

BLUE ASH PLANNING COMMISSION

June 7, 2007

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ITEM 1. - MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Chairman Schafer called the regular meeting of the Blue Ash Planning Commission to order at 7:07 p.m. on Thursday, June 7, 2007.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Raymond Schafer, John Moores and James Sumner

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: William Sikute and Beverley Gill

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager David Waltz, Assistant Community Development Director Dan Johnson, Administrative Clerk Traci Smith, Assistant to the City Manager Kelly Osler, Council Member Lee Czerwonka and interested citizens

ITEM 2. - OPENING CEREMONY

Pledge of Allegiance

ITEM 3. - APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Commission Members waived the reading of the minutes.

DECISION: Jim Sumner moved, John Moores seconded, to approve the regular meeting minutes of May 3, 2007 as submitted. A voice vote was taken. All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

ITEM 4 – CITY OF BLUE ASH

Zoning Code Amendments to Chapter 1181, Supplemental Site and Use Regulations relating to real estate signs (tabled at May 3, 2007 meeting)

DECISION: John Moores moved, Jim Sumner seconded to remove item from table. A roll call vote was taken. All members voted aye. Motion carried.

Dan Johnson explained this item was tabled to allow additional time for public comments and none were received by Community Development since the last meeting. All proposed changes remain as presented at the May meeting. Mr. Johnson reminded the Commission that the purpose of the changes is to simplify the temporary sign Code for real estate sales and leasing. Also, for commercial facilities designed for multiple tenant spaces to replace temporary "For Lease" signs with permanent signs that will accomplish the same task. He also advised that there is no requirement to notify property owners in advance of the amendment; however, before the last meeting Mr. Johnson notified and sent copies of the proposal to several large real estate companies in the area. Mr. Johnson noted that some of the people he talked with said they understood the dilemma and did not really like the changes, but no responses were received in the interim. David Waltz mentioned that, while some expressed some reservations, none were as passionate as the last time this subject came up.

John Moores said that it seems that the existing regulation has been largely ignored and wanted to know if this change would be enforceable. Dan Johnson explained that, after the six month grace period, enforcement would be easier because if he sees any of the

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existing temporary signs, they are illegal. There are currently so many of them that it is hard to tell which ones are legal and which are not. In the two years that Mr. Johnson has been in Blue Ash, he has only received two applications for temporary real estate signs. There are many signs out there that are non-conforming in terms of size, location and almost none have permits.

Chairman Schafer asked for public comments or questions. There were none.

DECISION: Jim Sumner moved, John Moores seconded, to recommend approval to council the amendments to Chapter 1181, Supplemental Site and Use Regulations for real estate signs. A roll call vote was taken. All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

ITEM 5 – 4270 HUNT ROAD – Joseph’s Custom Carpentry

Consideration of a minor amendment to an approved Planned Development at the El Pueblo restaurant to allow an outdoor seating area on the east side of the building, adjacent to the existing public entrance to the building.

PRESENT: Joseph Wharff, Applicant

Joseph Wharff gave details on the proposed addition of a concrete patio and fence for El Pueblo restaurant. A concrete sidewalk will be added to connect an existing service door with the patio area; however, there will be no elevation changes. The proposed 4-foot high cedar fence will match the architectural design and exterior trim color of the existing building. Mr. Wharff explained that the existing landscaping would be relocated to another area on the property and there will be low-voltage accent lighting mounted on the inside of the fence.

John Moores said his preference for the spacing on the fence would be to have the fencing closed in. Ray Schafer said his initial thought would be to have closed it, but then thought if opened then breeze could come through. Mr. Schafer asked City Staff for comment. David Waltz mentioned that typically a restaurant with outdoor seating the fencing is open. Dan Johnson said he would consult with the Police Department to see if they have a preference with visibility.

Ray Schafer asked if there would be outside music. Mr. Wharff explained there is one existing speaker and they will not add any more. The restaurant closes at 10:00 p.m. and there would not be live music on this outdoor area.

Jim Sumner questioned the need for the landscaping recommendation of City Staff. Dan Johnson explained the logic is to update the landscaping to meet current standards and that relocating the existing shrubs would meet this requirement.

There was general discussion regarding noise and it was generally agreed that any potential problems would be covered by the existing noise ordinance.

Chairman Schafer opened the discussion to the public. Bob Davis of 9240 Bluewing Terrace said he thinks this is a great addition to this facility and for growing their business.

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DECISION: Jim Sumner moved, John Moores seconded, to approve minor modifications to the approved plan as submitted with the following conditions:

1. No additional outside speakers or amplified entertainment are permitted ever, at any time, except for speaker that already exists.
2. Additional landscaping shown on the plans shall be maintained.
3. If substantial development does not occur within 12 months of approval, the applicant may be required to return for further review and approval.

A roll call vote was taken. All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

ITEM 6 – MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

David Waltz advised that the draft final of the Downtown Streetscape plan should be available for review and comment within the next month or so.

ITEM 7 – ADJOURNMENT

DECISION: There being no further business to be discussed, John Moores moved, Jim Sumner seconded, to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken. All members present voted aye. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Raymond Schafer, Chairman

MINUTES RECORDED BY:

Traci Smith, Administrative Clerk