

Minutes  
City of Monona  
Plan Commission  
Monday July 8, 2019

The meeting of the City of Monona Plan Commission was called to order (7:00 pm).

Present: Alder Nancy Moore (Chair), Mr. Chris Homburg, Ms. Coreen Fallat, Mr. Brian Holmquist, Mr. Rob Stein and Ms. Susan Fox

Excused: Alder Kathy Thomas, Mr. Josh Peterson

Also Present: Bryan Gadow, City Administrator

**Approval of Minutes**

A motion by Mr. Holmquist, seconded by Ms. Fallat, to approve the minutes of June 24, 2019 carried with no corrections.

**Appearances**

There were no appearances.

**Unfinished Business**

There was no unfinished business.

**New Business**

**A. Public Hearing for a Rezoning Request and Map Amendment from Single Family Residence District (Monona Municipal Code of Ordinances Sec. 480-24) to Two-Family Residence District (Monona Municipal Code of Ordinances Sec. 480-25) at 309 Femrite Drive as Requested by Raywood Development, LLC. (Case No. 2-004-2019)**

Mr. Dale Ganser presented his plans for rezoning 309 Femrite Drive from a single-family to a two-family lot. Mr. Ganser referenced the 2016 Comprehensive Plan and the number of two-family and single-family homes adjacent to one-another. Monona's housing strategies were also laid out in 2016, as was the 2012 Femrite/Roselawn small-lot subdivision which is mentioned as a housing type to be encouraged. Specific goals and objectives were referenced from the Comprehensive Plan that were relevant to the application.

Mr. Ganser was clear that he is trying to get away from traditional duplex's, and to offer a two-family home that would be sold as one, and allow the owner to rent out the other unit. These are designed as permanent homes, and high quality in design. The design is intentional in its avoidance of symmetry. Mr. Ganser showed initial designs and site layout concepts as they currently stand. Plans show 3-bedroom, 3 bathroom homes in a similar style to the other homes on Femrite by Raywood Development. Details were also shared of homes developed by the applicant in single-family neighborhoods in Austin, Texas.

Jeff Femrite spoke on behalf of Dick and Jeanie Femrite, who live next door to the property. Their concern was that the other development on Roselawn and Femrite, leaves them as the last single-family lot in the area. The density and scale of the properties being built were of concern.

Mr. Holmquist asked Mr. Femrite for greater clarification of the density. Across the street there was a single-family property replaced with six units. This site sees a limited footprint being doubled with the proposed addition. The added size of the home adjacent to their property is of concern. Ms. Fox confirmed that homes along Roselawn are single-family, and it is only the last home on the Femrite Drive. Chair Moore clarified that the consideration isn't including the site massing, just the change in use.

Ms. Fallat asked about the side-yard setbacks, and Mr. Ganser clarified that setbacks are increasing from the current homes location adjacent to Mr. Femrite.

Mr. Brian Person (6104 Roselawn Avenue) wants the property to remain single-family and residential, rather than rezoning and developing. There were no other appearances and the public hearing was declared closed.

**B. Consideration of Action for Approval and Recommendation to the City Council for Approval of a Rezoning Request and Map Amendment from Single Family Residence District (Monona Municipal Code of Ordinances Sec. 480-24) to Two-Family Residence District (Monona Municipal Code of Ordinances Sec. 480-25) at 309 Femrite Drive as Requested by Raywood Development, LLC. (Case No. 2-004-2019)**

City Administrator Gadow provided a summary of Planner Plowman's Staff Report recommending approval. The proposal is in-line with the Comprehensive Plan's vision for small-lot subdivisions.

Mr. Homburg allowed Mr. Ganser to respond to Mr. Femrite's comments. Mr. Ganser has tried to speak to Mr & Mrs. Femrite, and spoken to their daughter Michelle, leaving plans with them for their consideration. Mr. Ganser clarified that the Femrite/Roselawn project was not a multi-family project, they were fee-simple single-family homes. Current plans are for total square footage of 3,000 – 3,200 sq. ft. He shared that the plans will provide a model of these two-family homes for other developers to follow.

Mr. Homburg asked about the oak tree on site, and if there are plans to save it. The applicant confirmed that only one tree is planned to be removed, and not the established oak tree. Mr. Homburg shared his concerns with spot zoning. He thinks it's a good location, but has concern that adjacent owners are unhappy with the proposal.

Ms. Fallat had no additional questions, but believes to meet the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan, this application needs to be given serious consideration. Without zoning changes, it will be tough to meet the goals of the Plan. This proposal brings new and diverse housing to the City.

