

MINUTES OF THE CITY OF FRONTENAC
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2008, 7:00 P.M.

A. **CALL TO ORDER:** The regular meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Patrick Donelan.

B. **ROLL CALL:** The members present were:

Chairman Patrick Donelan

Bob Bauer

Dina Rinder

Alderman John Wynne

Elizabeth Barbieri

Kathy Smith

George Purviance

Nancy Schnoebelen

Dr. Tom Moran

Also in attendance were City Administrator, Bob Shelton; Building Commissioner & Zoning Administrator, Jeff Wappelhorst; City Clerk, Leesa Ross; Planning Consultant, Justin Carney; and City Attorney, Lee Curtis.

Also in attendance were Mayor Lee Murray and Alderman Tom Hizar.

C. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Mr. Donelan asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

MOTION: Dr. Moran motioned and Ms. Barbieri seconded to approve the agenda. All Commissioners present voted "Aye". There were no "Nay" votes. **MOTION PASSED.**

D. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Mr. Donelan asked for a motion to approve the minutes of September 23, 2008.

Ms. Barbieri stated she would like to make a correction to page 3 of 4, last full page she would like to change her sentence that says "any type of business" to "this type of business". Ms. Ross stated she has already made the correction.

MOTION: Mr. Bauer motioned and Ms. Schnoebelen seconded the approval of the September 23, 2008, regular meeting minutes as corrected. All Commissioners present voted "Aye". There were no "Nay" votes. **MOTION PASSED.**

E. **PUBLIC FORUM (PRESENTATION OF REMARKS AND/OR PETITIONS).**

No comments were made at this time.

F. CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS:

Mr. Donelan had no comments at this time.

G. COMMENTS BY COMMISSION MEMBERS:

No commission members made comments at this time.

H. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Shelton made no comments at this time.

I. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Proposal of revised sign regulations for the City of Frontenac.

Mr. Donelan stated Mr. Carney's report was sent out to everyone and was included in their packet. He also asked the commission members to keep in mind the time the City spent approving the comprehensive plan and the resident comments about the nature, character and look of Frontenac.

Mr. Carney stated he has information to review regarding wall signs and monument signs and stated the City has received numerous petitions for variances since the sign ordinance was approved in 2006. He stated he kept in mind the character, aesthetics and commercial corridors of Frontenac. Most recently a 46 square foot wall sign was approved for a variance and a large 80 square foot multi-tenant monument sign was denied.

Mr. Carney stated he has reviewed what other cities are doing and discussed with City officials their thoughts for Frontenac. He stated currently the City allows an 11 foot wall sign and prohibits a multi-tenant monument sign. He said some cities have different regulations for different districts and some request developers submit sign packages along with their plan submittals.

Mr. Carney stated the City has the following fundamental goals:

- To preserve the upscale character of the City of Frontenac
- While updating the comprehensive plan, visual appearance and aesthetics were noted as being important to accommodate the unique commercial corridor

- High end residential is located by most of the commercial corridors
- To balance aesthetic and economic interest
- To develop clear and practical regulations
- To reduce the number of variances, overall

Mr. Carney stated regarding wall signs his suggestion is to use the ratio approach and suggested the City choose a .7 to 1 ratio on walls signs which is explained below.

Wall Signs

- A ratio of .7:1 square foot of wall sign area to linear foot of leasable building frontage
- Leasable area not to include carports, canopies, or drive throughs
- A ten percent margin be required around the sign
- Set a minimum and a maximum size area, depending on the size of the building frontage perhaps not less than 12 square feet and not greater than 35 square feet (though the maximum could have allowances for large setbacks, multi-story buildings, or development size)

Mr. Carney explained different scenarios on buildings around town and explained the 10% margin of the area around the sign.

Mr. Purviance stated the commission should be looking at other criteria and it should be better represented than the graphical guidelines, because it is hard to visualize ratios. He also stated setback criteria is important, because of distance it can consume size. He said the purpose of the signs are identification for marketing and advertising. He feels Calico Corners size is minimal. He said the commission needs to layout some design considerations and they should be included and submitted by the developer.

Dr. Moran stated he has a dialectic opposition with commercial intent and aesthetics.

Mr. Carney stated he agrees that it applies because of variance requests and because businesses benefit from being in Frontenac. He stated commercial interests will always want a bigger sign, and agrees that aesthetics are more important than short-term commercial interest.

Mayor Murray stated variance requests must show a practical difficulty or an undo hardship and stated AG Edwards, Reliance and Wachovia, showed a practical difficulty because their buildings are set back 650 to 700 feet from Clayton Road. She stated the

City has only received two other requests for variances for wall signs which were from Stifel Nicolaus and the Commerce Bank sign.

Mr. Carney showed pictures of Stifel Nicolaus and Commerce Bank. Mr. Purviance stated the size of the building and distance should be considered because the size diminishes. He stated there should be a range with distance and a graphic consideration.

Mr. Donelan stated the developers knew of the sign ordinance when submitting their plans. He stated the Frontenac Grove location is an odd shape, and faces the wrong way. He said we should not be a repository because business is rotten, give us a bigger sign. Mr. Carney stated we can not regulate every nuance in the City.

