

**VILLAGE OF OXFORD  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

*Planning Commission Members: Rose Bejma, Jack Curtis, Gary Deeg, Gary Douglas,  
Maureen Helmuth, Adam Johnson*

22 West Burdick Street Oxford, MI 48371	April 3, 2018	7:00 pm
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**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Gary Douglas called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Douglas, Curtis, Johnson, Bejma, Helmuth

Members Absent: Deeg

Staff Present: Planning Consultant Sarah Traxler, Assistant Village Manager Drew Benson

**MOTION**

Motion by Helmuth, seconded by Bejma to excuse the absence of Commissioner Gary Deeg from this meeting.

Voice Vote

Yes: All - No: None.

Absent: Deeg

Motion Carries.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION**

Motion by Curtis, seconded by Helmuth to approve the regular Planning Commission Meeting Agenda for Tuesday, April 3, 2018 as presented.

Voice Vote

Yes: All - No: None.

Absent: Deeg

Motion Carries.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

**MOTION**

Motion by Bejma, seconded by Johnson to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018 as presented.

Voice Vote

Yes: All - No: None.

Absent: Deeg  
Motion Carries.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

### **A. Special Land Use – Sign Application 51 S. Washington Suites F & G**

#### **MOTION**

Motion by Helmuth, seconded by Bejma to enter a public hearing for the Special Land Use – Sign Application 51 S. Washington Suites F & G at 7:02 p.m.

Voice Vote

Yes: All - No: None.

Absent: Deeg

Motion Carries.

Justin Morr of Northern Sign Company rose to speak on behalf of Clarkston Medical Group, the tenant of 51 S. Washington Suite G. Mr. Morr discussed the proposed sign, outlined the background of the proposed special land use, as well as the regulations in place by the Village, and why the proposed sign should be approved.

Dr. Brian Tightsworth, a physician with Clarkston Medical Group, rose to speak. Tightsworth discussed the need for the requested signage.

The Planning Commissioners asked Mr. Morr and Mr. Tightsworth a variety of questions regarding the size of the sign, the additional sign for Re/Max (51 S. Washington Suite F) that would be adjacent to the CMG sign, as well as the presence of a non-conforming window sign. The applicants responded to each question.

Commission Chair Douglas asked if any representative from Re/Max was present for this topic, which there was not, and asked for additional public comments. There were none.

#### **MOTION**

Motion by Helmuth, seconded by Curtis to close the public hearing for the Special Land Use – Sign Application 51 S. Washington Suites F & G at 7:08 p.m.

Voice Vote

Yes: All - No: None.

Absent: Deeg

Motion Carries.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

Commission Chair Douglas asked how to proceed with the Commission Consideration for Re/Max with no representative present. Commissioner Curtis indicated that they should proceed with the face value of what Re/Max has provided to the Commission for consideration.

Commissioner Douglas noted that he would like to address the request from Clarkston Medical Group first, and then address Re/Max.

### **A. Planning Commission Consideration of a Special Land Use – Sign Application for 51 S. Washington Suite G**

Planning Consultant Sarah Traxler introduced herself as a member of McKenna & Associates, and indicated that she is in attendance in place of the Village's regular consultant, Chris Khorey, due to a scheduling conflict for Mr. Khorey.

Traxler noted that the analysis of each of these proposed signs are nearly identical, and it is clear that the two sign companies have worked together to coordinate their applications as requested by the Planning Commission at their previous meeting on this topic. Traxler then outlined the unique nuances of this topic, including the location of the Suites within the structure at 51 S. Washington, and the amount of allowed signage based on the suite's configurations within the structure. Traxler also noted the considerations that the Commission should take into account when making a decision regarding these signs.

Commission Chair Douglas asked for clarification as to how many units are on the second floor of the 51 S. Washington structure, and are entitled to wall-signage. Traxler indicated that there are 3, one of which had been previously approved for wall-signage that would be considered a non-conformity based on the current Zoning Ordinance, but was legally approved under a previous zoning ordinance, leaving these two units as the only two upstairs tenant spaces without wall-signage.

Commissioner Curtis asked if there is a requirement to bring all non-conformities on the site into conformance in order to grant a special land use. Traxler indicated that based on Chris Khorey's analysis, it does not appear that the legal, existing non-conformity would have a bearing on this decision that is before the Planning Commission.

Commission Chair Douglas asked for clarification from Ms. Traxler on whether this special land use can be approved without bringing any existing non-conformities on the site into compliance. Traxler restated her opinion is that there is not a requirement to do so in this case, as there may be in some other scenarios.