Mr. Stein asked for clarification of the concept of one owner, renting the other, adjacent unit. The applicant referenced the Comprehensive Plan seeking owner occupied structures in multi-family homes. There was some discussion of the potential home-buyers, and it isn't necessarily targeted to first-time home-buyers. Chair Moore referenced Accessory Dwelling Units as an opportunity to enhance affordability. Mr. Stein states that it is reasonably placed where it is. He referenced the applicants record in Monona, but acknowledged the challenge in locating it.

Mr. Holmquist confirmed that the homes on Roselawn and Femrite are still zoned single-family, and clarified the relative density in relation to the current application. He referenced other homes along Femrite that are yet to be redeveloped and improved, and the balance needed to meet housing objectives. This presents the opportunity to demonstrate a two-family home on a single-family lot. Mr. Holmquist asked if there are ways to tie development requests paired with a zoning change. City Administrator Gadow clarified that as the current code is written it would not be feasible. For a project and rezoning to be considered together, it would require something similar to a Planned Unit Development (PUD). Mr. Ganser stated that this is the largest lot along either Femrite or Roselawn.

Ms. Fox discussed the multi-family ownership of the Comprehensive Plan, and how she viewed it as a condominium. Mr. Ganser responded that he was happy to do that, and did it in his project in Austin. Ms. Fox shared that she believes it would have relatively little impact on the community with the additional density. She is concerned about the precedent this may set for the neighborhood, especially if changes occur along Roselawn.

Mr. Homburg shared that when the Comprehensive Plan was written there weren't as many rental units. He asked Mr. Ganser if he had considered a zero-lot line development, rather than a condominium to promote ownership. Mr. Homburg has concerns over the adjacent neighbor's opposition to the application.

Mr. Holmquist referenced the number of single-family homes being rented by owners that don't live in Monona. It was a goal of the Comprehensive Plan, to encourage local ownership. Mr. Ganser referenced duplex's along Femrite that he has attempted to buy, and was outbid by out-of-town owners.

A motion by Mr. Holmquist to move a consideration for PUD or zero-lot line to address the same development. City Administrator Gadow was unsure if City Council could change the application before them in that way. Mr. Homburg stated that a change to zero-lot line would make it easier to see the property staying as owner-occupied into the future. Ms. Fallat suggested that given the lot sizes in Monona, there may be more of these applications. It would be useful to have a property that shows how these developments should be made. Mr. Ganser responded to Mr. Homburg that there are no guarantees to ownership of the home. Ms. Fox agreed with the applicant regarding no guarantees of ownership, but outlined that Plan Commission doesn't have control regarding property ownership.

Mr. Holmquist asked when the last Single-Family home was rezoned in Monona to a denser use. Examples on Monona Drive were referenced, but the zoning already allowed it. Mr. Holmquist discussed the residential use map, showing current land uses, and compared it against the approved zoning map. Recent residential projects were discussed, as was their zoning and what changes were needed for their approval.

Mr. Ganser stated that the precedent is already set, with or without acceptance of his application, given the number of two-family properties in single-family districts. Other efforts were referenced where zoning was changed in larger areas to correct what was perceived as spot zoning. Mr. Holmquist stated he thinks this is a good proposal, but that there is a way to do this with a different application. He wanted to see this come back in a way that avoided spot zoning. City Administrator Gadow reiterated that the Commission may only recommend approval, denial, or

tabling of the application and request additional information from the applicant. Mr. Ganser stated that he understands the Commission's concerns, but respectfully asked for either approval or denial to City Council.

Mr. Holmquist moved to deny the application, supporting the project overall, but acknowledging the need to build cohesion, and to confirm what impact that will have in the future using the Comprehensive Plan. He acknowledged that Council could consider others ways to uphold the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning and accomplish the goal of what's proposed. Mr. Homburg seconded the motion. Ms. Fallat challenged that the property isn't in the middle of a single-family neighborhood, Mr. Holmquist stated that this is the case on Roselawn. Mr. Ganser stated how difficult it was to sell the previous Roselawn/ Femrite project because of their surroundings. He shared how his challenge is that he is surrounded by multi-family projects to the north. Ms. Fallat and Ms. Fox were both unsure of sending the applicant through a different application process to get the same density, same project and end result as is proposed. Mr. Stein believes it to be an appropriate proposal, the location is a good candidate and is unsure if it requires a different application.

A vote was made on Mr. Holmquist's motion to recommend denial of the application to City Council.

The motion failed. (1-5)

A motion was made by Mr. Stein to recommend approval of rezoning the subject property from single-family to two-family based on appropriateness of size, scale and location of project. Ms. Fallat seconded the motion. Mr. Homburg asked if a Finding of Fact could be added regarding the appropriateness of the application providing transitional zoning between multi-family and single-family. Mr. Stein accepted the finding of fact, Ms. Fallat accepted the addition.

