

HERMITAGE PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES

Monday
March 2, 2009
Regular Meeting
8:30 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Woody Steele – Secretary
Ed Benton
Matt Liburdi
Shannon McConnell
Chester B. Scholl
James Tamber

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Chuck Rogers – Chairman
John Coupland
Mark Passalinqua

OTHERS PRESENT:

Marcia Hirschmann
Tom Kuster, City Solicitor
Cindy Pagliaroli
Scott Smith
Jan Farmakis
Jeremy Coxe
Nathan Zampogna
Gary Hinkson
Gary Gulla
Chris Winslow
Joe Pinchot

Mr. Steele called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. in the Hermitage Municipal Building.

Mr. Steele asked for public input. There was none.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Steele asked for approval of the minutes of the February 2, 2009 meeting. Mr. Benton made a motion to approve the February 2nd minutes. Mr. Liburdi seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. The minutes were approved as distributed.

LAND DEVELOPMENT PLANS:

D’Onofrio’s Food Center 2009 Parking Lot Expansion Project Minor Land Development Plan (North Hermitage Road)

Mrs. Hirschmann explained that the purpose of this land development plan was for the expansion of the current parking lot.

Approval of the plan would have the following contingencies.

- 1) Drawing corrections
- 2) Approval of Stormwater Management Report by City engineer
- 3) Approval of proposed rezoning of property
- 4) Two sets of permanent ink mylars with signatures and seals

Mrs. McConnell questioned the location of the walkway, noting that it was very close to the road and that it should be farther back from the road as a matter of safety. Mrs. Hirschmann suggested that the sidewalk could be placed on the opposite side of the trees from where it is now located.

Chris Winslow, project engineer, stated that it may be possible to move it farther back from the road, but the grade of the area may be a factor.

Mr. Steele asked for additional questions or comments on this plan. There were none. Mrs. McConnell made a motion to approve the D'Onofrio's Food Center 2009 Parking Lot Expansion Project Minor Land Development Plan. Mr. Tamber seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

PROPOSED ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS:

Recommendation on a proposed Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment to provide clarification of changeable copy sign usage in the PTP & PTP2 zoning districts and for a reduction of the rate of change for electronic changeable copy signs.

Mrs. Hirschmann stated that after discussion at the February meeting, the Planning Commission agreed with the committee's recommendation to amend the rate of message change from 15 minutes to five seconds for electronic changeable copy signs, and also to clarify that electronic changeable copy signs are not permitted in the Planned Technical Park and Planned Technical Park-2 zoning districts.

Mr. Steele asked for questions. There were none. Mr. Tamber made a motion to approve the recommendation on a proposed Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment to provide clarification of changeable copy sign usage in the PTP & PTP2 zoning districts and for a reduction of the rate of change for electronic changeable copy signs. Mr. Scholl seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Discussion regarding Sign Ordinance – Mrs. Hirschmann led a discussion regarding the existing sign regulations in the zoning ordinance and possible changes for recommendation. She referred to a chart detailing the various zoning districts and their specific sign requirements, and she also provided a map that showed the location of each district throughout the City. Photos of numerous signs in the City were also provided for reference.

Mr. Scholl asked if there is a definition of sign height. He questioned what constituted the size of a sign, whether it is the message lettering only or the total structure on which the lettering is mounted. Mrs. Hirschmann referred to the zoning ordinance and determined that the area of a sign encompasses only the lettering and symbols and does not include the structure. She also noted that only one side measures the area of a two-sided sign.

Mr. Steele asked for volunteers to serve on a committee to review the existing sign regulations and provide a recommendation to the full Planning Commission at a later date. Mrs. McConnell and Mr. Liburdi agreed to serve on the committee. It was suggested that the committee review issues such as the inclusion of street numbers, the size of the structure on which a sign is mounted, and signs that encompass a number of smaller signs for buildings that are occupied by more than one tenant. Mrs. Hirschmann added that a lot in a commercial zoning district that has excess frontage could have additional signs for multiple businesses.

Mercer County Regional Planning Commission update – Mr. Benton reported that the Commission approved the D’Onofrio rezoning request. He also stated that the sale of Woodland Place to a private equity firm was moving forward.

Mrs. Hirschmann reported that a committee has been formed to formulate a plan for the Stull Farm on Sample Road. She noted that currently the consensus of the group is to use the property for a mix of environmental, education, recreation and agricultural purposes.

Mrs. Hirschmann stated that in the near future there will be a new, combined report on the City website from the Planning Department and the Community Development Department that will list current projects ongoing in the City. She noted that the report would be updated monthly.

There were no public comments. The meeting adjourned at 8:47 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Pagliaroli
March 3, 2009