

**PLAN COMMISSION
MINUTES**

Wednesday, October 28, 2020

Present: Bill Fitzsimmons, Victoria Graves, John Wetzel, Craig Mack, Cindy Wermuth, Mike Crotty, Dennis Kelly, Jeff Nelson, Butch Trevor

Absent: Peter McDermott, Ashley Pankey

Staff: Chris Mathias, Geoff Manis

Others: Dan Smith, Dave McDermott

1. Call to Order

Chairman Fitzsimmons called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. Commission meeting attendance was taken.

2. Approval of Minutes from October 14th, 2020

Motion made by Commissioner Trevor; seconded by Commissioner Mack, to approve the minutes from October 14, 2020. Motion carried unanimously.

3. New Business

- a. **Public Hearing – PC 20-11 to consider a request from the Moline/Coal Valley School District for approval of a variance to Chapter 3 of the Moline Code of Ordinances, to allow signage that exceeds the maximum size allowed for an institutional use at Moline High School 3600 Avenue of the Cities, Moline, IL.**

Chairman Fitzsimmons gave an overview of the rules and conduct of the Public Hearing.

Mr. Mathias explained PC 20-11 is a request from the Moline/Coal Valley School District for a sign variance to allow three wall signs that are larger than normally allowed for an institutional use. The applicant is constructing a large gymnasium addition to the high school which is 162' x 336', a total of 54,432 square feet. As part of that project, access changes were required to the site. The westerly of the two southern access points has been closed and will be moved farther west.

The City of Moline chose to zone most schools as single-family residential as they are either in neighborhoods or are located on the periphery of neighborhoods. However, Staff understands that the high school was not and will not be

developed with the same standards as a single-family residential neighborhood. The building is a unique size and the lot is a very large and unique parcel. The use of the building is also very different from other R-2 zoned properties in Moline. The variance request is to allow installation of signage, letters spelling out Moline on one wall and Maroons on the other, on the North and South walls of the new addition. The West side sign was omitted from the Staff Report but includes letters spelling out Moline High School & M with tightly fit lettering. Chapter 3 limits institutional wall signs to 10 square feet in residential districts making for an extremely small sign relative to the size of this building. When considering a sign variance like this, there are three criteria we need to consider:

1. The variance request involves special circumstances relating to size, shape, topography, location or surroundings that affect the property referred to in the application, when denial of said application would cause unreasonable or unnecessary hardship.

It is Staff's opinion that enforcing the limitation of a 10 square foot maximum sign size for an institutional use and denying the variance at this location would cause unreasonable and unnecessary hardship. The subject property is a high school and regional destination as students from as far as 10 miles away are commuting to this location on a daily basis.

2. That in granting the variance, said sign will not cause substantial injury to the value to other property in the vicinity nor be detrimental to the public safety or welfare of the neighborhood in which it is located.

Staff believes that granting the variance will not cause injury to the value of property or be detrimental to public safety or welfare of the neighborhood. The notice of the meeting was published in the newspaper 15 days prior to the meeting and sent to 90 neighboring property owners of which only one person contacted Mr. Mathias regarding the variance.

3. Off-site or on-site conditions exist which mitigate the adverse impacts, if any, created by granting the variance.

There are no anticipated adverse impacts from this application.

Staff believes that the request meets all three criteria and recommends that the Plan Commission approve the sign variance request.

Mr. Mathias swore in Dan Smith and Dave McDermott with the Moline/Coal Valley School District.

Dan Smith addressed the Plan Commission thanking them for their time and answered Commission questions on the variance signage.

Motion made by Commissioner Wetzel; seconded by Commissioner Wermuth, to approve the Moline/Coal Valley School District's request for PC 20-11 a variance to Chapter 3 of the Moline Code of Ordinances, to allow signage that exceeds the maximum size allowed for an institutional use including the West façade sign at Moline High School 3600 Avenue of the Cities, Moline, IL. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Commissioner Crotty, Kelly, Mack, Nelson, Trevor, Wermuth and Wetzel; Nays: None. Commissioner Graves abstained from the vote.

4. Old Business

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

Mr. Mathias discussed the ADU ordinance from Rapid City, South Dakota with the Plan Commission. He would like to use this ordinance as a starting point to construct Moline's ordinance. Copies were presented to Commissioners physically present at the meeting and Mr. Mathias will email it out to all Commissioners following the meeting. He would like the Commission to review it provide him with feedback. Once feedback is received and Plan Commission is onboard, he would like to schedule a Public Hearing the second Wednesday of December.

Sign Code

Mr. Mathias stated that we have been reviewing the sign code and received opinions from Legal staff on it. He is going to continue working on the code to define banner, temporary, flag, vehicle and video gaming signs and clarify the length of time these signs can be present. With these changes, sign code enforcement will be easier making signage better regulated. He requested Plan Commission let him know of any other changes they wish to see made in the sign code. The Commission discussed and provided the following concerns:

- Realtor signs
 - Regulating the length of time may be too restrictive when a house could be on the market for a year or more
 - Size restriction is too small
- Length of time
 - Could signs meeting length of time restriction be taken down and put back up?
- Purpose of sign
 - Regulation of informational sign versus contractor sign versus going out of business sign

Avenue of the Cities Corridor Plan

Mr. Mathias met with Alderman Moyer and Alderman Potter to discuss the Avenue of the Cities Plan. They want to start implementing the plan. Mr. Mathias will keep the Plan Commission informed of any meetings or work sessions that might take place on this discussion.

Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) - Form Based Code Grant

Mr. Mathias stated he received the official documentation that we received the \$160,000 from IDOT for the Form Based Code in the I-74 Bridge/Downtown area. He thanked Commissioner Nelson for his work on helping get the grant approved. Commissioners Nelson, Wetzel and Graves showed interest in being a part of the Steering Committee.

5. Public Comment

None

6. Adjourn

At the next meeting on November 18th, we will have the Election of Officers. Chairman Fitzsimmons appointed a Nominating Committee of Commissioner Wermuth, Commissioner Trevor. Mr. Mathias will update the Chairman on the terms of Commissioners.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Fawn Schultz, Community & Economic Development Administrative Assistant