Finding of Fact:

1. The adjacent multi-family zoning and cemetery use is considered as part of this application, and the proposal is deemed an appropriate transitional zoning between multi-family and single-family uses.

The motion carried. (6-0)

**C. Public Hearing on Sign Permit Request by Michael Sertich, BNG Services, LLC for one new Wall Sign for Shopko Optical at 6000 Monona Drive. (Case No. S-022-2019)**

Mr. Sertich introduced the Shopko Optical sign, and discussed how it related to the Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP) at 6000 Monona Drive. Shopko Optical wanted to make their signage standard throughout the State, and the proposal put forward is their standard signage aesthetic. There were no other appearances and the public hearing was declared closed.

**D. Consideration of Action on Sign Permit Request by Michael Sertich, BNG Services, LLC for one new Wall Sign for Shopko Optical at 6000 Monona Drive. (Case No. S-022-2019)**

City Administrator Gadow had nothing further to add to Planner Plowman's Staff Report. Ms. Fallat asked the applicant for clarification on the sign layout and colors. Mr. Homburg shared some background on the complex, and background to the Subway variance application previously granted. The applicant is seeking both channel lit letters as well as the blue

background. Mr. Homburg shared that as proposed it would stand out, and be unfair to the other occupants. His opinion is that the letters are too big, and the blue behind isn't a logo it is a part of the signage. The applicant responded that the sign size is the same as what was there before, they plan to use the same mounts and electrical ports. Further, Mr. Sertich stated that the Subway sign is very distinctive because of the color change. By allowing variance it can provide a balanced look as stores turnover moving away from the CSP.

Mr. Stein referenced multiple examples where CSP's have been amended to allow this type of sign. The Air Force location at Pier 37 and the H&R Block near Shopko were both mentioned. Mr. Homburg challenged that no others had such a splash of color, and the Sign Code rewrite tried to get away from this type of design. Ms. Fox discussed the properties across the street with a lot of colors on signage, as well as Lake Edge in Madison and how it gives the impression of each of these being different buildings. Ms. Fox is comfortable with the sign size when compared to the others in the center.

Mr. Holmquist shared his concerns with the property owner supporting a change to the CSP and how the Plan Commission enforces the parameters. The reasoning behind other variances was because of the recognition of the corporate signs and the identification of that. Mr. Holmquist shared his wish for the building owner to apply for the variances or to change the CSP's rather than the prospective tenant doing so.

Mr. Homburg added that the sign exceeds the 2' height limit, because the teal is a part of the integrity of the sign and measures 3' in height. Mr. Stein asked for clarification of the sign height and agrees with Mr. Homburg on his review. Ms. Fallat asked if the sign could be decreased to 2' in height to address this concern. Mr. Holmquist clarified that when Anytime Fitness moved into the complex, the purple sign was denied because it wasn't in-line with the integrity of the architecture.

Chair Moore asked why the Commission would request the property owner appear for this application, when there is already approval attached in the packet. Ms. Fallat raised the point that the Tasting Room will be vacating their retail space soon, and that without CSP amendment, there may be another similar application requiring Plan Commission approval. Mr. Holmquist shared his concern of using an email chain to approve variances to the CSP, rather than amending the CSP itself.

Mr. Homburg moved approval of the sign with a decrease in overall height to no more than 2' with the letters resized accordingly. Ms. Fox seconded the motion. Mr. Stein encouraged the owner of the complex to come before the Plan Commission for an amendment to the CSP should they wish to prevent this situation in the future.

Findings of Fact:

1. Signage on the Property is governed under a Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP) approved by the Monona Plan Commission on April 28, 2008.
2. The Applicant requests to deviate from the CSP requirement of a black background, replacing it with a teal background consistent with the Shopko Optical national branding.

Conditions of Approval:

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Approved July 22, 2019

1. As the sign is to be illuminated, an electrical permit shall be obtained from the City's Building Inspector.
2. The proposed sign must be reduced from a three (3) ft. height to a two (2) ft. height, with the letter being proportionately reduced, to conform with the signage size requirements of the CSP.

The motion carried. (5-1)

### **Reports of Staff and Commission Members**

- A. Staff Report Regarding Status of Development Project Proposals
  - a. Upcoming Meetings – July 22, 2019, August 12, 2019 (Tentative)
- B. Mr. Holmquist requested that any signage application that requests a change in CSP have the Building Owner appear, rather than just the tenant on a case-by-case basis.

### **Adjournment**

A motion by Mr. Stein, seconded by Ms. Fox, to adjourn carried. (9:20pm)

Respectfully submitted by:  
Doug Plowman, City Planner