the Strategic Housing Plan and a report on strategies and recommendations for rehabilitation of older multi-family developments.

The Plan Commission offered their perspectives on housing issues and opportunities in the City.

Chair Busse said there is a concern in general about an increasing level of multi-family and rental units, but there are different opinions amongst Commission members. He said there is a different fiscal impact from different types like senior housing and family housing for example. He said we want to encourage home investment and attract the millennial generation to the City in general. He added that we have commercial districts that are underperforming and would like to know more about best practices to incorporate mixed-use developments with the housing issues in mind. He also wanted to know about best practices to incorporating affordable units within market rate multi-family developments.

Mr. Homburg said the percentage of housing in the community as rental is his biggest concern. He indicated that owner-occupiers may often have more of a stake in the community because they are invested through ownership of their home. If the community becomes predominantly renter-occupied, he is concerned that the small-town character of the community would change. He discussed comparison of Monona to other communities of our size that have much higher owner-occupancy proportions.

Mr. Ganser said he agrees with the concerns, but questioned Monona's options given our landlocked status. He asked if we do not add more multi-family rental units, are we effectively saying we do not want to grow our population. The small-lot single-family home subdivision is an excellent model but very difficult to replicate.

Professor Paulsen said the project may also discuss these housing challenges in the perspective of economic development to address some of these issues.

Mr. Stein said community members have expressed concerns with conversion of single-family neighborhoods to rental properties. He would like to have data on this trend specific to Monona.

Mr. Dorschel said it seems that real estate investment groups are purchasing properties for the purpose of conversion to rental. He would like to know how this can be controlled. He also discussed affordability and would like to know what market demands in Monona are unmet with our current housing stock.

Alder Holmquist said our older multi-family developments are tired and need rehabilitation. He would like to see this as a component of the study. He also talked about possible transition of areas that are rental into ownership.

Staff will work with Professor Paulsen to refine a scope of work based on the Plan Commission's feedback and noted that the Community Development Authority will also provide input.

E. Review of Conditions of Approval Spreadsheet – Sonja Reichertz, City Planner.

Staff reviewed the spreadsheet used to track compliance with recently approved zoning permits and Plan Commission applications. The staff memo also reviewed letters sent to businesses that have current zoning or signage violations.

Reports of Staff and Commission Members

A. Staff Report Regarding Status of Development Project Proposals.

Staff reviewed the 2015 Planning & Community Development Annual Report and noted that it will be posted online on the Planning Department webpage. Staff reviewed upcoming agenda items for the April 11th meeting including a minor revision to the Floodplain Ordinance required by the WDNR.

B. Plan Commission Requests for Information Concerning Development Projects.

Mr. Homburg asked for an update on the Council's review of the Comprehensive Plan. Staff and Alder Holmquist reported that there were no public comments submitted during the thirty day public review period and that a brief summary presentation was provided. The Council did not have detailed questions but thought the overall document was well done.

Mr. Homburg noted that while the WVMO sign does not require a sign permit from the Plan Commission, if it is installed and lighting or glare becomes a disturbance, it could be reviewed by the Plan Commission for modification of the lighting in accordance with the lighting sections of the zoning code.

Adjournment

A motion by Mr. Dorschel, seconded by Mr. Stein, to adjourn was carried. (8:10 pm)

Respectfully submitted by:
Sonja Reichertz, City Planner