Mr. Carney went on to discuss monument signs. His recommendation is below:

Monument Signs

- Permit multi-tenant monument signs listing individual tenant names consistent with the current restrictions for monument signs for both size and aesthetic/illumination
 - Maximum of 35 square feet in size
 - Maximum height of five feet
 - Illuminated with reverse cut back lit or pin mounted halo lit lettering

Mr. Carney presented pictures of two different types of monument signs that would meet his recommendation for the City of Frontenac. He showed three monument signs in the City which are located on Clayton Road; Reliance Bank & Wachovia Securities; Le Chateau, Triad Bank & B & F Enterprises; and CDI & Frontenac Builders. Ms. Rinder asked how large the three signs which were shown were? Mr. Carney stated they all are 35 feet are smaller and should be large enough to identify the store fronts.

Ms. Smith stated she is not a fan of signs which list all the tenants. Mr. Bauer stated Frontenac Grove was given guidelines and thinks the signs should have uniformity. Ms. Smith stated Frontenac Grove is also across from residential property. She said signs don't help, people have an idea where they are going. Ms. Schnoebelen stated the problem is the sighting of Frontenac Grove. She said it is poorly built. She said she wants them to be successful, but the issue is the property sighting. Dr. Moran stated the Schnucks sign in Ladue is ugly and an enormous eyesore that you can't read. He also stated because the Frontenac Grove building is a poorly built development, there are other ways to advertise, through radio, TV and print media.

Mr. Donelan stated tonight we do not have to go forward with a recommendation.

Mr. Carney showed the existing Frontenac Grove sign at the request of Mr. Purviance. A committee member asked if you can legislate for one site. Mr. Curtis stated no it would

be for every business. Mr. Donelan asked if we had specific regulations for the Planned Development District. Mr. Curtis stated no. Ms. Smith stated I don't think we want to slap these monument signs all over the place. Discussion continued regarding regulations on multi-tenant monument signs.

Mr. Sendobry of Commerce Bank stated all of the photos of Frontenac Grove were taken from the east and he asked when presented again if photographs can be taken from the west to the east. Mr. Carney agreed to do so. Mr. Carney said the current sign regulations do not allow for multi-tenant monument signs. He stated Conway Centre would currently be allowed a monument sign with the name of the building and the address. Mr. Donelan thanked Mr. Carney for his presentation and stated it was valuable and worthwhile information.

Mr. Purviance stated he was in agreement with the .7 to 1 ratio. He stated graphic layouts would help and stated the City needs a graphic standard. Mr. Carney asked if canopies and drive-throughs should be included in the graphical guidelines. Mr. Purviance asked what the ratio would look like at Huffords and Calico Corners. Mr. Carney stated they would both be allowed bigger signs.

Alderman Wynne asked what the consensus was of the Commission members in regards to monument signs. He asked for a show of hands on whether the other commission members favored a monument sign with individual tenant names. All eight commissioners except Alderman Wynne stated they would not favor that type of a sign. Mr. Donelan stated he will forward the report to the Board of Aldermen.

MOTION: Mr. Bauer motioned and Ms. Schnoebelen seconded to accept the recommendation of Mr. Carney regarding wall signs which state:

- A ratio of .7:1 square foot of wall sign area to linear foot of leasable building frontage
- Leasable area not to include carports, canopies, or drive throughs
- A ten percent margin be required around the sign
- Set a minimum and a maximum size area, depending on the size of the building frontage perhaps not less than 12 square feet and not greater than 35 square feet (though the maximum could have allowances for large setbacks, multi-story buildings, or development size)

Mayor Murray asked what about the 35 square foot maximum. Mr. Carney stated the Commission could recommend setting the maximum at 25 feet. Mr. Curtis stated there was not much discussion on the parenthetical information either.

Mr. Purviance stated he would like to see an overlay in the difference between 25 to 35 feet. Mr. Bauer stated 25 feet is comfortable to me. Mr. Purviance asked what if it was an entire building. Mr. Carney stated the regulation would still be 25 feet. Mayor Murray

stated 35 feet is a big sign. She stated if a 35 foot sign is placed next to a 12 foot sign it is inconsistent, we want flexibility. She asked everyone to see how the Dazzle sign looks next to the Commerce Bank sign. A commission member stated all retail faces residential property and their job is to support the residents. Ms. Barbieri stated she is happy with a 25 foot sign, and Mr. Bauer and Ms. Schnoebelen both agreed. Mayor Murray stated she is concerned with the aesthetics of the community. Ms. Rinder asked what is larger than 25 feet. Mr. Carney stated Stifel Nicolaus is 22 feet and Wachovia is 77 feet. Ms. Smith stated the more uniform the better.

MOTION: Mr. Bauer motioned and Ms. Smith seconded to accept Mr. Carney's recommendation of the wall sign regulations as stated below:

- A ratio of .7:1 square foot of wall sign area to linear foot of leasable building frontage
 - Leasable area not to include carports, canopies, or drive throughs
 - A ten percent margin be required around the sign
 - Set a minimum and a maximum size area, depending on the size of the building frontage perhaps not less than 12 square feet and not greater than 25 square feet
- and to forward the recommendation on to the Board of Aldermen for approval. All Commission members present voted "Aye". **MOTION PASSED.**

K. **NEW BUSINESS:**

None

J. **ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday, November 25, 2008, 7:00 p.m.

K. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Mr. Donelan asked for a motion and second to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION: Mr. Bauer motioned and Ms. Smith seconded the meeting be adjourned. All Commissioners present voted "Aye". The vote was unanimous. **MOTION PASSED.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.