



City of Racine

City Hall
730 Washington Ave.
Racine, WI 53403
www.cityofracine.org

Meeting Minutes - Draft

City Plan Commission

Mayor Cory Mason
Alderman Dennis Wiser
Tom Durkin
Tony Veranth
Mario Martinez
Christina Hefel
Marvin Austin

Wednesday, March 28, 2018

4:30 PM

City Hall, Room 205

Call To Order

Mayor Cory Mason called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

PRESENT: 5 - Cory Mason, Dennis Wiser, Tony Veranth, Mario Martinez and Marvin Austin

EXCUSED: 2 - Tom Durkin and Christina Hefel

Approval of Minutes for the March 14, 2018 Meeting

A motion was made by Alderman Wiser, seconded by Commissioner Austin, to approve the minutes of the March 14th meeting. The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote.

4:30 P.M. PUBLIC HEARING

[0312-18](#)

Subject: (Direct Referral) A request from Bill Pfister of Michael's Signs, representing North Pointe (Trinity) United Methodist Church, Inc., seeking a conditional use permit to install an electronic message center at 3825 Erie Street. (PC-18)

Attachments: [3825 Erie St. Applicant Submittal](#)
[3825 Erie St. Public Hearing Notice](#)

Mayor Mason opened the Public Hearing at 4:37 p.m.

Assistant Director Matt Sadowski reviewed the zoning of the subject and adjacent properties, surrounding land uses and business, the public hearing notice map that was distributed to neighboring properties, the comprehensive plan land use designation for the property, and photos of the site and surrounding area. He stated the request is not in any corridor or design district.

Mr. Sadowski showed the proposed placement of the sign and stated the sign would be lit from 7:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m., which is the maximum amount of time the ordinance allows. He stated the applicant would adjust the hours to fit the guidelines

and the only part of the static sign that would be illuminated would be the text. He stated the size of the sign is in compliance and the landscaping proposed includes greenery.

Mr. Sadowski explained the possible actions of the commission and stated that with this sign, there are a variety of exceptions that would need to be granted. He stated at this time staff is not recommending action be taken with the sign, but that the item be deferred to allow time for staff to work on an ordinance update to eliminate the need to grant the exceptions desired e.g. distance from a residential area, and to continue the public hearing for the request at the next meeting to allow time for staff to present conditions of approval and suggested changes to the ordinance.

Bill Pfister, Michael's Signs, 5817 Cambridge Lane, spoke in support of the request. He stated he works with the city and looks for suggestions from staff as far as approvals. He asked if the modified ordinance will allow or disallow the sign. He stated the signs are set up to automatically change illumination during the course of the day.

Mayor Mason explained that the current ordinance has conflicts with placement of electronic message signs in residential neighborhoods. He stated that we want to write a code that can be offered in practice.

Mr. Pfister stated over the years his company has not put a lot of signs in dense residential neighborhoods. He stated electronic message signs are becoming more popular as a marketing tool and explained that the use of letter boards and the lighting used are not necessarily appealing and aesthetically pleasing to the neighborhood. He stated the colored electronic message sign enhances the message and the neighborhood.

Don Francis, Pastor of North Pointe United Methodist, explained the sign will incorporate a merger of two churches; he stated they share a facility with United Lutheran Church. Pastor Francis spoke about the effect the church has within the community and stated the sign is the only way to reach the community.

The Chair of the Leadership Board explained the mission of the church and the services that the church offers e.g. the diaper ministry, food pantry, the harmony club, community garden, etc... She stated the sign is a good way to communicate with the neighborhood; the old sign is not as visible.

MaryAnn Furrie, 5000 Valley Trail, Chairman of the Trustees. Spoke in favor of the request. She stated they worked hard on the sign package that was presented. She stated the church is working with a changing population and would like to serve those people and the static old sign does not help them reach out and provide services. She stated the church is competing with Shorecrest and gas station signs.

Mayor Mason stated a motion was being requested to keep the public hearing open until the next meeting on April 11th.

Discussion after the motion.

Commissioner Martinez asked about the precedence that could be set regarding moving forward on the request.

Mr. Sadowski stated electronic message signs are not allowed in residential areas and

are required to have a 200 ft. separation from residential areas. He stated this sign violates both of those requirements; however, the Commission approved four signs last year that all required exceptions to the ordinance in that regard. He stated staff needs to look at the ordinance so that it can be changed so that exceptions would not need to be granted to requested signs in or near residential districts.

Commissioner Austin asked about the timeframe and process for changing the ordinance.

Mr. Sadowski stated that language would be presented at the next meeting. He stated it would be a two week delay for the sign request; however, the ordinance would not be acted on until early May.

In response to Commissioner Austin, Mr. Sadowski stated the request would have to meet the ordinance as amended.

Commissioners Veranth and Austin expressed appreciation for the work the church has done for the community. Commissioner Austin hopes the delay does not impact them moving forward.

A motion was made by Alderman Wiser, seconded by Commissioner Veranth, to keep the Public Hearing for the item open through the April 11th meeting and to defer action until said date. The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote.

END OF PUBLIC HEARING

[0246-18](#)

Subject: (Direct Referral) A request from Carolyn DeDeyne seeking a conditional use permit to operate a retail goods store selling new and used items at 2421 Geneva Street. (PC-18) (Res. 0106-18)

Recommendation of the City Plan Commission on 3-28-18: That the request be approved subject to conditions.

Fiscal Note: N/A

Attachments: [2421 Geneva St. Review & Recommendations](#)
[2421 Geneva St. Applicant Submittal](#)
[2421 Geneva St. Public Hearing Notice](#)

Associate Planner Jeff Hintz stated progress was made on the property since the last meeting. He stated a lot of the debris was cleaned up in the area and an dumpster enclosure was constructed.

Chief Building Inspector Ken Plaski explained that an order was written to the owner regarding five violations. He stated the chimney in the rear needs to be repaired, removed, or replaced; the fence is deteriorated and sections need to be replaced; the paint on the exterior wood trim of the building is chipped; window glass is broken; and on the east side of the building, there is a nuisance vehicle that needs to be removed. He stated the owner has until April 20th to correct the violations.

Mr. Hintz explained the possible actions of the commission. He stated the required findings of fact have all been met and a written maintenance plan has been provided.

Mr. Hintz read through the conditions of approval and stated staff is recommending approval.

A motion was made by Commissioner Martinez, seconded by Commissioner Veranth, to recommend approval of the request subject to conditions. The motion PASSED by a Voice Vote.

Adjournment

Mayor Mason adjourned the meeting at 5:22 p.m.