Commissioner Bejma asked about the internal illumination component of these signs, and the Commission discussed the surrounding signage and the presence of previously approved internally illuminated signs, as well as the specific layout of the signage on the 51 S. Washington structure.

Bejma also asked if the Oxford Downtown Development Authority (DDA) weighs in, or is involved in any way with signage for businesses in the downtown district. Assistant Manager Benson indicated that unless the sign applicant is also applying for a sign grant from the DDA, the DDA is not involved at all in the approval process. Bejma indicated that she would like to have the DDA involved in the signage decision process. Benson added that the Zoning Ordinance gives the Planning Commission the authority to review internally illuminated signs, but non-internally illuminated signs that meet the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance are approved administratively without any legislative approvals; and that legislative bodies can not legislate content. Bejma indicated that she still would like to allow the DDA to be aware of the signs that come before the Commission. Benson indicated that he can pass sign permit applications along to the DDA Director for consideration.

DDA Board Member and Village Council President Susan Bossardet rose to speak, and indicated that she would like to see the Planning Commission follow the Zoning Ordinance and not allow internally illuminated signage. The Commission discussed Bossardet's comment, as well as the various aspects of the proposed signs before the commission at this meeting.

#### **MOTION**

Motion by Curtis, seconded by Helmuth to approve the special land use for the signs at 51 S. Washington for Suites F and G with the following conditions: 1. The CMG *and Re/Max* (added via amendment to motion) window signs are reduced in size to no more than 25% of the window it is attached to; 2. The internal illumination is approved for both signs; and 3. The temporary banner for Re/Max will be removed.

Commission Chair Douglas indicated that he would like to make sure that these signs are not overly bright, and produce light pollution.

Commissioner Curtis indicated that he would like to amend the motion to also include that the Re/Max window sign be reduced in size to no more than 25% of the window it is attached to, and Commissioner Helmuth accepted that amendment.

Commission Chair Douglas added that he would also like to see an amendment to the motion that limits the brightness of the illumination of the signs. Planning Consultant Traxler indicated that there is language in section 7.3.2.b.2 of the Zoning Ordinance that states that maximum light intensity permitted at the street right of way line be no more than 1 foot candle, which would encompass Mr. Douglas' request, and can be enforced administratively.

Roll Call Vote

Yes: Johnson, Curtis, Bejma, Douglas, Helmuth - No: None.

Absent: Deeg

Motion Carries.

## **B. Planning Commission Consideration of a Special Land Use – Sign Application for 51 S. Washington Suite F**

This topic was addressed in the previous motion, and was not discussed further.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

None.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

### **CONSULTANT COMMENTS**

Planning Consultant Traxler indicated that the Village's Zoning Ordinance states that in the C-1 Core District, internally illuminated signs may be allowed, subject to Planning Commission approval. Traxler noted that this distinction means that internally illuminated signs are not entirely disallowed in the Village as previously discussed, but rather that signs of that nature simply require additional legislative consideration to be approved. Traxler added that in the C-2 District, internally illuminated signs are also allowed according to the Zoning Ordinance.

Assistant Manager Benson indicated that the Village has received sign applications from the Holy Cross Church, as well as from Falling Down Brewery, although these signs are not internally illuminated and do not require Planning Commission review.

Commission Chair Douglas asked if there has been any recent activities with the Weckle project, and Benson indicated that he has not heard anything new, but would double check.

### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Curtis discussed the recent activities of Oxford Township, including the Township's Master Planning Process, recent development projects, and a Sanitary Sewer backup on M-24 and Indian Lake Road and the mitigation efforts of that issue.

Commissioner Bejma discussed the Zoning Board of Appeals, and indicated that their meeting on April 2<sup>nd</sup> regarding a dimensional variance for 145 S. Washington had been cancelled, and was expected to be rescheduled for May.

Commissioner Helmuth indicated that she wants Planning Commission to continue to review internally illuminated signs, and indicated that each decision should be viewed on its own merit, and not be precedent setting. Commissioner Bejma added that she would like to have all signs in the downtown reviewed by the DDA Director so that that individual can inform the DDA Board.

Commissioner Douglas noted that the coordinating effort between the two applicants tonight was a significant help for approving these signs, and thanked the applicants for their effort.

## **ADJOURN**

### **MOTION**

Motion by Helmuth, seconded by Bejma to adjourn the meeting at 7:47 p.m.

Voice Vote

Yes: All - No: None.

Absent: Deeg

Motion Carries.

Respectfully submitted,

Drew Benson  
Recording Secretary

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Recording Secretary

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Planning Commission Chairperson